

PRIME UNIVERSITY JOURNAL

VOLUME 3

NUMBER 1

JANUARY - JUNE : 2009

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Prime University

Consumer Protection in Bangladesh: Present Status and Some Thoughts for the Future

Prof. Mizanur Rahman*

ABSTRACT

In a modern society consumer rights are considered integral part of human rights. One of the interesting aspects of consumer rights is that these rights affect lives of all the members of the society irrespective of whether they are producers, sellers of ultimate consumers. Existing laws on consumer protection, until very recent past were not only sporadic in nature but favoured more the rights of tradesmen (producers, sellers etc.) than protecting individual consumers. Corresponding protection mechanism was similarly characterized as ineffective. Comprehensive consumer rights protection legislation was therefore, a long standing demand of the consumer groups in Bangladesh. In this context, the recently promulgated Consumer Protection Act in Bangladesh is a welcome initiative. However, on a closer scrutiny it appears that the legislation is inherently flawed though very many provisions of the Act virtually 'take away' more rights than it 'gives'. In so doing, the Act puts individual consumers at the mercy of bureaucrats. The article makes an attempt to reveal the loopholes in the said act and proposes what needs to be done to empower the consumers so that the Act may truly be designated as the consumer rights protection act.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Need for Consumer Protection

Consumers need protection because of peculiarities of the market in which s/he transacts. Jurisprudential basis of consumer rights protection may be traced in the following extracts:

"The fact that a false statement may be obviously false to those who are trained and experienced does not change its character, nor take away its power to deceive others less experienced. There is no duty resting upon a citizen to suspect the honesty of those with whom he transacts business. Laws are made to protect the trusting as well as the suspicious. The best element of business has long since decided that honesty should govern competitive enterprises and that the rule of caveat emptor should not be relied upon to reward fraud and deception." (1)

"It is also to be more in mind that the rules of unfair competition are based not alone upon the protection of a property right.... but also upon the right of the public to protection from fraud and deceit. It may be granted that this case is a novel one and that it may be doubtful whether other [similar] cases... may soon arise, but the fact that a scheme is original in its conception is not a good argument against its circumvention,. 'The fact that the question comes to us in an entirely new guise and that the schemer has concocted a kind of deception heretofore unheard of in legal jurisprudence is no reason why equity is either unable or unwilling to deal with him. It has been said by some judge or law-writer that "on fixed rules can be established upon which to deal with fraud for, were courts of equity to once declare rules prescribing the limitation of their power in dealing with it the jurisdiction would be perpetually cramped and eluded by new schemes which the fertility of man's invention would contrive." When a scheme is evolved which on its face violates the fundamental rules of honesty and fair dealing a court of equity is not impotent to frustrate its consummation because the scheme is an original one. There is a maxim as old as law that there can be no right without a remedy and in searching for a precise precedent and equity court must not

* Ph. D, Department of Law, University of Dhaka and Executive Director, ELCOP

lose sight not only of its power, but of its duty to arrive at a just solution of the problem." (2)

"The Legislature ... broadened the scope of legal protection against wrongful business practices generally and in so doing extended to the entire consuming public the protection once afforded only to business competitors. In a society which enlists a variety of psychological and advertising stimulants to induce the consumption of goods consumers rather than competitors need the greatest protection from sharp business practices." (3)

In its perception of the relationship in which an individual- a consumer-obtains a product or service to meet his private needs from a person who earns his living from manufacturing, selling or entrepreneurial activity, conventional economic doctrine relies on a number of assumptions: the end of all economic activities is consumption, consumer demand is the free and willing expression of consumer needs, the two poles in the relationship are perceived as discrete units for analytical purposes, the market place is the only place where commercial relationships can be formed. (4) Only the Market "gives consumers the opportunity to express the needs they feel through demand..., enables the producer to gain knowledge of this demand and to deploy the resources needed to meet it..... formalizes the trade relationship between the isolated buyer and the individual seller" (5) However, the advent of mass consumption has resulted in consumers facing an information gap when they enter transactions involving the purchaser of products or the provision of services. Products are now being marketed in such a number and in such a manner that it is more difficult for consumers to judge their quality adequately. The advance of technology means that many consumer products are quite complex. Quite apart from questions of judgment, style and taste, expert knowledge is essential to appreciate the features of many modern products which fall below the threshold of perception of the ordinary consumer One author opines that "the course of innovations has thus quickly dated consumers' experience and knowledge, for example what was known about natural fibres like wool, and cotton has little bearing on the characteristics and

performance of nylon". Characterizing the US market, Ralph Nader goes so far as to argue that "consumers are being manipulated, defrauded and injured not just by marginal businesses or fly-by-night huchsters, but by the US bluechip business firms. (6)

The imbalance, if not antagonism, in the consumer/supplier relationship is highlighted by the results of various empirical surveys describing the respective legal positions of the parties. (7) For the isolated consumer, all that freedom of contract means is an obligation placed on him to comply with the terms of a contract probably pre-drafted-which he has no power to influence, generally in the absence of any alternative in the market concerned. Expressions of a specific demand and negotiation of the conditions of the transaction are made difficult, if not impossible, by the impersonality of distribution networks and the standardization of contracts. (8) Even if the consumer has the determination to negotiate the terms of a transaction before entering into it, he will still need the necessary technical and legal competence and access to the relevant information.

Moreover, several doctrinal and empirical studies have pointed to the financial, psychological and cultural barriers preventing the traditional -individualist and judicial-model of access to justice and settlement of disputes from being applied satisfactorily to the settlement of disputes arising out of relations between consumers and traders. (9) Therefore, legal rules are required to redress the natural imbalance between the individual consumer and them. (10)

Thus, imbalances and failures which arise in the course of the development of an economic system based on the free play of market forces account for the emergence of a deep seated social movement whose first demand is for the reestablishment of market conditions making for a real balance between suppliers and consumers. The purpose of consumer law thus consists in "defining standards and rules and setting up procedures and structures which serve to promote the interests of the consumers on the market. However, it extends well beyond the mere protection of economic interests of the consumers, to become part

of more general social policy on consumer affairs. (11)

1.2. CONSUMER PROTECTION AND CONSUMER LAW

It has quite aptly been mentioned in literature that one aspect of consumer protection which has failed

to receive adequate attention is the need of consumers for protection from themselves. (12) Economic development has given consumers tremendous increases in purchasing power while at the same time prompting changes in the market which have significantly weakened their bargaining position. This problem bears particularly heavily on the poor. It is now a matter of no contention that consumer protection is not simply a middle-class issue but a matter of vital importance for the less well-off members of society. (13) Despite these peculiarities, little or no development has occurred in the west in the legal concepts which govern the much altered supplier/manufacturer-consumer relationship in the market.

Behind this shadow of a long hidden vacuum in the regulation of the supplier consumer relationship, there has for some time existed a growing realization that the law as it stands does not give sufficient protection to the consumer. As a matter of fact, the term consumer is by origin an economic concept and until quite recently, it was simply foreign to legal usage and conceptualization. However, with the growing realization of the need for special legislation for the protection of consumers and only consumers, it became important to give the term consumer a fixed legal meaning.

It should, however, be kept in mind that to make for less antagonism and a more real balance between contracting parties, the legal formalization of consumer relationships or the processing of bringing them within the scope of the law, must necessarily entail the development of new regulatory instruments or adjustment, if this is sufficient, of existing rules and procedures. The various initiatives and approaches taken in this direction reflect the aims of consumer law.

According to a leading European author on the subject, consumer law comprises "the body of standards, rules and instruments representing the juridical fruit born by the various efforts that have been made to secure or improve the protection of the consumer on the economic market. By recognizing a number of consumer rights and establishing a

specific normative framework, it is conducive to the achievement of the aims of the movement seeking to promote the interests of the consumer" prominent among which is the aim to establish a balance of power between consumers and their economic partners or, probably more realistically, to define the means whereby the existing imbalance can be reduced. (14)

Some authors have tended to define consumer law either from a narrow or from a wide perspective. According to the former approach consumer law "focuses mainly on citizens entering transactions to obtain products and services from commercial enterprises... it is what is generally regarded as the thrust of consumer protection legislation, such legislation confines itself to transactions involving goods and services. (15) According to the wider view of the consumer interest, the term "consumer" is virtually equated with the term "citizen". It is said that the consumer interest is involved when citizens enter exchange relationships with institutions like hospitals, libraries, police forces and various government agencies, as well as with businesses. (16)

It has, however, been quite strongly argued that even the concept of the consumer as citizen is limited, because it implicitly accepts the existing order of things. (17) Much has been written about how advertising creates needs, generates consumption and thus perpetuates capitalism. Curbing advertising abuse does not affect this fact. It has further been argued that the notions of consumer protection may lead to such negative effects as deprivation and consequently divisions in society. (18)

In the opinion of some writers it is rather difficult to formulate a definition of consumer law of any legal value which is widely acceptable. But they opine that for practical purposes consumer law is meant to cover the rules which govern relations between professionals (producers and traders) and consumers, as well as those rules which intend to protect consumers though not directly applicable to them. (19)

In a marked departure from the above mentioned approaches it has been accepted in Sweden and other Scandinavian countries that the "legal consumer concept must be confined to private persons who are acquiring goods, services or anything else of value mainly for their own use and not for resale or use in business. (20) In this sense, it is about what the Germans call *Endverbraucher* or the ultimate consumer. Such a

delimited consumer concept has of late gained international recognition and may be traced back to the American UCC which defines consumer goods as goods "used or bought for use primarily for personal, family or household purposes". (21) However, even in Swedish legislation the notion of consumer protection law has not always been constant and has undergone changes through the years. Thus, under the Swedish Marketing Practices Act of 1975, the term was still very fuzzy and included anyone who acquired goods or services for his own use. It was not limited to private persons and seemed to include business also.

In the opinion of Professor Ulf Bernitz, leading Scandinavian expert on consumer law, the most sophisticated definition of the term is to be found in the Swedish Consumer Sales Act of 1973. (22) This Act, renewed in 1991, is applicable "where a consumer buys from merchant goods which are intended mainly for private use and which are sold in the course of the merchant's professional activities." This definition, in the opinion of Prof Bernitz is also applicable to consumer services where they are intended for private purposes rather than private use, "Consumer purchase is thus a narrower concept than non-commercial purchase and relates only to sales from a merchant to a consumer. Outside this concept are all cases where the purchaser is a businessman, a legal person or a person who mainly intends to use article in his professional activities. Transactions between private persons also fall outside the definition." (23)

Notwithstanding such a clear concept of consumer protection, confusion still creeps in as to the true legal nature of some transactions. Thus, in practice it may prove difficult for a seller to decide, within the framework of his ordinary rapid sales routines whether a purchaser is a consumer or not - a matter which according to the Swedish approach depends on the purchaser's intention in buying the goods for himself. The English method of limiting the scope of legislation on the basis of commodity groups i.e. restricting the application to what can be regarded as typical consumer goods, does not seem to help resolve the problem either. Such limitation, in the opinion of many experts, would appear to be an unnecessary curtailment of the scope of consumer protection.

Prof Bernitz rightly claims that in reality the sale to persons other than consumers of what appears to be typical consumer goods normally

takes place on standard conditions which fulfill the requirements of consumer legislation and thus seems to be in complete harmony with commercial realities. (24) Thus, in short, it may be concluded that consumer protection is the achieved or intended result of consumer policy.

1.3. AIMS OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

It is now generally accepted that consumer policy and consumer protection are concepts closely interlinked and sometimes even interchangeable. Professor Bernitz remarks that "when trying to define the scope of consumer policy, the greater part of the community activity and lawmaking is ultimately aimed at providing the individual citizens, the consumers, with protection and support in various aspects." (25)

The scope of consumer protection is quite vast and engulfs even newer interests and aspects. The Consumer Protection Charter of the Council of Europe (26) and the Consumer Policy Program adopted by the European Community in April, 1975, (27) contains what may be termed the scope of consumer protection and covers a broad spectrum of goods and services - everyday goods and consumer capital goods such as domestic appliances, cars and boats, repair and maintenance works, private houses and vacation cottages, travel and insurance as well as broader issues such as planning alternatives and costs for housing, the household and the use of leisure-time.

Although the scope of these objects may be identical to that in Nordic countries, the latter do not regard consumer protective aims to be fundamental rights as has been done in the above mentioned two European documents.

The aims of consumer protection require the fulfillment of several conditions which *inter alia* include the following:

- i) Consumer information, without which it is almost impossible for the consumer to exercise his real freedom of choice. Information is required primarily in three areas: the quality and safety of goods and services available on the market; the price of goods and

services offered and the rights that consumers can exercise in their dealings with suppliers; (28)

- ii) a genuine network of legal advice services which are readily accessible and competent in consumer affairs;
- iii) there must be effective protection of consumers against excessive examples of imbalance in their relations with suppliers;
- iv) consumers must be given real opportunities to defend their rights and obtain redress for any damage suffered;
- v) consumers must be involved, through consultation and representation, in decision making, not only by public authorities but actually within companies which affect their interests. Participation by consumers in the law making process is an essential factor in the development of specific consumer law; vi) education on consumer problems needs to be organized, so that the citizen is in a position to make active use of the legal aid which it is intended to make available to him. In a broad sense, law reform has to be accompanied by consumer education since there is no denying the fact that "you cannot legislate for fools."

This enumeration of the types of action needed to promote consumers interests provides an accurate indication of the fields in which consumer law should come to play, foremost among which are:

- a) protection against risks of physical injury to persons or property and against useless products,
- b) protection against improper marketing measures and inadequate information,
- c) protection against one-sided contract terms and risks of economic damage,
- d) provision of effective and impulsive dispute resolution procedures for the consumer,
- e) monitoring of the mechanism whereby prices and rates are fixed on the consumer goods and services market,

f) surveillance of practices or agreements jeopardizing the competitive structure of a market sector,

g) planning of a consumer education programme.

The edifice of law that must be constructed on these institutions is bound to mark a significant departure from the conventional principles of the liberal legal system, denouncing the imaginary protections which is all that the consumer can expect of it. The instruments that it are called to use are drawn from various traditional categories of law: the mechanisms of private law, the rules of economic control, civil, administrative and criminal sanctions, the rules of prejudicial or judicial proceedings etc. Prof. Bernitz summarizes the picture in the following words: It calls for several bold reform and new interpretations: greater formalism in contracts, increased responsibilities for suppliers to provide consumers with positive information, compulsory definition of certain clauses in contracts, introduction of mechanisms departing from the ordinary law of contract to give consumers an opportunity to think things over, introduction of bans or requirements for prior authorization under public or administrative law, etc. (29)

Thus, we can conclude that consumer protection is a large area, covering a diverse range of laws and policies. It includes such topics as the regulation of market-place relations (contract terms, advertising), the establishment of health and safety standards for products sold to consumers, and regulation of the provision of certain services (credit, professions, public services etc.) In short, consumer protection law is designed to protect citizens/consumers against injuries thought to occur in unregulated markets. (30)

Consumers have sought protection through legislation because the general laws and market forces have failed to provide it. Many consumer protection laws either relate to the terms and conditions of contracts that consumers make with suppliers for the supply of goods and services, or to conduct intended to encourage the making of such contracts (marketing, packaging, advertising and provision of information). Previous laws, especially the law of contracts, assumed that the parties to contracts are legally equal in

terms of power and information. In substance, in real markets, almost invariably consumers have markedly less power and information than suppliers. The law deems the action of a consumer in buying a commodity to be the making of a contract-in theory a free, consensual act. In practice, the legal consequences are attributed to the action by the law without any consideration of what the consumer actually knows or wants. The common law of contracts simply cannot afford consumers the protection they probably would seek if they were rational, fully informed, and equal in economic power to the supplier. Because contract law offers an inadequate basis for an equitable legal transaction, it must be modified by legislation in order to afford greater protection to consumers than they can negotiate individually for themselves.

1.4. Consumer Protection *Laws* in the Global World.

Since 1960 most developed countries with commonlaw legal systems, the nations of Europe and most recently of Asia have enacted significant consumer protection legislation. (31) Such laws are national, and operate only within the geographical limits of the enacting jurisdiction, except where conflict of laws rules permit them to be applied as part of the law of some other country. (32) Attempts to apply such existing laws to activities outside the geographical boundaries of the enacting state might prove ineffective. Examples include marketing and sale of goods or services (including financial services) online through the Internet or satellite TV by suppliers who are in remote areas, often beyond the reach of legal process.

If consumers (and groups who are similarly disempowered through social fragmentation, such as employees) are to be able to participate in markets on even a rough approximation of equal terms with suppliers, there must be both a geographically-defined arena in which there can be a political contest of interests and a countervailing political force. If it is impossible to locate production, marketing, distribution and trade in goods and services in a defined physical and juristic locality, no legal control is possible.

The popularity of the Internet is rapidly growing. (33) Until recently, the Internet was confined to academic use but now an increasing number of

businesses set up their Internet sites and offer pages in the World Wide Web (WWW). They offer goods and services to customers, who usually pay by credit card or electronic cash. In the case of sale of goods the only physical transaction is the shipping of the goods. If the contract is for the supply of services on the Internet (e.g. supply of software or database access) no physical transaction takes place at all. The vast majority of those contracts are consumer contracts, the supplier being a professional business and the purchaser being a natural person usually buying goods or services for private purposes. In a considerable amount of contracts the purchaser might act in the course of business and will thus be in a position different from that of a genuine consumer in terms of consumer protection. The appearance of retail business on the Internet presents a factual pattern never seen before. Cross-border transaction used to be the concern of big enterprises and wholesalers, with retail sales confined to special areas and market niches. The Internet has changed that. Now thousands of consumer contracts are being made every day with the supplier and purchaser almost inevitably situated in different countries. Moreover, in a world wide computer network, where it is not possible to trace the location of the other party to the contract, (34) traditional choice-of-law terms such as "place of business", "place of performance", "place where the contract was made" seem to become meaningless.

What is the applicable law to consumer contracts for supply of goods and services made via the Internet? Which courts have jurisdiction to hear the case? These questions are not only of academic interest but their answers imply dramatic practical consequences both for the courts and for people doing business on the Internet. If the consumer receives defective goods or if he regrets having made the purchase, he wants to know where to sue the supplier and which law governs his right for damages or withdrawal respectively. The supplier, on the other hand, might find himself confronted with foreign consumer protection law which he does not know. Uncertainty is an obstacle to economic activity.

2.1. Consumer Protection Law: The Bangladesh context

Any inquiry into the problem of consumer protection in a least developed country like Bangladesh should begin with the existing fundamental difference between consumer protection philosophy in the developed and in the developing countries of the world. While a consumer in a developed economy is literally submerged in an ocean of alternative choices, his counterpart in a developing economy suffers from acute lack of purchasing power. So for him the question is not 'What to buy, but How to buy' Hence, from a third world point of view, most important consumer right is the right to satisfaction of basic needs, which under pressure from the developing countries was subsequently incorporated as one of the eight basic rights of consumers in the UN Guidelines for Consumer protection.(35) The remaining consumer rights, now internationally recognized, are the right to safety, right to be informed, the right to complaints and representation, the right to choose and get things at fair price, the right to get compensation, the right to consumer education and the right to health; environment. Needless to say that in a country like Bangladesh where "poverty for the great majority of the people is a grim struggle for survival"(36) consumer rights have little, any, practical appeal to general people. The government, on the other hand, could not also attach due importance to consumer protection since the inception of this tiny nation-state.

Consumer movement in Bangladesh, to put it plainly, is still in its nascent stage, Consumer vigilance grows with literacy and knowledge. Only 29.2 percent of total population in the country is literate (37). This explains why "consumer movement is a complicated social step in our present socio-economic condition. Unlimited desire for profiteering having no control brings unbearable sufferings for the consumers and particularly for the people of limited income as they cannot adjust themselves with the great and sudden change in price level. At present with the price hike, adulterated and imitated articles of essential goods flooded the market and no protest and agitation from the innocent and silent consumers is making the situation all the more worse"(38). The vast population is revolving in the vicious circle of poverty, illiteracy and fatalism. They blame their luck and accept the subhuman life as natural (39). Under existing

socio-economic and political circumstances the attention of the government has been shifted to more urgent necessities and not withstanding the decision of the 1990 Bangkok Conference of the countries of Asia and the Pacific to adopt by 1995, consumer protection measures in the member-states in accordance with the UN Guidelines, 1985, no practical, unidirectional step has yet been taken in Bangladesh.

2.1.1 CONSUMER PROTECTION LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The specific constitutional provision which paved the way for consumer protection legislation in Bangladesh is stated in Article 18 of the constitution (40):

"The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties, and in particular shall adopt effective measures to prevent the consumption, except for medical purposes or for such other purposes as may be prescribed by law, of alcoholic and other intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health."

Moreover, it may be inferred from Article 15 of the Constitution which makes provision of basic necessities a fundamental responsibility of the state, that the responsibility of the state to provide education would also include consumer education in the sense the term has been used in the UN Guidelines, 1985.

Both the above mentioned articles of the Constitution though are defined as non-enforceable in the courts of law, contemporary jurisprudence attaches to them high degree of significance and even interprets them in a manner as to establish their binding nature in legal proceedings.(41) Furthermore, these constitutional provisions indicate the importance attached to the nutritional status of the people and basic principles and measures for protection of consumers from health hazard products, processes and services.

2.1.2 Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009 (CRPA)

2.1.2.1. Brief History of Enactment of the CRPA, 2009

Legal protection of consumer rights in Bangladesh has been quite

palatable, to say the least. Unorganized consumers, otherwise helpless before the powerful 'tradesmen' have been feeling the extreme need of effective legal protection of their rights since long. The process of formulating special comprehensive consumer protection law began in 1992 when the then commerce minister pledged to enact such legislation. However, the real work began in July, 1994 when a 21 member Committee under the leadership of the commerce secretary was formed to draft this law. Subsequently, a sub-committee was established in 1995 to carry forward the task. After numerous consultations with members of the civil society, consumer organizations and experts a draft law titled "Consumer Rights Protection Bill, 1998" was tabled. This Bill was put into public scrutiny by the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB) and on 5 January, 1999 the Ministry of Commerce forwarded the Bill to the Cabinet for its approval. The cabinet however, returned the Bill for further consultation with concerned ministries. The Bill was resent to the Cabinet on 5 May, 1999. The Cabinet forwarded the draft to the Law Commission on 28 October of the same year for latter's comments. The Law Commission returned the Bill to the Commerce Ministry on 29 October, 2000 which in turn sent the draft to the Ministry of Law for vetting. This was completed by September 2001 and the draft was once again referred to the Cabinet for approval. Once again the Cabinet instead of approving the draft formed another six member Secretarial Committee to re-examine the draft law. This Committee finished its task in June, 2004 and sent it to the cabinet. The Cabinet meeting of 9 August, 2004 in principle resolved to 'approve' the draft subject to a number of amendments and guidelines. The cabinet discussed the amended draft in its meeting on 30 January, 2006 and directed the Commerce Ministry to reintroduce the draft 'after further examination' sometime in the future. An inter-ministerial meeting was also held in 2006 to consider the draft legislation but the meeting ended without any decision.

After the Care Taker Government took over power on 11 January, 2007, it promised to enact consumer protection law 'within next two months'.

But once again everything came to a stand still. Incidentally, the time coincided with unusual price hike of daily necessities and the caretaker government directed the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) to conduct open market sale of consumer food commodities. Very soon the BDR felt the need of strong consumer protection law to fight continuing price hike and with assistance from CAB who prepared a draft "Consumer Rights Protection Ordinance, 2007" and sent it to the concerned ministry for further necessary action. The President signed the ordinance on 6 October, 2008 and it was gazetted on 13 October, 2008.

The fate of this ordinance became uncertain after national elections in December, 2008 when a new government came to power. The new government, for obvious reasons, wanted to distance itself from enactments made by the immediate past military backed Caretaker government. However, after much wrangling, in the very first session of the parliament the 'Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009' (42) was passed unanimously ushering in a new epoch for the consumers of Bangladesh.

2.2. The CRPA, 2009: A Declaration of Rights for the Bangladesh consumers

Consumer protection issues draw attention only when citizens begin complaining with relative frequency that commercial entities are abusing the liberties offered by a market economy. Moreover consumer protection law can increase the costs of business activity by dictating the boundaries of lawful commercial practice and mandating expensive remedies for consumers who have been injured by prohibited conduct. The CRPA, 2009 (43) has come at an opportune time. Thousands of new independent producers and sellers of goods and services have emerged in the country and the numbers and range of commercial activities are expanding at an accelerating rate. As the new breed of entrepreneurs proliferates, the potential for unfair or deceptive conduct increases. History has shown that the expansion of free markets invariably yields a familiar pattern of consumer complaints. There is no reason to believe that the experience in

Bangladesh will be any different. The need to minimize consumer dissatisfaction with unfair commercial practices is present in all nations, because critics of free enterprise abound and suspicions of market principles run deep. If large numbers of consumers perceive the new "Wild west capitalists" as unfairly taking advantage of their market autonomy and if no effective redress exists the movement against market reforms may be fueled. This reaction may be especially strong when the benefits of a market economy seem meager to the majority of citizens as inflation and unemployment rates soar, while a rich minority prospers. Effective consumer protection laws can help counter anti-market attitudes by giving consumers reason to believe that this aspect of the system while not perfect at least strives to be fair. In addition consumer protection legislation can support the privatization of industry-an essential ingredient in the economic reform movement. Consumer laws can ease concerns about privatizing state enterprises. When an enterprise has no effective competition there is little economic penalty for producing inferior (or even unsafe) products or for engaging in deceptive and injurious commercial behavior in an effort to maximize profits. Unless the product is a luxury, consumers cannot simply choose to avoid dealing with the monopolist. If effectively enforced the laws can give consumer redress against a monopolist's abuse of market power and enhance consumer welfare until effective competition evolves. Consumer protection laws can also provide safeguards for privatizing industries that regulators may perceive as too health sensitive or safety related to place in private hands such as chemicals, alcohol or pharmaceutical production and processing. They can help assure the public that the purity and quality of such products will not be compromised by a private owner who may be tempted to seek short term gain at the expense of consumer welfare.

The newly enacted law is predominantly concerned with elevating the status of consumers *vis- a- vis* sellers and service providers and in this respect it matters little whether the merchant is the state or a private entrepreneur. The provisions of the law reflect the central premise of many consumer laws: *an individual is not likely to have the knowledge or economic power to engage in a meaningful bargaining process with a merchant over many contract terms.*

The CRPA's provisions elevate the legal status of consumers when they purchase goods and services. The proposed law essentially sets forth an elaborate "bill of rights" for consumers that cannot be infringed by contract. (*sec.20*). The result is a package of legal protections that meet those afforded consumers in many economies. The law focuses on three areas of consumer protection: product labeling, misleading advertising and mandatory product and service standards would if developed farther help our consumer markets operate more efficiently. The law also discusses the enforcement mechanisms and suggests that the promise of the law's substantive provisions may be undermined unless a more "consumer friendly" enforcement scheme is introduced.

The Bangladesh law follow the modern trend to fulfill albeit imperfectly consumers natural expectations about the safety and quality of goods and services. In so doing the law avoids some of the troublesome legal doctrines that have hindered consumers in other nations. Most of the provisions of the CRPA take a transactional approach focusing on the rights and remedies of consumers who have purchased defective products (*Sections 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48*) or have engaged the services of a provider who does not perform satisfactorily (*Sections 45, 52,53*). It deals principally with two of the three concepts familiar to Western consumerists: claims for personal injury or property damage resulting from the use of a defective product, i.e. (1) product liability claims for the lost value of the defective product itself and (2) liability for the performance of defective services. The third essential concept, that of warranty liability, is however missing in the CRPA, 2009. In each of these areas the CRPA promise consumers a multitude of benefits and creates some restrictions on entrepreneurial freedom.

2.2.1 Product Liability

Under the traditional civil law of most Western nations, an enterprise was not liable for injuries resulting from its products unless the consumer proved that the enterprise was reckless or negligent in the design or manufacture of the article. In a world when goods are often mass produced in complex manufacturing processes involving many individuals and component parts, consumers often found it difficult

to pinpoint the negligent act or omission that caused the defect. To ease these difficulties courts in several nations (e.g. Germany, England, Denmark and the Netherlands) reversed the burden of proof and began requiring the producer to prove that it did not act negligently. (44) Despite these reforms however, consumers still found it difficult to succeed on product liability claims. As a result, legislation and court decisions over the past more than a quarter century have created 'no fault' or 'strict liability' as the standard in international commerce. The consumer must only prove that the product had a defect and that the defect caused an injury to his person or property.

The CRPA provisions governing "obligations resulting from the infliction of damage" is the analog to tort liability in the West and for the last thirty years it also made fault the general basis of recovery. Although there was a presumption of fault if a defect caused injury, the producer could overcome this presumption by proving its compliance with all known safety precautions. Under the CRPA, 2009 liability can be avoided (burden to prove 'no-fault' may be shifted to the complainant-consumer) only when the damage occurred notwithstanding compliance of standards. As in other strict liability systems the law's central issue is causation, not fault and thus can be viewed as a partial return to the civil law liability.

The CRPA law is silent in determining who is liable when a defect causes injury. In much of Europe the producer of a product can be held strictly liable in tort on the theory that the existence of a defect is evidence that some aspect of the design or manufacturing process was unsafe, but the non-producing retail seller usually cannot. This is because in the modern world a retailer is usually a mere distributor of the product and has no voice in the design or manufacturing process. The EC product liability directive incorporates this view though a retail seller can be held liable under special circumstances. Such as when it places its own trade name on the product (thereby assuming the appearance of a producer) or when it cannot identify the producer upon inquiry by the consumer.

The Bangladesh CRPA, 2009 creates an apparently unique two-

tier product liability system in which the seller and producer share responsibility. If a product causes injury during a warranty period or before any stated expiration date, it appears that both the seller and the producer can be held liable.

It is apprehended that the CRPA, 2009 further extends a retail seller's liability to all consumers injured by the product even those who had no contractual relationship with the seller thereby making unavailable the so-called "horizontal privity" defense. In many countries if a retail seller is liable for consumer injuries at all only the injured buyer (and perhaps members of the buyer's family who are injured) may claim damages. Bystanders or other product user may have no recourse against the retail seller since they did not enter into a contract with the seller. Therefore, their only resort would be a possible tort claim against the producer. The CRPA's apparently liberal attitude may encourage third party claims against the seller. To the average consumer it makes no sense to say that a seller must compensate for the buyer's injuries but not for those of a person who borrowed the product from the buyer or who was standing next to the buyer when the product caused the damage.

An extended interpretation of *Sec.4* of the CRPA, 2009 though may make it possible for two-tier product liability involving the producer and the seller, sections 78 (1) and 78 (2) provide safeguards for "innocent" sellers if such sellers had no prior involvement with manufacturing of the products.

The law leaves open the possibility, however, that producers who possess substantially more economic power than retailers will be able to insulate themselves from indemnity liability in their distribution contracts. This is more than a theoretical possibility in the initial years because many manufacturers will still be large enterprises some possessing near monopoly power and many retailers will be small entrepreneurs just entering the market.

From a consumer perspective however, the two-tier liability scheme strikes a fair accommodation. If a defect causes injury shortly after the purchase the consumer can seek redress from the retail seller who in most cases will be located near the consumer's

home. This often will be less costly than pursuing the manufacturer who may be difficult to identify or located in a distant location. More importantly it also means that the seller will compensate the consumer if the manufacturer cannot be located or has gone out of business.

2.2.2 Service Liability

The consumer protection programs of most nations focus primarily on the sale of goods. Comprehensive regulation of consumer services (e.g. appliance, repairs, dry cleaning, home improvement, construction) is less common not because services are less important to consumers but because the quality of services is more difficult to monitor and influence through general legislation. For goods the object of control is a tangible product often mass produced in standardized form and sold through non-producing merchants. Product quality can be evaluated by comparing it to other similar products. For services the object of control is not simply a tangible item although a product may be the result. A service is a variable human activity often performed by individuals or small businesses directly for the consumer. The object of concern is often not just the result of the service (e.g. a properly cleaned suit), but also the way in which the service was performed (e.g. in a timely professional manner). Contract terms are generally more negotiable because services are more personal to each consumer. Moreover, standards of acceptable quality may vary widely among consumers and producers in various service sectors. Delays in the construction trade for instance may be tolerated much more readily than delays in dry cleaning or refrigerator repair, or in a hospital.

In the absence of general legislation protecting consumers against delayed or defective services consumers often must turn to the common law of contracts. The safeguards provided therein can be inadequate, however, because the rules often are not mandatory, the provider is usually allowed to draft a contract insulating itself from their effect. In some nations this problem has been addressed in part by legislator prohibiting specifically enumerated unfair contract terms in service agreements (e.g. the German Standard Contracts Act.) thereby making it more difficult to avoid liability by

contract. In Anglo American systems specific unfair terms may be prohibited by consumer laws while others may be deemed unenforceable under the common law principle of unconscionability. Unfortunately, the CRPA, 2009 does not provide any protection against 'unfair contract terms' or 'one sided contracts' to the detriment of the weak and isolated consumers

The modern trend is to regulate services more comprehensively through industry specific control measures. Three types of regulation are common but each has its limitations. The government may require the licensing of service providers in designated sectors (lawyers, doctors, plumbers, hairdressers) as a means of ensuring that work is performed by qualified professionals. Consumers can benefit from licensing requirements that are properly enforced, but only to a limited degree because once the license is obtained there is no assurance that a specific service will be performed in a satisfactory way. A second protective device is more transaction specific- the direct regulation of certain industries by dictating acceptable and prohibited activities.

Legislation of this type tends to target commercial sectors that historically have provoked a high number of consumer complaints such as correspondence courses, travel promotions, auto repair shops, banking services and insurance. Laws are often drafted with the participation of the target industry and consumer representatives. While effective at times this approach is piecemeal and leaves many service sectors unregulated. A third type of sector specific regulation is the informal cooperation of industry representatives, consumers and government regulators who agree on standard contracts: Codes of practice and performance criteria for that industry. These "soft law" approaches have occasionally been successful particularly in the developed economies of North America and Europe, but there are drawbacks. The standards are usually enforceable only on members of the industry who choose to abide by them thus leaving unregulated those who fail to comply out of neglect and even worse, the unscrupulous providers who most egregiously harm consumer interests. Consumer interests often are under-represented in the development of the rules, and businesses tend to focus on self-regulation that restricts competition or limits access to the market.

And as with piecemeal legislation entire service sectors may avoid regulation by not agreeing to any soft law standards.

The CRPA, 2009 creates basic rights and remedies applicable to all service providers. But it does not contemplate the use of sector-specific regulations. Its framework primarily addresses the problems of delayed and defective performance of services.

2.2.3 Advertising and Other Representations

The other significant provisions of the CRPA, 2009 deal with misleading information and advertising. The law provides that consumers have recourse against a purveyor of misleading or incomplete information in three situations: (1) if the product does not exhibit the advertised characteristics (*Sec.44, 45*) (2) if the consumer cannot use the product "as intended" (*Sec.37*) and (3) if the consumer or his property is injured as a result of a misleading or incomplete statement (*Sec.37, 40, 44, 45,47,48,49 etc.*).

Experience has shown that it is difficult to define an "unfair" advertisement or a term like "misleading" information narrowly enough to give adequate notice of prohibited conduct. A considerable problem with drafting general standards is that advertisement often conveys ambiguous messages and its effects depend on the various inferences consumers draw from the representations. Generic definitions of unfair or misleading advertising such as those in the EC directives tend to be vague and give businesses little notice of the point at which an advertisement goes beyond being merely persuasive, rhetorical or clever and becomes unlawfully misleading or unfair to a competitor. Even truthful advertising can be misleading when it places undue emphasis on selective information or provides only tangentially relevant information that has little connection with the product. Consequently most advertising is misleading to some but not all consumers. A law that seeks generally to define misleading information or unlawful comparative advertising for all industries and for all consumers as in the EC directives and in many national laws runs the risk of inhibiting legitimate marketing practices unfairly punishing entrepreneurs through selective enforcement of the law and ultimately restricting the flow of information.

The temptation to over-regulate in the name of consumer protection is important to resist in any nation but the costs can be particularly severe in a developing market economy. Government mandates on matter that might otherwise be left to the discretion of entrepreneurs can be economically inefficient and stifle creativity. Compositional standards that prescribe a method of preparation and product contents restrict the variety of goods marketed. This deprives consumers of the choice to buy good which are less expensive though perhaps qualitatively inferior.

As smaller operators begin to test their entrepreneurial skills and as large state enterprises are dismantled through privatization programs experimentation and creativity should be encouraged. Innovation has risks, however and more consumers may be affected by defective products or services produced under free markets at least until the inefficient or unscrupulous merchants either change their ways or fail. If regulators have the patience to wait until markets mature and if consumers can effectively enforce the consumer protection act against merchants supplying defective goods and services in the interim economic prosperity may be more quickly realized. Excessive regulatory conditions can also have an adverse effect on trade and foreign investment. There are inherent conflicts between protecting consumers and encouraging trade. On the one hand, open borders can cause consumers problems Products made in other countries may be manufactured under less restrictive consumer protection laws and could enter the domestic market posing unknown risks. Moreover, obtaining redress from foreign firms that harm Bangladesh citizens may be difficult. On the other hand, consumers can benefit from the removal of trade barriers.

Imports and direct foreign investment can be critical in supplying desperately needed consumer goods until domestic production can satisfy demand. Moreover imports and foreign investment can increase competition in industries that currently exhibit monopolistic characteristics by offering investment can increase competition in industries that currently exhibit monopolists and eventually lower prices.

3.1. Establishing Adequate Enforcement Mechanisms

It is common knowledge that consumer laws have little practical meaning without mechanisms which allow consumers to seek a quick, inexpensive and fair resolution of disputes. Traditional approaches to enforcement focus on three areas: (1) individual action through citizen claims pursued in the courts or other forums: (2) collective actions by consumer organizations, and (3) government prosecution of criminal and civil consumer protection laws. The CRPA, 2009 however, in essence provides for the third model i.e. government prosecution of civil and criminal consumer protection laws (*Chapters 5, 6 and 7*). Although the law outlines an enforcement framework involving each of these mechanisms and includes several provisions designed to encourage compliance with the law, the enforcement scheme suffers from a heavy reliance on traditional court enforcement. Even here too the sovereignty of an individual consumer to redress grievances by way of accessing the court has been heavily curtailed by the CRPA, 2009. The Act bars individual consumers to seek any relief through litigation under the CRPA. He may choose to go to the court under other laws having relevance for consumer rights. Majority of these scattered laws are of British Indian or Pakistani origin and have over the years proved their total incapacity and inadequacy to protect consumer rights. The only organ enjoying the right to access the court in consumer rights is the Directorate of Consumer Rights Protection, more specifically the Director General (DG) of the said body or any other official so authorized by the DG (*Section 60*). Unless fundamental changes are made to enable individual enforcement and promote consumers collective interests more efficiently few practical benefits will be realized from the CRPA, 2009.

3.1.1 Individual Enforcement through Courts and Other Dispute Resolution Mechanism

Citizens' experience with law can have a profound influence on their attitudes toward consumer protection. Consumers in a market economy generally do not expect government to directly control the commercial activities of entrepreneurs. Rather they realize that businesses are given freedom to conduct their operations as they choose limited only by the legal rules that purport to ensure basic fairness, When a

merchant breaks the rules and refuses to offer a voluntary remedy consumers look to the law for redress and can pursue remedies through private action in the courts or other tribunals, As new abuses of the market expose gaps in the existing law consumers may put pressure on legislators to enact further protective legislation.

Consumers in all nations often find it difficult to obtain redress through conventional judicial proceedings. Not only that they are usually unfamiliar with the law, their claims (absent severe personal injury) often involve small amounts of money, so litigation cost can easily exceed the amount of the claim. Thus consumers tend to abandon their claims rather than pursue an economically unprofitable course. On the other side businesses are typically "repeat players" in legal controversies. They have more expertise in legal matters and possess economies of scale that allow for more efficient litigation. They also have an incentive to litigate for the creation of precedent as well as for immediate gain: as a recurrent litigant they are willing to expend resources to influence the making of legal rules. Thus even when a consumer initiates a legal action success can be difficult to achieve. Despite the numerous difficulties consumers face in relying on the courts to protect consumer right enforcement by individual consumers through private actions has been important in common-law systems where judges have enforced or even created consumer rights when legislatures have delayed taking remedial action. Judicial decisions can have a wide reaching precedential effect and thus can secure a benefit to the public at large even though the decision is based on the facts in a particular case. Court actions are effective in part because judges are presented with real fact situations and actual injury to individuals. This stands in contrast to the hypothetical debates undertaken in legislatures or government agencies when they decide issues of public law.

3.2. Private Enforcement in Bangladesh

Despite their cognitive appeal private judicial actions seem unlikely to play a major role in guaranteeing consumer rights in Bangladesh. Certain characteristics of our judicial system reduce the effectiveness of private actions. The court system is presently ill-equipped to resolve consumer disputes, judges command little respect, seldom decide cases involving merchants and were not especially

trained in commercial laws and practices. In addition expert lawyers in Bangladesh are still relatively scarce-so obtaining effective assistance of counsel may be difficult for some time. Further, class action as well as contingent fees have not been recognized .The CRPA is also silent on these issues.

Not only is our legal system ill-equipped to resolve consumer complaints on a large scale, our people are simply not inclined toward litigation. Citizens generally not expect the courts to dispense justice fairly. It may be years before citizens reinvent their confidence to view the courts as trustworthy guarantors of their rights. They may therefore be reluctant to initiate consumer complaints in the courts even when they have sufficient knowledge and financial resources to do so. Litigation tends to be competitive aggressive undertaking. Consumer lawsuits are contests between individuals and they generally result in winners and losers. From a cultural perspective the people may find litigation less appealing than other forms of dispute resolution.

Unfortunately, the CRPA does not provide for arrangements for low cost arbitration or mediation inherent in our legal culture. Such an informal dispute resolution system has obvious advantages over litigation. Procedures are simpler and less cumbersome and decision makers try to mediate a settlement in order to avoid the lengthy litigation process.

There may however be hidden costs. Decision makers in arbitrations and other informal tribunals may have inadequate legal training and often seek a rough sense *of* justice rather than adhering to the law. Since the CRPA creates a generous (and often 'vague') assortment of consumer rights, this may work to the claimant's disadvantage. Nevertheless, since consumers are often unrepresented by counsel in small matters they find it difficult to argue the technical application of the law anyway so the "rough justice" aspect of informal dispute resolution may ultimately disfavor consumer more often than not. To the extent this deficiency is deemed significant it can be remedied by making the decisions nonbinding on the parties. The informal resolution would be a prerequisite to suit in the courts and would likely resolve a large percentage of claims while leaving the consumer the option of bringing a court action at a later date.

However, a better alternative is a small claims court that has jurisdiction to resolve matters involving small amounts of money. Procedures in a small claims court are simplified, but the ruling is made by a judge after receiving both written and oral evidence. The decision is usually binding on the parties with a limited right to appeal. Unlike informal private mediation or arbitration proceedings however, small claims proceeding- which are a matter of public record-have the advantage of providing a greater opportunity for the government to publicize consumer victories and thereby extend the benefits of the decision to the public at large. In a country where class actions are not allowed and tort cases are rare publicizing consumers victories can be the principal means of empowering consumers collectively through individual initiative.

If the procedures in a small claims court are readily understandable and the amount in controversy is low the consumer will usually not need the services of a lawyer. Consumers might benefit from a small claims tribunal specifically designed to resolve minor consumer problems. The jurisdiction of the small claims judge could be limited to particular categories of claims (e.g. disputes between consumers and merchants, service providers or landlords). To encourage settlements the small claims judges could mediate the dispute and not merely sit in the traditional role of an impartial decision maker Since the amount in controversy will be low, a small claims law could provide for only a limited right of appeal. Appeal would be allowed for example only when the appellate court deems the case important for precedential value, when new evidence has surfaced after the hearing or when the judge clearly relied on an incorrect interpretation of the law. This can further reduce costs and ensure a faster resolution of the claim.

3.3.1 The Importance of Educating the Public

Even the most easily accessible dispute resolution schemes cannot succeed unless consumers are aware of their rights and know how to pursue them. Consumer education is therefore a critical part of any private enforcement scheme and here the CRPA is deemed inadequate. Consumer education is especially important in countries like ours where vast majority of consumers are illiterate. Education can assist consumers in better understanding their economy, influence

their expectations concerning the strengths and weaknesses of market economies and promote greater knowledge of the laws that have been enacted to protect their interests. Education can thereby help ease some of the dissatisfaction that is bound to exist until the economy is operating more efficiently.

Consumer education in school curricula is mandatory in some nations. Critical concepts need not be taught *as* separate subjects but can be incorporated into instruction on economics, ecology, political science, communications, journalism and other subjects. Important messages to convey include the theoretical operation of market forces, the role consumers and consumer organization play in policing market behavior, the appropriate mechanisms for obtaining redress for personal and economic injury and the function of advertising and the mass media in market activity. In addition, general instruction in business ethics could provide a moral foundation for tomorrow's entrepreneurs.

Effective educational programs outside the schools may be more difficult to design and implement. Many individuals have little interest in consumer protection issues until they have been victimized by an unfair contract or otherwise injured by an unscrupulous business practice. To counter this tendency many nations have initiated adult consumer education programs through the broadcast of television and radio shows, the publication of consumer magazines and the distribution of short pamphlets, buying guides or even comic books written in easily understood language. These may be sponsored by the National Consumer Rights Protection Council (NCRPC- *Sec.5*) responsible for consumer education. It is indeed encouraging that the CRPA provides for Consumer Rights Protection Council at various levels of administration (*District, Upazilla and Union, sections 10,11,12,13*) with overwhelming civil society participation. The local level consumer protection councils can provide individualized information on the quality of products sold locally as well as guidance in resolving post-purchase complaints.

Consumer organizations in Bangladesh may find it difficult to guard the collective interests of consumers. Consumers have differing interests, priorities, economic circumstances and views of morality.

They consume different goods and services at different times from a variety of sellers and providers. In all democratic nations this makes it difficult for a broad-based consumer organization to build a consensus and offset the influence of business interests whose concerns and resources are more concentrated. This may delay the development of influential grass roots organizations with the ability to represent consumers effectively on a broad spectrum of issues.

More problematic however, is the lack of money. Consumer organizations everywhere find it difficult to raise money in large part due to a "free rider" problem. When a consumer organization successfully obtains a policy change (through negotiation, litigation or lobbying efforts) the change benefits many consumers even those who are not part of the organization and did not contribute to the effort. This psychology makes it difficult for consumer groups to attract dues-paying members. As a result, completely private consumer organizations have flourished in only a few nations. They have typically done so by offering individual benefits to their members such as subscription to magazines that contain product testing data and other evaluative information about consumer goods and services. Profits from the magazines go in part to collective lobbying and litigation efforts.

Bangladesh lawmakers should consider funding consumer organizations to some extent at least in the first few years of the CRPA's life. Because the efforts of consumer groups can benefit the public at large, it is appropriate to allocate general tax revenue to such organizations just as other public goods such as food and drug testing bureaus, road construction and national defense are funded by taxes. For the same reason professional and trade associations require the payment of dues when collective efforts benefit all members yet individual constituents are naturally willing to let someone else pay for the service. There is some evidence that in other countries modest subsidies to consumer associations have wielded high payoffs.

To some extent government funding runs the risk of compromising the independence of the organization. As government departments find their regulatory policies called into question and as influential state run enterprises begin to confront consumer organizations on a regular basis, government officials who can influence funding decisions may

begin directly or indirectly pressuring the organizations to temper their activities or shift priorities. Protecting against this conflict of interest may require new legislative framework designed to insulate consumer organizations from party politics in matters of priorities, policies, personnel and budget.

4. LIMITATIONS OF THE CRPA, 2009

The CRPA, 2009 is heralded as a 'landmark' in consumer rights protection initiatives in the country. It is a bold step to come out of the legislative impasse concerning rights of the consumer. The definition of a 'consumer' as *inter alia* "any person who buys products for earning his livelihood and uses it for a commercial purpose as a means of self-employment" (*Section 2 (19) (GA)*) is a marked improvement over the usually recognized definition of a consumer. Defining a consumer thus has made it possible to overcome the limitations of defining a consumer as the 'ultimate user' for example, in the Indian Consumer Protection Act of 1986. Nonetheless, despite its otherwise innovative character the CRPA, 2009 is not totally free from several loopholes. Some of these weaknesses of the Act are as follows:

- a) the composition of the NCRPC (*Sec.5*) appears to be tilting towards predominance of the bureaucracy vis-à-vis members of the consumer groups and civil society. Even the members of the civil society as represented in this body are to be nominated by the government making it awkwardly possible to give it a partisan face.
- b) The provisions relating to limitation in filing of a complaint within 30 days (*Sec.60*) of the inception of the cause of action curtails consumer's autonomy to get redress;
- c) The provision in *Section 61* of the Act relating to lack of any remedy if the Directorate fails to move the court within 90 days of filing of the complaint by a consumer virtually leads to denial of justice for the consumer. Not only that the consumer is denied justice, the law is silent on the consequences of such failure on the part of the Directorate making the CRPA a mockery of consumer rights protection;
- d) The Act also fails to provide for any alternative forum for redressal

of consumer complaints making it easier for business to trample the provisions of the Act;

- e) The law fails to provide any safeguard to the consumers from 'one-sided' or 'unfair' contract terms;
- f) Though the Act provides for product and service liability albeit for defective or delayed product and service performance, it has largely compromised on strict liability of the manufacturer/sellers and thus favours the tradesmen at the cost of consumers;
- g) The CRPA similarly does not provide any mechanism for monitoring of standards of services;
- h) The law quite surprisingly fails to take into account latest developments in the market, both commodity and service markets and thus fails to address issues like correspondence courses, coaching centres, higher education in private institutions, higher education abroad etc.;
- i) For some unknown reasons, the law does not define 'misleading' or 'unfair' advertisement
- j) Similarly, the Act does not address issues of consumer rights protection in situations of e-commerce and internet trading;
- k) Two of the most ludicrous provisions of the Act are *sections 72 and 73* wherein it is mentioned that the DG of the National Consumer Rights Protection Directorate (*Chapter 3*) shall enjoy the authority to investigate incidences of fake or adulterated medicine and violations of health services rights by private health sector but cannot draw any proceedings against the perpetrators. He can 'merely' inform the Secretary, Ministry of Health and the DG of the CRPD of such violations!

5. CONCLUSION

A close examination of the CRPA, 2009 shows that it can at best be used as the first stepping stone towards formulating an effective consumer protection legislative framework in the future. In its present form, it either overlooks or neglects some very important areas of consumer concern or attaches undue importance and space to

institutions which may have only peripheral role in consumer protection. Moreover, many issues have been left in the domain of administrative rule-making which ultimately may put into question the efficacy of the whole law. However, the CRPA, 2009 is a good beginning and has every potential to construct an umbrella for protection of consumer rights in the country. For this to happen, it is recommended that the following ideas may be considered by the policy makers and the legislature in their future endeavors in reforming this law:

- a) Establish “Market Court” for street vendors, door-to-door sellers, etc.;
- b) Establish separate ‘Small Claims Court’ for petty consumer rights redressal;
- c) Redesign the NCRPC to act as
 - Consumer advice centres
 - Policy oversight authority
 - Consumer grievances redressal forum
 - Consumer education forum
- d) Provide for licensing of service providers in designated sectors, etc. and
- e) Immediately embark on reforming and amending the Act to make it a truly effective instrument for protection of consumer rights. More specifically, legislative efforts must be undertaken to get the document rid of the loopholes and weaknesses mentioned in this paper so that it can essentially be dubbed as a consumer rights protection *mantra*.

The CRPA, 2009 in its present form is a model of ‘under-regulation’. While this is totally unacceptable given the palatable plight of consumers in Bangladesh, ‘over-regulation’ may not also be yielding desired results. It is the duty of the government, more concretely of the legislature, to find an optimum balance between these two extremes. The journey has begun with the enactment of the CRPA, 2009 and it may not be too late when we can really be proud of consumer rights protection in the country.

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Financial Diagnosis of the Financial Institutions of Bangladesh: A Comparative Study on IPDC, IDLC and ICB

A. K. M. Zahirul Islam *
Nahid Farzana **
Md. Azizur Rahman ***

ABSTRACT

Diagnosis is a well known task in the medical and the physical domain. However, in the financial domain it is not clear what is encompassed by financial diagnosis. In practice, financial analysts and managers often encounter diagnostic tasks that incorporate much financial data. The objective of this article is to characterize financial diagnosis in order to indicate guidelines for automation of financial diagnosis. The paper will be started with a general and independent description of the problem of diagnosis. Further, it will compare the problem of financial diagnosis with diagnostic problems from the entire position of the three financial institutions: i.e., IDLC(Industrial Development Leasing Company of Bangladesh), IPDC(Industrial Promotion and Development Company) and ICB(Investment Corporation of Bangladesh) by diagnosing the financial health, particularly, aspects of internal liquidity, operating performance, growth and risk, applying the technique of ratio analysis on financial information for a period of five years (2001-2002 to 2005-2006). The study reveals that the financial performance of the three financial institutions is quite sound than internal liquidity and operating performance position. They are able to gain popularity in our country's financial market mobilization because of their efficient services, consultancies and corporate financial services.

* Senior Lecturer, Prime University, Bangladesh
** Lecturer, Prime University, Bangladesh
*** Lecturer, Prime University, Bangladesh

INTRODUCTION

Financial institutions play an important role to encourage and broaden the base of investment and mobilize savings of our country's economy. They also promote and establish subsidiaries for business development of capital market of the country. The financial diagnosis of the financial institutions is very much important since they are the intermediaries of our country. They act on commercial consideration with due regard to the interest of the industry, commerce, depositors, investors and to the public in general. The financial diagnosis is indicative of the adequate utilization and interpretation of the financial statements of an organization, which can provide 'Symptoms' of the condition of the firm. So financial diagnosis helps financial institutions, customers or users and assesses the financial, economical and managerial condition of the firms.

The financial statements of IDLC, IPDC & ICB for a period of five years, have been studied which revealed the fact that, though the particular Financial Institutions (FIs') are very much solvent and renowned but in few years or in few sectors they have been passing through a crisis. Therefore, an attempt was made to analyze the financial statements of the above Financial Institutions for a period of five consecutive financial years and examine the trends of financial date with a view to identifying the causes for such crisis in operational performances.

Objectives of the study

- i) To evaluate the financial performance of IDLC, IPDC and ICB in respect of internal liquidity, operating performance, growth and risk on time series basis.
- ii) To make a comparative analysis among IDLC, IPDC and ICB in respect of liquidity, operating performance, growth and risk for the year of 2005-2006.
- iii) To identify the problems relating to their financial activities.
- iv) To make some suggestions and recommendations for overcoming the problems in order to get better operational result in future.

Methodology and Scope of the Study

The study is based on financial and non-financial data and opinions of concerned executives working at IDLC, IPDC & ICB. The quantitative data are collected from annually published accounts and reports of above FIs'. Financial data are rearranged and reprocessed for the sake of study. The study is based on time-series and cross-sectional analysis of financial statements of IDLC, IPDC and ICB. The study covers a period of five financial years from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006. Financial ratios widely used in practice, have been followed for the purpose of the study. Standard deviation and co-efficient of variance is also calculated for risk analysis of the study. Because of time and financial constraints at the disposal of the authors, only selected ratios are calculated which seems more important for FIs' financial diagnosis.

Review of Literature

Financial Diagnosis of the Financial Institutions: Bangladesh perspective

Md. Shahjahan Mina & Md. Abu Taleb (1995)¹; summarize that the analysis and interpretation of financial statements are generally aimed at determining the financial position of a firm. Financial ratio is used as an analytical technique for assessing the performance of the concern.

Khan Md. Muinuddin (1991)²; also suggest ratio analysis as the tools for the evaluation of the financial performance of the particular organization.

Bala Swapon & Habib Ahsan (1997)³; also suggest that ratio analysis can be used for the performance evaluation of the financial institutions. They also use portfolio theories for calculations of NAV (Net Asset Value) of mutual funds.

Financial Diagnosis of the Financial Institutions: International perspective

Reilly and Brown (2005)⁴ state that financial statement analysis seeks to evaluate management performance in several important areas including profitability, efficiency and risk. The ultimate goal of this analysis is to provide insights that will help us to project future management performance. They also suggest that financial ratios

should be examined relative to the economy, the firm's industry, firm's main competitors and the firm's past relative ratios.

1. Financial diagnosis: A case study, Dhaka University journal of Business Studies, Vol. 16 (2), P.43-65,
2. Evaluation of financial performance of an Edible Oil Co, The Cost & Management, ICMAB, Dhaka, Volume XIX, No. 1, Jan-Feb,
3. Investment Performance evaluation a study on Investment Corporation Of Bangladesh (ICB) mutual funds, Dhaka University journal of Business Studies, Vol. 18 (2),
4. Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management'0 ed 8, P.307-340 Foster George (2002)¹ also reaches to a similar conclusion about the financial diagnosis of the financial institutions.

These reviews provide that for the overall financial diagnosis of financial institutions ratio analysis is the best technique for the comparative analysis of financial performances of the financial institutions like IDLC, IPDC and ICB. Above ratios are calculated for the purpose of financial performance analysis of the IDLC, IPDC and ICB.

Theoretical Framework

According to Reilly, Frank K and Brown Keith C. (2005)² the analysis of financial ratios involves two types of comparisons: (i) time series analysis and (ii) cross – sectional analysis. Time series analysis compares the performance of firm over time. Cross sectional techniques is the comparison among the different organization at the same point in time. The specific ratios can be divided into four categories depending on the purpose of the analysis: internal liquidity, operating performance, risk analysis and growth analysis.

Internal liquidity: Internal liquidity ratios are intended to indicate the ability of the firm to meet future short-term financial obligations. Such ratios are:

- (a) **Current ratio:** The current ratio of a firm measures its short term solvency³

$$\text{Current Ratios} = \frac{\text{Current Assets (CA)}}{\text{Current Liabilities (CL)}}$$

An acceptable value of current assets depends on the industry in which a firm operates. A low ratio and current ratio may be indicative of financial difficulties. Very high ratio suggests excess current assets that have an adverse effect on the long term profitability of the firm⁴.

(b) **Quick ratio:** Quick ratio includes quick assets, quick assets refer to the current assets which can be converted into cash immediately or at a short notice without diminution of value⁵

$$\text{Quick Ratios} = \frac{\text{Current Assets} - \text{Inventory}}{\text{Current Liabilities}}$$

Very high quick ratio suggests excess cash, a credit policy that needs revamping, or that a change may be needed in the current versus long term assets composition⁶.

(c) **Cash ratio:** This ratio is the most rigorous and conservative test of a firm's liquidity position.

$$\text{Cash Ratios} = \frac{\text{Cash} + \text{Marketable Securities}}{\text{Current Liabilities (CL)}}$$

It is suggested that it would be useful for the management if liquidity measure can also be taken into account 'reserve borrowing power' as the firm's real debt paying ability not only depends on cash but also on its ability to borrow from the market at short notice.

(d) **The collection period:** The collection period estimates how many days it takes on average to collect the credit sales of the firm and provides an indication of how effective the credit granting and management activities of the firm are⁷.

(e) **Working capital ratios:** Net working capital represents the excess of current assets over the current liabilities. It is quite useful for internal control. A time series comparison of the firm's net working capital is often helpful in evaluating the firm's operation⁸.

Operating performance ratios: The operating performance ratios can be divided into two subcategories. (a) Operating efficiency ratios (b) Operating profitability. Efficiency ratios examine how the management

uses its assets and capital. Profitability ratios analyze the profits as a percentage of sales. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)⁹

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|---|---|
| 1. Financial Statement Analysis, Pearson Education Pvt. Ltd, ed2, P55-75. | 5. Financial management, Khan Jain '1995, P.83. |
| 2. Investment Analysis & Portfolio Management, Ed8 | 6. Pinches George P.55 |
| 3. Financial management, Khan Jain '1995, P.83. | 7. Pinches George P.55 |
| 4. Pinches George P.54 | 8. Gitman Lawrance P.195. |
| | 9. Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management' Ed 8, P 315. |

Operating efficiency ratios:

1. **Total assets turnover:** It indicates the effectiveness of the firm's use of its total asset base.

$$\text{Total assets turnover} = \frac{\text{Net Sales}}{\text{Average Total Asset}}$$

This ratio must be compared to that of other firms within an industry. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)¹ The higher a firm's total assets turnover, the more efficiently its assets have been used. (Gitman Lawrance P-200).

2. **Equity Turnover:** It is useful to examine the turnover for capital components.

$$\text{Equity turnover} = \frac{\text{Net Sales}}{\text{Average Shareholders Equity}}$$

To evaluate this ratio, it is important to consider the firm's capital structure ratios, because the firm can increase or decrease its equity turnover ratio by increasing or decreasing its proportion of debt capital. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)²

Operating profitability ratios:

1. **Operating profit margin:** The variability of the operating profit margin over time is a prime indicator of the business risk of a firm. This volatility should be compared to similar ratios for competitors and the industry. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)³

$$\text{Operating profit margin} = \frac{\text{Operating Profit}}{\text{Sales}}$$

2. **Net profit margin:** This margin relates after tax net income to sales.

$$\text{Net profit margin} = \frac{\text{Earnings after tax}}{\text{Sales}}$$

The higher the firm's net profit margin, the better its financial position is. A low net profit margin indicates that (i) the firm is not generating enough sales relative to its expenses (ii) expenses are out of control or (iii) both.⁴

Growth analysis: The analysis of sustainable growth potential examines ratio that indicate how fast a firm should grow. Analysis of firm's growth potentials is important for both lenders and owners. Owners and creditors both know that the value of firm depends on its future growth in earnings, cash flows and dividends, Growth ratios are:

i) **Return on equity (ROE):** The return on owner's equity (ROE ratio) is extremely important to the owners of the enterprise because it indicates the rate of return that management has earned on the capital provided by stockholders after accounting for payments to all other capital suppliers.

$$\text{ROE} = \frac{\text{Net Income}}{\text{Common Equity}}$$

According to the modified DuPont formula a firm has three choices to improve its return on equity- increase of the profit margin, increase of the total assets turnover or the use of more debt. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)⁵

(ii) **Retention Rate:** Another important indicator of growth analysis is retention rate which is a decision of directors based on the investment opportunities available to the firm.

$$\text{Retention rate} = 1 - \frac{\text{DPS}}{\text{EPS}} \text{ or } (1 - \text{Dividend Payout ratio})$$

(iii) **Sustainable growth rate:** Sustainable growth rate on any economy depends,

$$\text{Sustainable growth rate} = \text{Return on equity} \times \text{Retention rate (RR)}$$

The more a firm reinvests, the greater its potential for growth. (Reilly, Brown, 2005)¹

4. **Risk Analysis:** Risk analysis examines the uncertainty of income flow for the total firm and for the individual sources of capital. Total risk is equal to business risk and financial risk. Business risk is the uncertainty of operating income caused by the firm's industry. This uncertainty is incurred due to two factors (i) the volatility of the firm's sales over time (ii) its operating leverage. The volatility of the firm's sales over time is measured by Standard Deviation (S.D) and Co-efficient of Variance (C.V) of operating earnings. Financial risk is the additional uncertainties of returns to equity holders due to a firm's use of fixed financial obligation securities. A firm increases its relative debt financing with fixed contractual obligations, it increases its financial risk and the possibility of default and bankruptcy. Financial risk is measured by debt equity ratio and interest coverage ratio.

$$\text{Debt equity ratio} = \frac{\text{Total long term debt}}{\text{Total Equity}} ; \quad \text{Interest coverage ratio} = \left(\frac{\text{EBIT}}{\text{Interest}} \right)$$

Relationship between business risk and financial risk: The acceptable level of financial risk for a firm depends on its business risk. If the firm has low business (stable operating earnings), investors are willing to accept higher financial risk

Empirical Results:

Industrial Development Leasing Co. (IDLC) of Bangladesh

Internal Liquidity Evaluation

From the table shown in below, it can be observed that the overall liquidity position shows a declining tendency. The reason behind

1. *Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management, Ed 8, P 315.*
 2. *Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management, Ed 8, P 315.*
 3. *Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management Ed 8, P 316.*
 4. *Pinches George P.55*
 5. *Investment Analysis and Portfolio Management'Ed 8, P 316*

such occurrence is the result of too much increase in current liability in the heads of loan deposits and advances. The current and quick ratios of IDLC were decreased in the recent years. Net working capital ratio was improved in the year 2005-2006. Average account receivable collection period is also deteriorated in the recent years in comparison with the year 2001-2002.

This situation needs some sort of corrective measures to overcome the shortage of current assets or working capital.

Table- 1: Liquidation Scenario of IDLC

Financial Ratios Year	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006
Current Ratio	1.1	1.18	1.12	0.93	0.85
Quick Ratio	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.23	0.15
Receivable turnover (in times)	5.18 times	2.63 times	1.83 times	1.95 times	3.06 times
Avg. Collection Period(in times)	70.46	139	199	186	118
Net Working Capital ratio	10.51%	10.92%	9.99%	7.26%	19.97%

Source: Annual Report of IDCL for Respective Year

Operating Performance evaluation

Though IDLC's total sales increased in 2005-2006 compare with 2001-2002 but due to poor credit collection procedure their assets turnover ratio, equity turnover ratio and operating profit margin will decline day by day. However their net operating profit margin was improved in the recent years.

Table- 2: Operational Performance of IDLC

Financial Ratios	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006
Total assets turnover (in times)	0.69	0.58	0.21	0.25	0.27
Equity turnover (in times)	3.31	3.47	1.10	1.21	1.37

Operating profit margin	12.27%	11.97%	31.19%	26.69%	18.70%
Net profit margin	7.33%	6.67%	17.04%	15.65	12.60

Source: Annual Report of IDCL for Respective Year

Growth Analysis

The ROE of the IDLC has been increased from the years 2003 but again decreased in the year 2006. The retention rate was inconsistent over the reporting years. Total sustainable growth rate was also increased in the year 2002 to 2005 other than 2006. Sustainable growth rate mainly depends on organization ROE. Regarding the DuPont systems, a firm's ROE (Return on Equity) is a function of three components, net profit margin, total asset turnover and financial leverage. So IDLC can increase its ROE by increasing its profit margin, by becoming more efficient (increasing its turnover), or by increasing its financial leverage (total asset). Investors should examine and estimate each of the above components when estimating the ROE for firm.

Table-3: Growth Status of IDLC

Financial Ratios Year	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006
ROE	20.8%	17.8%	18.8%	19%	17.1%
Retention Rate	62.06%	62.76%	60.81%	63.16%	62.93%
Sustainable growth Rate	12.90%	11.17%	11.43%	12.00%	10.76%

Source: Annual Report of IDCL for Respective Year

Risk Analysis

IDLC has a very low business risk, based on business risk indicator of standard deviation. Operating earnings which were declined over the years indicate less dispersion between actual operating revenues. Business risk is an uncertainty due to organizational variability of sales and degree of operating leverage. The financial risk measured by debt-equity ratio shows an upward trend and causes to increase the degree of financial risk to capital structure of IDLC. Time interest coverage ratio

also shows a decreasing tendency, which indicates that they are losing the ability to pay periodical interests.

Table-4: Degree of Risk Faced by IDLC

Financial Ratios Year	2001- 2002	2002- 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006
Standard Deviation (million Tk.)	14.22	6.17	6.80	13.50	0.09
Coefficient of Variance	6.19%	2.68%	2.96%	5.87%	0.039%
Debt equity ratio	7.1	7.5	7.6	8.0	9.3
Interest-coverage ratio (in times)	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.3

Source: Annual Report of IDCL for Respective Year

Industrial Promotion and Development Company(IPDC) of Bangladesh

Internal liquidity Evaluation

The current ratio, quick ratio and all other liquidity ratios have been declined over the years. Because of two current liability heads increase in deposit and current lines credit in the recent years and poor credit collection are the main reasons for decreasing the liquidity position of IPDC from the year 2002 to 2006.

Table- 5: Liquidation Scenario of IPDC

Financial ratios	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Current ratio	1.1	1.11	1.09	1.11	0.97
Quick Ratio	0.80	0.81	0.79	0.63	0.37
Receivable turnover (in times)	4.13	3.35	1.65	1.64	1.33
Avg. collection period (in days)	88.30	108	221	222	264
Net Working Capital ratio	15.17 %	18.03 %	26.27 %	19.45 %	4.07 %

Source: Annual Report of IPDC for Respective Year

Operating performance evaluation:

IPDC'S overall operating performance has been improved in 2006 more than in the year 2004. Total increase in sales was consistent in all the reporting years than the year 2004 and 2006. In the year 2005, their income from operation was declined as well as EATS also reduced. In the year 2006 increase in operating revenues is lower than the other, but in 2006 operational expenses are reduced in comparing to 2005. For this reason, net profit margin in 2006 shows better compare to the year 2005.

Table- 6: Operational Performance of IDLC

Financial ratios Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total assets turnover (in times)	0.27	0.29	0.21	0.25	0.29
Eqnity turnover (in times)	1.19	1.40	0.88	1.008	0.76
Operating profit margin	21.81%	19.12%	27.92%	22.03%	19.56%
Net profit margin	18.59%	17.48%	25.15%	11.98%	16.32%

Source: Annual Report of IPDC for Respective Year

Growth analysis

Overall sustainable growth rates indicate a very inconsistent result in the reporting years of study. Both changes in ROE and retention rate are inconsistent. As a result, it is not easy to make any comment on IPDC's growth. But the ROE ratios and retention rate (RR) are near about to IDLC and ICB's ROE and RR. So it can be said that growth in financial sectors is quite satisfactory.

Table-7: Growth Status of IPDC

Financial ratios Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Return on Equity	22.31%	24.53%	22.25%	12.08%	12.48%
Retention rate	28.31%	46.83%	49.29%	10.90%	50%
Sustainable growth	6.32%	11.49%	10.97%	1.32%	6.24%

Source: Annual Report of IPDC for Respective Year

Risk Analysis:

From the overall calculation, an inconsistent picture of IPDC's operating and financial risk indicators has been found. In the year 2003, SD was declined (4.47 from 15.20); again increased in the year 2004 at 14.31 and decreased in the year 2005 and 2006 at 12.52 and 6.71 respectively. Same inconsistency was found in the calculation of debt equity ratio. As a result, decision cannot be made about their business and financial risk on time series basis.

Table- 8: Degree of Risk Faced by IPDC

Financial Ratios	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Year					
Standard deviation of operating earnings (in Tk. Millon)	15.20	4.47	14.31	12.52	6.71
Co-efficient of variance (%)	6.97%	2.05%	5.56%	5.74%	3.07%
Debt-equity risk	2.32	2.41	1.83	2.35	0.69

Source: Annual Report of IPDC for Respective Year

Investment Corporation of Bangladesh(ICB)

Internal liquidity

From the table shown below, it can be said that ICB's overall liquidity position has been improved in reporting years.

Table- 9: Liquidation Scenario of ICB

Financial ratios	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Current ratio	1.47	1.10	1.11	1.18	1.17
Quick ratio	1.11	0.89	0.96	0.98	1.11
Average Receivable turnover (in times)	4.33	4.60	3.83	3.26	4.60
Average collection period (in days)	84	79	108	111	79

Source: Annual Report of ICB for Respective Year

Operating Performance:

Operating Performance of ICB has consistently been improved. Its operating revenues have been increased in the reporting years. Its operating profit margin and net profit margin have also been improved in the recent years. ICB earned a total income of 170.38 crore in 2004-05 which was 24.05% higher than that of Tk. 137.35 crore earned in 2003-04. This is the highest level of income that ICB has thus far earned. In the year 2005-2006, ICB earned 2.33% lower than 2004-2005. Except interest income, income from all major heads was declined in the year 2005-2006 because of sluggish trend prevailing in the capital market. As a result, the operating ratios were also declined in the year 2005-2006.

Table-10: Operational Performance of ICB

Financial ratios	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Year					
Total asset turnover (in times)	0.033	0.0280	0.0367	0.0641	0.419
Equity turnover (in times)	0.4009	0.4164	0.4608	0.7068	0.4124
Operating profit margin	23%	24%	29%	22%	42%

Source: Annual Report of ICB for Respective Year

Table-11: Growth Status of IPDC

Financial ratios	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Return on equity (RoE)	10.39%	9.94%	13.62%	15.73%	14.45%
Retention Rate (RR)	64.24%	65%	72%	73%	74%
Sustainable Growth rate	6.67%	6.46%	9.80%	11.43%	1071%

Source: Annual Report of ICB for Respective Year

Growth analysis:

ICB's ROE and retention rate has been improved over the years. As a result overall sustainable growth rate was also increased. ICB's overall growth rate of both ROE and RR is very high in the reporting years.

Risk analysis

Business risk of ICB was quite high. Since SD as well as C.V of ICB was increased in the recent years, debt-equity ratio of ICB has been declined over the years, which causes the decrease of the degree of financial leverage. Their time interest coverage ratio has also been improved in the recent years. It indicates that ICB is able to meet the contractual obligation arising out of use of debt in its capital structure.

II. **Cross Sectional Analysis:** Comparisons of financial ratios of IDLC, IPDC and ICB for the year 2005-2006 have been shown in the table below:

Table-12: Cross Sectional Analysis for the Year 2005-2006

Financial Ratios	IDLC	IPDC	ICB
Current ratio	0.85	0.97	1.17
Quick ratio	0.15	0.37	1.10
Average Collection (in day)	118	267	79
Net working capital ratio	20%	4.07%	-
Total assets turnover (in times)	0.27	0.29	4.19
Equity turnover (in times)	1.37	0.76	0.4124
Operating profit margin (%)	18.70%	19.56%	77.41%
Net profit margin(%)	12.60%	16.32%	42%
RoE	17.17%	12.48%	14.45%
Retention rate	62.93%	50%	74%
Sustainable growth rate	10.76%	6.24%	10.71%
i) Business risk (C.V)	0.039%	3.07%	1.48%
ii) Financial risk Debt equity ratio	9.3	0.69	0.26
Interest Coverage Ratio	1.3	-	26.66%

Source: Annual Report of IDLC, IPDC & ICB for Respective Year

According to the rating, it was observed that internal liquidity position was better in ICB comparing to other two financial institutions. It indicates that ICB has more current assets against its current claims compared to other two financial institutions. But accounts receivable collection period was very high in all the three financial institutions

Table-13: Rating of the financial position of three FI's in 2005-2006.

Ratios	IDLC	IPDC	ICB
Internal liquidity			
Current ratio	III	II	I
Quick ratio	III	II	I
Average collection period	II	III	I
Net working capital ratio	I	II	-
Operating performance			
Total assets turnover	II	II	I
Equity turnover	I	II	III
Operating profit margin	III	II	I
Net Profit	II	III	I
Growth Analysis			
Sustainable growth rate	I	III	II
Risk analysis			
Business risk	I	III	II
Financial risk (considering debt-equity ratio)	III	II	I

Source: Annual Report of IDLC, IPDC & ICB for Respective Year

The operating performance of the ICB is also better (except equity turnover ratio) in comparing to other FIs'. Growth analysis indicates that IDLC has maintained a high growth rate (10.76%) compared to other two financial institutions. ICB's growth rate is also very near to IDLC (10.71%). IPDC's growth rate (6.24%) was quite lower in comparison to other two FI's. Business risk of IDLC is lower than other two financial institutions. But their financial risk is very high in comparison to ICB & IPDC. In contrast, ICB's financial risk (0.26) is very low and its business risk is also (1.48%) quite acceptable. So, after assessing overall business and financial risk and evaluating their liquidity and operating performance, it can be said that ICB is in better position in comparison to IDLC & IPDC in the year 2005-2006.

Problems and suggestions

From the study, the following problems and remedial measures can be suggested for achieving a better financial performance of the FIS:

Problems relating to internal liquidity: Except ICB, other two financial Institutions face liquidity problems. Their accounts receivable collection period is deteriorating in the reporting years. Liquidity crisis has to be removed for better and smooth running of operation. Source of finance and line of credit arrangements should be enhanced. Working capital of permanent nature and fixed assets are to be financed from long- term sources and working capital of variable nature is to be financed from short term sources, as per ideal concept of financing. Cost of funds of financial institutions is high in comparison to their counterparts, i.e. banks. As a result, they charge a high interest rate on loan.

1. **Problems relating to assets management:** Financial institutions face severe problem to repossess their lease assets. It has to undergo lengthy and tire some legal process to get repossession of the assets from defaulter lessee. Govt. should take necessary steps for establishing repossession agencies. Except ICB, other two FIs' operating performance has been deteriorated in the reporting years. Financial institutions also face problems to sell repossessed equipment. Since Bangladesh is industrially less developed, finding a buyer for second hand equipment is difficult. Sometime, FIs' disposed such equipment at much lower price. These losses result a lower rate of asset turnover.
2. **Problems of evaluating creditability of customers:** Financial institutions evaluate the financial solvency of the customers on the basis of customers' bank statements, audited Balance Sheets or tax return. But in our country none of these reports or documents is reliable. But there is no credit information bureau or credit rating agency in our country. So financial institutions should collect information from different sources. They should give more attention in evaluating customers.
3. **Problems relating to documentation of the security creditability:** Financial institutions face problems in documentation of the securities. Registration charge for the mortgage of security is very high. It is not possible to obtain registered mortgage of security from the customer. So FIs' make only equitable mortgage of security. In equitable

mortgage, the lesson can have only original documents of the property, but it is possible to get more than one original document for a particular property.

4. **Problems relating to growth and operating risk:** IDLC and IPDC's net profit margin ratio is reducing in the present years. They should try to improve their sales as well as operating profit to maintain their growth in future. To remove business risk, their EBIT should also be enhanced.
5. **Problems relating to capital structure:** IDLC's debt equity ratio and interest coverage ratio are discouraging. All the three financial institutions should rise up equity capital and reduce dependence on borrowed funds. Budgetary control and standard costing system have to be introduced so that persons can be identified with responsibility for the work done improperly and wrongly.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it appears that financial institutions constitute a major source of finance in today's business world. They have a key role in the business development of capital market of the country. We started our study by compare the problem of financial diagnosis with diagnostic problems from the entire position of the three financial institutions: IDLC(Industrial Development Leasing Company of Bangladesh), IPDC(Industrial Promotion and Development Company) and ICB(Investment Corporation of Bangladesh) by diagnosing the financial health, particularly, aspects of internal liquidity, operating performance, growth and risk, applying the technique of ratio analysis on financial information for a period of five years (2001-2002 to 2005-2006). In our study, it was observed that internal liquidity position is much enhanced in ICB comparing with the IDLC and IPDC. It indicates that ICB has more current assets against its current claims. We observed that the average collection period of IDLC, IPDC and ICB is 118, 267 and 79 respectively. So we can say that IPDC are in the worst position to collect their receivable or IPDC has a lot of scope for improvement. The operating performance of the ICB is also healthier (except equity turnover ratio) in comparing with

the IDLC and IPDC. Growth analysis indicates that IDLC has upheld a high sustainable growth rate (10.76%) compared to other two financial institutions. ICB's growth rate is also very near to IDLC (10.71%). IPDC's growth rate (6.24%) was quite lower in comparing to other two FI's In spite of some liquidity problems, financial institutions are able to gain popularity in our country in the years to come because of its emergent and efficient services, consultancies and corporate financial services. Finally we can say that if IDLC and IPDC try to make them with the Industry average then they should play a vital role in economic development of Bangladesh.

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The Impacts of Globalization in Business Sectors in Bangladesh

Naiem Jalal Uddin Ahamed¹

ABSTRACT:

The term Globalization implies Free-flow of goods, services and information. Its basic idea is to come up with an economically sustainable solution where everybody gets equal opportunities to perform their desire tasks without any obstacles. Furthermore it turns the economy from what is called an inequality position to equality position, where effective and efficient allocation of resources will be done. In broad terms, globalization describes a process of increasing interdependence or the building of networks between individuals, firms, countries or regions. The emergence of these networks is evident in the economic field through the increased movement of goods, services, knowledge, ideas, finance and people; in the political field, through various State-sponsored forms of integration; and in the cultural field, through increased communications and opportunities to travel. The principal driving forces behind this current phase of globalization are lower barriers to trade and investment, lower transport costs, lower information technology costs and the increasingly important role of the Internet.

INTRODUCTION:

The contemporary global debate on globalization and its multi-pronged impact has had a strong echo in the academic and political discussions in Bangladesh as well. After a hesitant start in the mid-1980s, Bangladesh moved decisively to embrace the wave of globalization in the 1990s. Ever since, the impact of globalization on the economy of Bangladesh and, more pointedly, on the lives of its people, has become a hotly debated issue. This paper attempts to take an in-depth look at the impact of globalization on the business sector of Bangladesh.

1. Scope and Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of globalization on the business sector of Bangladesh

- To know about the impact of globalization on different micro and macro environmental elements of the business sector.
- Discuss some major issues of globalization.

2. Methodology of the study

This paper extensively uses the secondary data available in different books, publications, press releases and internet etc. Some information is very important to know.

3. Limitations of the study

The objectives and the methodology of this report are clear. But there has been some limitations of this research that should be noted. These are:

- The availability of the secondary data is the prime problem for a researcher, although different types of work have been done on the issues but for this specific issue, the data is not widely available.
- To do this sort of research, casual a research methodology is much more appropriate, but due to resource constrains it was not possible.
- Mainly in a country like Bangladesh, our market economy is reactive rather than proactive. In such condition, information asymmetry is a

¹ Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, Stamford University

common problem and its cause problems in the research a lot.

GLOBALIZATION IMPACT ON MICRO AND MACRO ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS OF BUSINESS SECTORS IN BANGLADESH:

The domestic governance structure is increasingly affected by accelerating globalization bringing about major changes in the national socio-political institutions. Many pre-existing/old institutions are either abolished or significantly altered. Altering or abolishing existing institutions has put serious pressures on domestic governance in Bangladesh, because it is defined as the 'processes and institutions, both formal and informal, which guide and restrain the collective activities of a group'². Hence, it is systematically related to the institutional characteristics of the state. In addition, the pursuit of hasty transnational integration generates mismatches even within the economic institutions, needless to say about political or societal realms. New issues such as child labor, trafficking of children and women, trade unionism in the Export Processing Zone, and environmental standards are coming to the surface in the economic governance of Bangladesh, though its export market is concentrated on few items, such as ready-made garments and shrimps, which are susceptible to these constraints. Under these new pressures distinct national regimes of extensive labor rights and social protection have become almost obsolete. Nation-states, as perceived by the proponents of extreme globalization like have become the local authorities of the global system. The spread of powerful international and regional factors in national politics and accommodation of national politics enmeshed within regionalization and/or internationalization has transformed the tools of national governance. Bangladesh's national markets are in the capital, products and labor are more sensitive to the movements and crises of other markets. To put it quite bluntly, Bangladesh experienced a phase of

² Robert O Keohane, *Power and Interdependence in a Partially Globalized World*, (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 15

hegemony of the World Bank and IMF, the chaos of privatization and liberalization and the demise of the sovereignty of the state³. As the process of globalization accelerates, government experiences greater difficulties in trying to control events within the national borders. Those difficulties, summarized by the term diminished autonomy, show why tensions arise from the competition between political sovereignty and economic integration⁴. While governments in the developing world are constrained to challenge these pressures as they did in the 1950s and 1960s, tensions are evident at societal level. Haggard observes this incongruence in a limited sense. He mainly indicates the political impact of economic liberalization as he points out; cross-border economic integration and national political sovereignty have increasingly come into conflict, leading to a growing mismatch between political structures of the world⁵. In short, the accelerating effects of globalization changed the pattern of interactions among different forms of collective action organizations that provided a variety of governance services to diverse groups. It raises a critical question: to what extent has globalization produced integrative effects within Bangladeshi society? This requires dealing with the implications of these changes induced by globalization from two dimensions: rule-changing capacity and end results. Because it is often argued that the process of globalization would bring convergence in socio-economic and political practices and increase allocative efficiency by moving toward free market and 'getting the prices right', it is against this background, the paper is basically an institutional analysis of the impact of globalization based on empirical evidence.

³ Borhanuddin K Jahangir, 'Consensus, Problematics and Reform Agenda' in Hasnat Abdul Hye (ed.), *Governance: South Asian Perspectives*, (Dhaka: University Press Ltd. 2000), Jahangir, p. 38.

⁴ Stephan Haggard, *Developing Nations and the Politics of Global Integration* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), p. xx.

⁵ Haggard, p. xviii. Rehman Sobhan (ed.), *The Decade of Stagnation: The State of the Bangladesh Economy in the 1980s* (Dhaka: University Press Ltd, 1991), p. 12.

GLOBALIZATION AND SOME MAJOR ISSUES IN BUSINESS SECTORS AND ITS IMPACT:

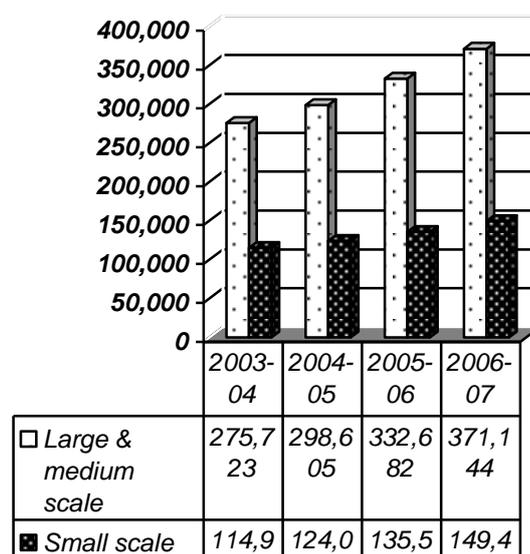
There are some major issues which play a vital role in business sectors under the consideration of globalization impact in an LDC (Least Developing Country) like Bangladesh.

PRIVATIZATION AND LACK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

The problem of entrepreneurship continues to hinder economic development as it did in the 1970s and 1980s. What is observed is only development of trading and real estate businesses where rates of returns are quite high or in sectors with a flight of capital. Despite faster pace of economic reforms towards market economy for more than a decade, the private sector has not developed in the market due to poor level of entrepreneurship that is the key to private sector development. The privatization launched through denationalization and disinvestment has not contributed much to the strengthening and widening the scope of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. The Industrial policy has been changed several times. Particularly, the industrial policies in 1991 and 1999 undertook sweeping changes towards market reforms. More importantly, the government has vigorously replaced the public sector with a private one. But, in reality, the vicious cycle of low savings and low investment continues to exist due to the country's dependence on foreign aid and increasing government's lending from domestic banks. Despite undertaking a considerable extent of deregulation of the financial sector, medium and small size financial organizations have not been established. The contribution of the manufacturing sector in GDP fluctuated between 10-12 per cent of the GDP for the last 25 years. This disappointing picture of the manufacturing sector clearly reflects the poor condition of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh.

Table 1: Manufacturing Sector's share in GDP in Bangladesh (in constant price)

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Manufacturing	390688	422690	468197	520586
Large & medium scale	275,723	298,605	332,682	371,144
Small scale	114,965	124,085	135,515	149,442



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Some argue that the issue of entrepreneurship is related to creativity. Bangladesh lacks the environment that stimulates creativity. The privatization, denationalization and disinvestiture have set the process of 'de-industrialization', instead of promoting entrepreneurship. Some point out that it is the legacy of the British colonial rule for two centuries and the Pakistani discrimination by concentrating industrial locations in the Western part. They further argue that the devastating War of Liberation has largely reduced capacity. However, this historical reason for the lack of entrepreneurship does not deserve much importance after three decades of independence. The question of creativity has some merits, but it must not be blamed for such a dismal picture of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. Though creativity largely depends on national environment, the major problem lies with the systems of governance, marked by corruption, rent seeking and patronage. Discretionary intervention through the widespread use of personal connections hinders the growth of entrepreneurship. It is clear that

real entrepreneurs don't get opportunities as provided by the government through its policy reforms. In disbursing loan, personal contact and influences played a big role. Entrepreneurial capability was overlooked. The persistence of a 'predatory state' syndrome has created a nouveau riche class in society. Changes of organizations and policies under the conditions of globalization are not resulting in building a good class of entrepreneurs. This phenomenon is largely because of the continuity of traditional institutions that discourage the local entrepreneurs. Embracing globalization before changing the existing values and norms in society creates the problem of incompatibility in adapting to the process of globalization.

Table 2: Sectoral Share of GDP at Current Prices, 2003-04 to 2006-07

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Manufacturing	16.13	16.53	17.21	17.95
Large & medium scale	11.38	11.68	12.23	12.79
Small scale	4.75	4.85	4.98	5.15

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Table 3: Annual Gross Domestic Product Growth in Bangladesh (Percentage)

DMC	GDP (%)					
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Bangladesh	4.1	4.9	4.6	5.4	5.2	4.9

DMC	Agriculture (%)					
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Bangladesh	0.9	-0.3	3.1	6.0	3.2	4.8

Source: World Development Indicators 2000

PROBLEM OF MARKET ACCESSIBILITY (COUNTING TRADE DEFICIT):

Trade openness is a critical factor for accelerating the benefits of globalization. Various studies particularly sponsored by the Bretton-Woods institutions demonstrate there are a number of beneficial effects of trade both at South-South and North-South levels. Traditionally, the GDP growth is the driving cause, but there are other benefits too. It is argued that trade liberalization may promote

efficiency in resource allocation, increase competitive capability by acquiring global standards of efficiency, broaden options for consumers, and can make use of international capital markets to increase private investment, and may result in familiarization with new ideas, technology and products. All these benefits largely depend on the capacity to develop a dynamic export sector and external markets for exports. The reality is, however, somewhat different in Bangladesh's case. The integration of the Bangladesh economy into the world economy against the backdrop of recent policy reforms has not enabled the state to exploit its comparative advantage in world trade. The export-led strategy has faltered due to dwindling global market for its export items. Instead of expanding its export base through diversification of products and increasing the volume of existing items, the country faces the prospect of losing its traditional markets for readymade garments and knitwear (around 80 per cent of total exports) in the near future. With the demise of Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA)⁶ in 2005 under the WTO ruling, Bangladesh will lose its protected market in North America and Europe. Furthermore, the conditions of labor and environmental standards in exporting goods and services appear to be a serious blow for its search for external markets. These are new barriers of 'neo-protectionism' for a developing country like Bangladesh. More so, the trade liberalization has facilitated more imports that results in huge trade deficit every year. Trade deficits were higher during 1990-2000 period compared to the previous era. At most, the dismal scenario with the trade deficit continues irrespective of following an export led strategy. In this situation, some argue that the success of East Asian export-led policies cannot be replicated in Bangladesh's context. In East Asia it was high domestic savings and modest consumption and a lack of large domestic markets that pushed those countries to follow export-led strategies. The economists in Bangladesh argue that the explosive growth of trade deficit is a direct impact of our ill-timed import liberalization. Bangladesh's soaring trade deficit with India in the early 1990s is an example. The reason behind this situation is that

⁶ MFA was signed in 1974.

the country has not developed an efficient and dynamic manufacturing sector. Industrial activism is minimal, if not stagnant. Only garments and urban construction sectors are booming because of no competition⁷. Consequently, private investors within the domestic industrial sector lack the capacity to compete with imports, which results in a huge trade deficit every year.

Table 4: Annual External Indebtedness of Bangladesh (in total outstanding and disbursed debt)

Country	Total External debt \$ millions		Long-term debt \$ millions		Use of IMF credit	
	1990	2002	1990	2002	1990	2002
Bangladesh	2439	17037	626	71	11657	16445

Country	Public and publicly guaranteed debt \$ millions				Private non guaranteed external debt \$ millions	
	Total		IBRD loans and IDA credits		1990	2002
	1990	2002	1990	2002	1990	2002
Bangladesh	11657	16445	4159	7076	0	0

Source: Asian Development Bank, Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries 2000, Volume XXXI (China: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 59.

This situation might be worse in the coming years given the constraints of market access for Bangladesh's export items. Here we observe a clear discrepancy in terms of the economic effect of globalization policies initiated by the governments.

Under globalization, trade liberalization is supposed to generate export-orientation and to expand the external market in a significant way. The average trade deficit of Bangladesh has

⁷ Interview, Ayubur Rahman Bhuyan, Taken by Sobhan, 'The Economy of Bangladesh: Present Performance and Challenge for the Future'.

considerably increased in 2000 compared to 1978.

FINANCIAL VOLATILITY:

Contrary to highly liberal policy regime for private foreign investment in Bangladesh, there was a frustrating amount of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Bangladesh in the last decade⁸.

All the incentives for privatization and liberalization have not been able to attract a minimum degree of private foreign investment in Bangladesh. Figure 5 shows that the FDI net inflows continue to be nil in Bangladesh until 1986 when it was only 0.01 per cent of GDP.

Table 5: Net FDI Inflows into Bangladesh (% of GDP)

1990-1995 (Annual avg.)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Country	2004
0.3	14	1.3	1.9	1.7	2.8	0.7	.52	.26	Bangladesh	.46

Source: World Development Indicators, 2000.

Surprisingly it remained around 0.01 per cent until 1995. Later it increased to 0.72 per cent in 1998. On the other hand, Malaysia, Thailand and Sri Lanka received FDI at 6.9, 6.23 and 1.23 per cent of their GDP in 1998, respectively. While looking into the disinterest shown by the foreign investors to invest in Bangladesh, it is almost universally recognized that domestic socio-political institutions which are marked by bureaucratization, rent seeking and corruption and political instability are the major bottlenecks. This clearly indicates that FDI as a driving force of globalization as well as economic growth cannot be increased without improving governance in the country. The so-called liberal investment policy regime has simply faltered demonstrating another source of divergence between the rules and norms of globalization and

⁸ Social Science, October 1998, Center for Advanced Research in Social Sciences, vol. 5, University of Dhaka p. 31

domestic governance as well as in terms of the actual outcome of liberalization in the country.

Another example case is of the capital market performance in Bangladesh. The recently instituted capital market to boost portfolio investment and domestic private capital flows is not functioning properly. This is illustrated by the 1996 capital market crisis in Bangladesh. The capital market was reorganized in 1993 as a direct outcome of the market-based liberalization program of the government. The individual investors demonstrated much enthusiasm about this market. In a short time, the country's stock market experienced a crash in the winter of 1996 that resulted in huge losses to medium and small investors⁹. The sudden rise of stock prices encouraged thousands of investors who lost out in an abrupt and dramatic down-slide.

It was reported that 'after an unprecedented bull run lasting some five months at the Dhaka Stock Exchange, the DSE All Share Price Index, having reached the unsustainable level of 3627 points on November 16 1996, came crashing down, amidst widespread panic in the kerb market¹⁰⁹.' The crash in capital market was followed by widespread agitation by the middle class investors. Subsequently, all share price index continued plummeting. Still the capital market is in shambles with a crisis of public confidence in this institution. It is widely held that a few sponsored directors of private companies artificially created the crisis. It is reported that four foreign companies played an instrumental role in the stock market crash¹¹. These companies were assisted by the corrupt members of the Stock Exchange. The consistent downward trend in 1999 not only curtailed the profits of market players but also kept capital

⁹ Rahman Ayubur, 24 December 2000, The Daily Janakantha (Dhaka).

¹⁰ Chaudhury SK, 1995, 'Cross Border Trade between India and Bangladesh, NCAER', Working Paper 58, New Delhi; Quoted in Nisha Taneja, 1999, 'Informal Trade in the SAARC Region', Working Paper 47, ICRIER, New Delhi.

¹¹ Ghosh Jayati, Mar. 27 – Apr. 9, 1999, 'The Liberalization Fallout', Frontline, vol. 16 - issue 7, p. 8

investments low. Given the volatile nature of capital flows, this crisis raises some crucial questions. First, is Bangladesh prepared for instituting such a fluid market device? What institutional mechanisms does Bangladesh need to establish before opening a capital market? Although the crisis and the subsequent behavior of the share market shows that Bangladesh was not ready for instituting the capital market as such, the adequate institutional mechanisms could reduce the risks of the investors, mostly lower and middle class people.

Table 6: Annual GNP Per Capita in Bangladesh

DMC	Total GNP (US\$ Million)			Per Capita GNP (US\$)		
	1996	1997	1998	1996	1997	1998
Bangladesh	41651	44090	44224	340	360	350

Source: World Development Indicators 2000

COMPETITION AND COMPETITIVENESS:

Competition is another cardinal norm of globalization. Traditionally, it is closely related to the growth of entrepreneurship in a society that is considerably lacking in Bangladesh. In addition, because of market and information imperfections, there is a general tendency for market failure even in the ideal neo-liberal market-based system. In Bangladesh, imperfections have intensified because social conditions are marked by economic backwardness, lack of access to information technology, widespread illiteracy and government control over media. Thus, competition has not improved efficiency. It was expected that privatization would decrease rent-seeking conditions in the country; but it has not occurred. Who will compete in the market, if there are not enough number of actors and proper infrastructure? Apart from market and information imperfectness, there is one critical factor behind the absence of competition i.e., lack of capability. If a country lacks appropriate technological development and sound infrastructure, it is impossible for private investors to flourish and compete with domestic and international firms. Technology is both a

public and private good. It is impossible for a poor nation like Bangladesh to develop basic technological capability through the private sector.

There is a necessity of considerable state support to improve national capacity in technological and infrastructural capacity. Another factor is the social environment which is marked by rent seeking, patronage and corruption mainly sponsored by the state. Use of physical force is widespread from tender snatching to political nomination. In both cases, government has a critical role to play, but here again the dilemma is that if government continues to play a key role in developing markets and infrastructure then it may provide an environment for continued rent seeking behavior and ineffective allocation of resources and resulting in continued lack of capability. So in what way should the country acquire local capability to generate competition in the market? It depends on the capacity of the government as well as private sector. Both have to work hand in hand to develop national capability. Ironically, the rules and norms of globalization pathologically discourage governmental support for local capability entrepreneurship. This shows another disparity between domestic reality and globalization.

CONCLUSION:

There have been mixed outcomes of globalization in Bangladesh. Neither the positive end results in terms of developmental effects nor institutional convergence take place in a substantive way. At the heart of continuing poor performance of the state and market organizations and failure of policy reforms are the disintegrative effects of globalization. It manifests in the mismatch between the rules and norms of globalization and the pre-existing governance mechanisms and institutional patterns at the domestic level. This divergence is most evident in political and societal governance mechanisms. This creates further pressure on domestic governance. As we observed that the process of globalization has contributed to the

precedence of some international set of values and practices over the preferences or policies of the Bangladeshi state. Extreme globalizes and the

international donors' communities emphatically argue that domestic governance, for that matter, 'good' governance plays a crucial role for adapting to the process of globalization. The empirical evidence suggests that globalization itself hinders this adjustment process as it transforms the domestic norms and rules in a standardized way and creates incompatibility in rules and norms of governance. To put it differently, the agenda of globalization in Bangladesh has not addressed the domestic realities in Bangladesh, in terms of addressing the institutional settings and business sector's impact of it's characterize in the country. Consequently, the process of linking global neo-liberal values and domestic norms and practices is generating an inevitable clash that Bangladesh is experiencing more profoundly in the last decade.

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Malnutrition Rampant Among Pre-school Children in Bangladesh

Jesmin Akter¹
Luisa Fozila Chowdhury²
Dr. A.K.M. Helaluzzaman³

Abstract

Bangladesh is one of the densely populated countries in the world . Over population and poverty impede development process in Bangladesh. The nutritional status of children is a sensitive indicator for country's health and nutrition. Nearly one-half of all children below the age of five years are either under weight or stunted. This study investigated the biodemographic and socioeconomic causes of child malnutrition in Bangladesh . Multiple ordinal logistic regression analysis of the effects of selected predictors indicates that the significant correlates of child stunting are child's age, birth order, religion, mother's height, birth's interval, current breastfeeding, delivery of birth, mother's involvement with nongovernmental organization, mother's chronic energy deficiency, and household standard of living which are contributory factors. Multivariate analysis indicates that older children, children of higher birth order, first birth as well as preceding birth interval less than two years, children not immunized with BCG, mother with chronic energy deficiency, mothers involvement with NGO, children born to Muslim household, children reside in urban area and low to moderate economic households are more likely to be severely stunted. Currently breastfeeding children, children born with healthy facility, children reside in southwestern region (Khulna division) and northern region (Rajshahi division) of the country are less likely to be severe malnourished. Association of top killers of children is related to like diarrhoea, measles, fever, rapid breathing with cough and child's household background variables such as sources of drinking water, sanitation facility, type of house etc.

Keywords and phrases: Anthropometric measure, ordinal logistic regression, parallelism hypothesis, bio-demographic factors and odds ratio.

Introduction:

Bangladesh is a developing country in the world, roughly half of its citizens are below poverty line, half of all children under five years are suffering from malnutrition. Socioeconomic status is a major determinant of nutritional status. A new survey jointly conducted by World Food Program , UNICEF(United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) and Institute of Public Health and Nutrition (2008) has revealed that two million children in Bangladesh are suffering from acute malnutrition. Most causes of child mortality in developing countries is malnutrition. Pelletier(1994) and Shanghvi and Murray (1997) shows that Malnutrition is responsible for over half of the under-five-year-old deaths in developing countries. Alderman, Behrman and Hoddinot (2004) found that the children who are malnourished suffer from impaired physical development and have limited intellectual abilities, which in turn may demolish their working capacity. Silva (2005) found that Child malnutrition may also lead high levels of chronic illness and disability in adult life which may have intergenerational effects as malnourished females are more likely to have low-weight babies .

Morbidity impedes the body's metabolism and retards its immune response as the poor appetite of malnourished child leads to low dietary intakes. Oni., Schumann and Oke (1991) showed in their study revealed impairment in the immune-competence of an organism and may cause death at an early stage of life . The chronic energy deficiency (CED) tend to have small children, i.e., mother's nutritional status can explain the nutritional status of child. Briend, Wojtyniak, and Rowland. (1988) found that Malnutrition is often cited as an important factor contributing to high morbidity and mortality among children in developing countries . The relationship between nutritional status and child mortality is preventable.

1. Assistant Professor, Dept. of Business Administration, Prime University
2. Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Business Administration, Prime University
3. Chairman, Dept. of Business Administration, Prime University

Sahn and Stifel (2002) found that level of malnutrition is related to the sex of child and location of residence. Several studies observed that an increase in household income/wealth is expected to reduce child malnutrition Yimer. (2000). Even though household income is not sufficient, a positive impact on child nutrition in Vietnam in 1990s. Studies in Ethiopia similarly found a negative correlation between level of economic status and child malnutrition Yimer (2000),Genebo, Girma, Haider and Demmissie. (1999). Mother's work in Nigeria reduced stunting in their children. Sahn and Stifel (2002) found that Malnutrition among boys is consistently higher than malnutrition among girls found. Pal (1999) found the nutritional status of female children is better than that of male children in India .

Yimer (2000), Genebo and Girma, Haider and Demmissie (1999), Moen. (1993) have concluded that parental education, especially that of mothers, is a key element in improving children's nutritional status. The impact of mothers' schooling on child nutrition is not only through its nutritional knowledge. Moen (1993), studied that an educated mother is likely to have a higher effect on children's health and nutrition. Higher economic status and power in the household as well as a community helps to take decision about children's needs. Alderman, Behrman and Hodinot (2004) found the effect of maternal education is about twice as important as that of paternal education. Pebley and Amin (1991), and Bairagi (1986) showed that discrimination against girls in feeding and health care are often cited for poor nutrition and high mortality among girls than boys. Basu. (1993) and Sommerfelt and Stewart (1998) studied based on anthropometric measurements do not find a high prevalence of malnutrition among girls.

Glewwe, Koch and Nguyen (2002) studied that households living in wealthy communities generally have a relatively healthy environment, better sanitation facilities and access to clean water and healthy facilities. In a study of South India showed that when clean water, sanitary toilet and electricity are considered separately, the lack of a sanitary toilet and electricity had significant negative effects on child health while clean water had no significant effect. When these three variables are added simultaneously, electricity lost its statistical significance while a sanitary toilet remained significant. Also author suggested that policies directed at improving sanitary toilets in a community would better health outcomes, Esrey (1996). A multi-centre study showed that improved sanitation has a substantial effect on nutritional status and improvement in water supply enhances these effects. In separate analysis, water supply has a smaller effect on nutritional status than sanitation.

Methodology:

The data for the study were analyzed from Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS),2004. The unit of analysis of this study is child and the nutritional data of children have been extracted from individual level information of married but reproductive aged women. The survey gathered detailed information on breastfeeding and weaning practice, and also collected information on vitamin A and immunizations. In addition, anthropometric (height and weight) measures were taken. Because the survey also obtained information about many basic social, economic and demographic characteristics (of the respondent and/or the household), nutrition status can be linked to background characteristics. The BDHS sample is a stratified, multistage cluster sample consisting of 361 primary sampling units, 122 in the urban and 239 in the rural areas. A total of 11,440 ever-married women aged between 10 to 49 years were successfully completed. Data collected include variables related to household economic welfare (such as wealth, land, cattle ownership and food availability etc.), household and individual characteristics (such as age of children and mother, sex of child, parental education and employment status etc), availability of services and access to services (such as safe water supply, sanitation, and health facilities, health status of children in terms of various diseases etc.), demographic characteristics (such as birth order, birth

spacing etc.), and spatial variables (such as distance to health services etc.). The methods used for the quantitative analysis are descriptive statistics, bivariate and multivariate analysis.

Measurement of Child Nutritional Status:

Three commonly used measures are height-for-age, weight-for-height and weight-for-age. Low height-for-age (stunting) is an indicator of long-term poor nutritional status of the child while low weight-for-height (wasting) indicates short-term poor nutritional status. Low weight-for-age (underweight) reflects poor social conditions in both the long and short term. These measures are expressed as Z-scores from the median of the International Reference Population as recommended by National Center for Health Statistics and WHO. A child is considered stunted, wasted or underweight if the corresponding Z-scores are less than -2 , respectively. When the Z-scores are less than -3 , the child is considered severely stunted, severely wasted and severely underweight, respectively. Sommerfelt and Stewart (1998) Extreme values (i.e., outliers) of height-for-age and weight-for-height z-scores have also been excluded since they may be due to measurement errors.

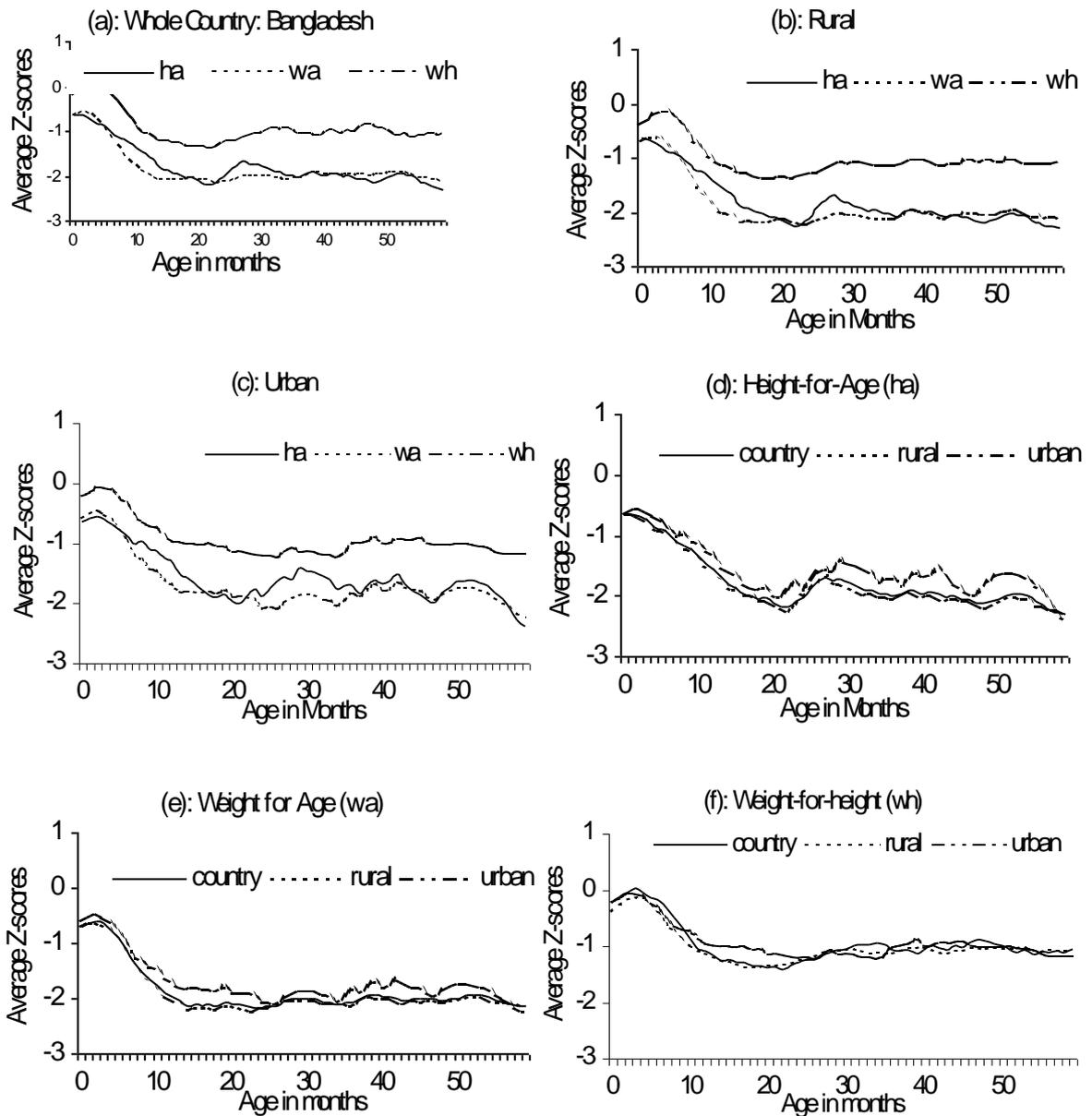
Descriptive Analysis:

In the case of wasting, the rate increased from 10.3 percent to 12.9 percent between 1999-2000 and 2004, while the rate of stunting decreased from 44.7 percent to 43.0 percent and also the rate of third measure underweight of nutrition halted at 47.5 percent between the two survey periods. Similarly the proportion of severely wasted children increased by 23.1 percent (from 1.0 percent to 1.3 percent), however, the percentage of severely stunted children decreased by 8.7 percent (from 18.3 percent to 16.8 percent). Much of this change can be accounted by change in rural areas where severe wasting was halved. Disaggregating by gender, the study indicates that girls are better off in 1999-2000 while boys fared better in 2004 in terms of both wasting and severe wasting. Table-1 shows the percentage distribution of children of age under five by selected child-mother level characteristics and socio-demographic characteristics. The present study revealed that ninety percent births are delivered at home, fifty-seven percent of the mothers received antenatal care at last birth, thirty-eight percent of them are illiterate, forty percent of father's are illiterate, eighty percent live in the rural areas, eighty percent live in the kachcha houses, seventeen percent are engaged in work, thirty-one percent are member of NGOs, thirty eight percent having electricity in the house, ninety six percent drink piped or tube well water and fifty seven percent use modern or pit toilet. Eighty five percent mother's having the 145 cm and less height, thirty eight percent has body mass index less than 18.5 kg/sq meter. Ninety one percent of the children are immunized with BCG, thirty percent by all three DPT, thirty percent by at least three polio vaccinations, eighty five percent by tetanus injections, sixty seven percent measles and seventy-two percent taken vitamin A.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of children by selected child-mother level and socio-demographic characteristics

Individual Characteristics		Household Characteristics	
Gender of Child (Female)	49.2	Drinks piped/tubewell water	96.4
Delivery with health facility	10.0	Uses moderate and pit toilets	56.6
Current breastfeeding	76.0	Electricity in house	37.6
<i>Illness 2 weeks b4 survey</i>		<i>Type of house</i>	
Diarrhoea	7.7	Pucca	5.7
Fever	41.2	Semi pucca	7.0
Cough	42.6	Kachcha	87.4
Rapid breaths	19.7	Type of floor (Kachcha)	85.8
<i>Immunization</i>		<i>Wealth status</i>	
BCG	90.7	Poor	45.9
DPT (3 doses)	29.6	Middle	19.5
Tetanus	85.1	Rich	34.5
Polio (>= 3 times)	29.6	Maternal Characteristics	
Vitamin A	72.2	Age: 15 – 19	16.1
Measles	66.5	20 – 24	33.3
<i>Preceding birth interval</i>		25 – 29	25.6
First birth	27.9	30 – 34	15.4
Below 24 months	10.9	35 – 39	6.7
24 – 47 months	33.6	40 – 44	2.2
48+ months	27.6	45 – 49	0.8
<i>Birth order</i>		Height < 145 cm	84.2
First birth	27.8	BMI below 18.5 kg/sq m	38.1
2-3 births	44.8	Work with cash	17.0
4+ births	27.5	Antenatal visits at last birth	56.7
<i>Birth wanted</i>		Membership of NGO	31.0
Wanted then	70.6	<i>Education:</i>	
Wanted later	15.0	No education	37.5
No more	14.4	Primary	31.1
<i>Stunting (Height for Age)</i>		Secondary	26.2
Severe stunted	16.4	Higher	5.2
Moderately stunted	26.0	<i>Father's Education:</i>	
Normal	57.3	No education	40.2
Obese	0.4	Primary	27.2
<i>Wasting (Weight for height)</i>		Secondary+	32.6
Severely wasted	1.3	Spatial/Community Characteristics	
Moderately wasted	11.4	Place of residence (rural)	80.4
Normal	86.6	Religion (Muslim)	92.1
Above normal	0.7	<i>Region</i>	
<i>Underweight (Weight for Age)</i>		Barishal	6.0
Severe underweight	12.7	Chittagong	21.7
Underweight	34.1	Dhaka	31.0
Normal	52.9	Khulna	11.0
Overweight	0.3	Rajshahi	22.4
		Sylhet	7.9

Figure 1: Nutritional status of preschool children in Bangladesh, DHS 2004



The anthropometric indices such as stunting, wasting and underweight by age in months of under-five (preschool aged) children is shown in Figure 1. It is clear that the nutritional status of children deteriorated rapidly after birth; the trajectory of weight-for-age measure declined sharply down than those of other measures. These indices stabilize after 12 months of age in both rural and urban and as a whole of the country and curves pass through the lower-limit line of malnutrition. The fact behind this might be that babies were reported to be of small size at the time of birth. It is more indicative that all the three average Z-scores for children aged one month (just after birth) are negative, indicating that newborn babies by birth are stunting, wasting and underweight. In reference to the mean Z-scores curves as a whole country, panels (d-f) of Figure 1 show that the trajectory of all these anthropometric measures for rural children pass throughout entire 60-month time period under the reference curve while the trajectory of urban pass over the line throughout the period.

Bivariate analysis is performed to determine the differentials of malnutrition among children aged under-5, according to any prevailing risk factors. Pearson's chi-square test of independence is performed to test the existence of significance association between nutritional status of children and selected risk factors. The significant variables observed in bivariate analysis are subsequently included in multivariate analysis. Table 2 provides the chi-square test results at five and one percent level of significance for testing the association of various factors with the level of malnutrition. Age of children is found to be significantly associated with malnutrition. The extent of stunting (severely stunted) increased with increasing age. Only 4 percent of children below the age of 12 months are severely stunted, while the prevalence rate rapidly increased to 20 percent at age interval 12-23 months. After that it almost subsequently sustained, whereas the percentage of children with normal height-for-age showed a drastic reduction from 83 percent to 48 percent. Osmani, S.R. (1997) found that there is no significant association between gender and nutritional status, that is, there is no sex difference in the nutrition of preschool children. There has a significant association of child nutrition with each of the disaggregated vaccination coverage to children. Similarly the factors of status of current breastfeeding and morbidity conditions of children such as diarrhea, fever and cough within the last two weeks at the time of survey are also found statistically insignificant. The percentage of severe stunted and stunted children among chronic energy deficient (CED) mothers are higher than normal mothers. It has been observed that 21 percent and 29 percent children of such mothers are severe stunted and stunted respectively, while 15 percent and 25 percent of children of normal nutrition mothers are stunted. The chi-square test of association has also shown that the difference is statistically significant. There are significant association observed between prevalence of stunting and child's birth order and birth interval of the preceding births. The association between nutritional status of the children and economic status revealed that the proportion of normal children increased with the increase in the household economic levels that measured by wealth index. A corresponding decline in the proportion of severe malnutrition is also evidenced from 25 percent in low economic group to 6 percent in high economic household. The overall association between the levels of nutrition and the levels of household economic condition is found to be statistically significant. The associations of the levels of child nutritional status in relation to the differentials of their morbidity are also showed statistically significant. Children residing in the better housing conditions had better nutritional status, signifying the importance of environment on the growth and development of children. The other parental, household and spatial-related factors such as educational status of both mother and father, age of mother and her involvement with NGOs, sources of drinking water, toilet facility, access to electricity, place of residence, geographic region are also found significantly associated with the levels of child nutrition.

Table 2: Prevalence of stunting among children by biodemographic and socioeconomic characteristics, Bangladesh

Characteristics	No. of Children	Severe Stunt	Stunted	Normal	Characteristics	No. of Children	Severe Stunted	Stunted	Normal
Current age of child ^a	1125	3.5	13.7	82.8	Wealth Index ^a	1409	25.0	29.1	45.9
<12 months	1125	20.3	29.9	49.9	Poorest	1167	18.7	27.8	53.5
12 – 23	1107	15.6	29.3	55.1	Poorer	1093	15.0	25.9	59.1
24 – 35	1144	20.2	28.6	51.2	Middle	1010	13.0	26.7	60.3
36 – 47	1097	23.0	28.8	48.2	Richer	918	6.2	18.3	75.5
48 - 59					Richest				
Sex of child					Member in NGO ^b	3861	17.3	25.4	57.3
Male	2842	16.0	26.0	58.1	No Member	1736	14.7	27.4	57.9
Female	2755	17.0	26.1	56.9					
Birth Order ^a					Sanitation ^a				
First	1553	15.1	24.3	60.7	Modern	1221	9.2	22.3	68.6
2-3	2508	13.8	25.7	60.5	Pit Latrine	1944	15.4	25.5	59.1
4+	1536	22.3	28.3	49.4	Open/hang etc.	2432	21.0	28.3	50.7
Birth Interval ^a					Sources drinking ^b				
First Birth	1557	15.1	24.3	60.6	Piped	345	13.9	22.9	63.2
< 24 months	614	20.2	28.2	51.6	Tubewell	5058	16.7	26.0	57.3
24+ months	3427	16.5	26.4	57.1	River/Pond etc	194	15.5	33.0	51.5
Current Breastfeeding					Residence ^a				
No	1338	15.4	27.2	57.4	Urban	1098	13.4	24.0	62.7
Yes	4260	16.9	25.6	57.5	Rural	4500	17.2	26.5	56.2
Duration Breastfeed ^a					Religion ^a				
Never/<12 months	1348	5.7	15.2	79.1	Muslim	5155	16.8	26.3	56.9
12+ months	4249	19.9	29.4	50.6	Others	443	12.9	22.3	64.8
BCG ^a					House Floor ^a				
No	3475	19.2	26.6	54.2	Katcha	4807	18.1	27.1	54.7
BCG on Card	2122	12.0	25.0	63.0	Pucca/wood	791	6.4	19.2	74.3
DPT ^a					House type ^a :	316	3.8	14.6	81.6
Not completed	3937	17.7	25.5	56.8	Pucca	389	8.5	21.6	69.9
All 3 DPT	1661	13.7	27.2	59.1	Semi-pucca	4893	18.0	27.1	54.9
					Katcha				
Polio ^a					Electricity ^a				
Not Completed	3940	17.6	25.5	56.9	No electric facility	3500	19.7	27.6	52.6
All 3 Polios	1658	13.8	27.2	59.0	Electricity in locality	2098	11.1	23.3	65.6
Measles ^a					Mother Employ.	4640	16.3	25.8	57.9
No	4319	16.8	25.1	58.2	No cash	958	17.6	27.0	55.3
On card	1278	15.6	29.3	55.2	Cash earned				

Diarrhea					Mother's Age ^a				
No	5167	16.3	26.0	57.7	<25 years	2763	15.1	25.5	59.4
Yes	431	18.6	26.5	55.0	25 – 34	2295	16.8	25.9	57.3
					35 +	540	22.2	29.3	48.5
Fever					Mother				
No	3299	16.0	25.9	58.0	education ^a	2107	22.6	27.7	49.7
Yes	2300	17.2	26.1	56.7	No education	1737	17.2	27.5	55.4
					Primary	1755	8.5	22.5	68.9
					Secondary +				
Cough					Father				
No	3216	16.8	26.1	57.2	Education ^a	2253	21.7	28.0	50.3
Yes	2382	16.2	25.9	57.9	No education	1516	15.8	27.7	56.5
					Primary	1829	10.7	22.2	67.1
					Secondary +				
Rapid Breathing ^c					Mother Height				
No	4494	16.3	25.5	58.2	^a	886	28.6	33.5	37.9
Yes	1104	17.2	28.2	54.6	<145 cm	4712	14.2	24.6	61.2
					145 and above				
Pregnancy					BMI ^a :				
Intention ^a	3951	15.8	25.8	58.3	CED	2128	21.1	29.3	49.5
Wanted then	843	16.4	24.7	59.0	Normal	3166	14.6	24.7	60.7
Wanted later	803	19.8	28.4	51.8	Obesity	304	3.9	16.4	79.6
No more wanted									
Place of					Region ^a				
Delivery ^a	560	7.5	16.4	76.1	Barishal	333	18.9	28.5	52.6
Health Facility	5038	17.5	27.1	55.4	Chittagong	1218	18.7	26.9	54.4
Home, others					Dhaka	1738	18.4	25.8	55.8
Vitamin A ^a					Khulna	611	8.5	23.7	67.8
Taken	4034	18.5	28.3	53.1	Rajshahi	1254	14.0	25.8	60.3
Not taken	1563	11.2	20.1	68.7	Sylhet	444	19.1	26.4	54.5
					Total	5597	16.5	26.0	57.5
					(Percent)		(923)	(145)	(331)
								7)	8)

^a and ^b indicate that the corresponding characteristic variables are significant at 5% and 1% level of significance (chi-square tests) respectively

Multivariate Analysis:

In child malnutrition studies, a range of multiple regression, logistic regression and multinomial regression models are applied to examine the determinants of malnutrition, depending on the conceptualization of the hypotheses and the nature and the categorization of both dependent and independent variables. Since the nutritional status is ordinal in nature after categorization of the values of stunting, multiple logistic or multinomial logistic modeling are not suitable and might produce misleading inferences. Practitioners and researchers in demography are customized to interpret the parameters of interests using the odds ratios techniques. Poston (2001) analyzes the nutritional status data of preschool children by using the widely used ordinal logistic regression model for polychotomous ordinal response variable. Nguyen-Dinh. (1997) found a fertility analysis in Vietnam examining the socioeconomic determinants of the number of children ever born using OLS, Poisson and ordinal logistic regression models and compared the results that showed that later model was somewhat better than the others; however, the estimated effects of many variables were similar for the Poisson model .

Ordinal Logistic Regression Model :

In ordinal logistic regression, the event of interest is observing a particular score or less. Score indicates a particular level of malnutrition a child belongs to. Considering low, middle, and high score of outcome event malnutrition corresponds respectively to the nourished, malnourished and severely malnourished children, that is, the higher the score the higher the severity of child malnourished. For the level of malnutrition, all of the odds are of the form: $\gamma_j = \Pr(\text{score} \leq j) / (1 - \Pr(\text{score} \leq j))$ since the probability of a score greater than j is 1 minus probability of a score less than or equal to j and j goes from 1 to the number of categories minus 1. The model is based on the assumption that there is a latent continuous outcome variables and that the observed ordinal outcome arises from discrediting the underlying continuum into j -ordered groups. The thresholds estimate these cut off values. McCullagh, P. (1980) showed the ordinal logistic regression model for multiple independent variables

$$\log(\gamma_j) = \alpha_j - (\beta_1 x_1 + \dots + \beta_k x_k)$$

where γ_j is the cumulative probability for the j th category, α_j is the threshold for the j th category, and β 's and x 's are k regression coefficients and predictors respectively. There is a minus sign before the coefficients for predictor variables, instead of the customary plus sign. That is done so that large coefficients indicate an association with larger scores. A positive coefficient for a dichotomous factor, we know that high scores are more likely for the first category. A negative coefficient tells that lower scores are more likely. For a continuous variable, a positive coefficient tells that as the values of the variable increase the likelihood of larger scores increases. An association with higher scores means smaller cumulative probabilities for lower scores, since they are less likely to occur.

Each log has its own intercept, threshold α_j term but the same coefficients β 's for the predictors. That means the effect of each of the independent variables is the same (i.e., parallelism hypothesis) for different log functions. This is why this model also called the proportional odds model. The purpose of the method is to model the dependence of an ordinal categorical response variable on a set of discrete and/or continuous independent variables. Since the choice and the number of response categories can be arbitrary, it is essential to model the dependency such that the choice of the response categories does not affect the conclusion of the inference. That is, the final conclusion should be the same if any two or more adjacent categories of the old scale are combined. Such consideration leads

to modeling the dependence of the response on the independent variables by means of the cumulative response probability.

Fitting of Models:

Findings of descriptive analysis of malnutrition and its differentials by biodemographic, spatial and socioeconomic variables indicated that many of these variables are interrelated with the levels of child malnutrition, so a multivariate analysis of the determinants of malnutrition for only the outcome variable stunting of children is undertaken. This modeling is executed in three stages in order to examine the changing nature of the explanatory potential of background characteristics. The Model 1 includes only individual characteristics of children to estimate the effect of each of these variables on malnutrition status outcome. Similarly Model 2 is based on both child and parent's background, and the Model 3 includes all the variables discussed earlier. Table 3 presents estimated coefficients and corresponding odds ratios for each of these models. It is essential to test the fundamental assumption of the ordinal linear model that regression coefficients are the same for all three categories of response variable. Since all the observed significance levels are larger (last row of Table 3 with the p-values greater than 0.25, 0.20 and 0.25, respectively), we do not have sufficient evidence to reject the parallelism hypothesis. Noting that if this hypothesis is refuted, one should preferably consider using multinomial regression, which estimates separate coefficients for each nominal category.

The multivariate analysis confirms most of the findings presented in the descriptive analysis, particularly in the direction of relationship between malnutrition and its risk factors. However, not all variables are significantly associated with malnutrition. From the observed significance levels we see that age of child, birth order, birth interval, breastfeeding, BCG, rapid short-breath, and delivery facility are all related to the nutritional levels (Model-1). Table 3 (columns 4 and 5) presents the estimates and odds ratios for Model-2 extending the Model-1 by including parental characteristics. The coefficients of the variables of age of child, birth order, birth interval, breastfeeding, BCG, rapid short-breath, delivery of birth, mother's involvement with nongovernmental organization, both mother's and father's level of education, mother's height and chronic energy deficiency are found to be significant with nutritional status of children. To turn to the household, socioeconomic and spatial level variables influence on the nutritional status of children, these predictors are included in Model-3 and the estimated coefficients and odds ratios are presented in columns 6 and 7 of Table 3. The significance level observed for the variables of age and gender of child, birth order, birth interval, breastfeeding, BCG, vitamin A, rapid short-breath, delivery of birth, mother's involvement with nongovernmental organizations, father's education, mother's height and chronic energy deficiency, place of residence, religion, region, and household living standard.

Results and Discussion:

The negative value of coefficient indicates that the factor with this level is less likely to high level of malnutrition than the reference level of the factor, while a positive value corresponding to a level of a factor indicate that the high scores (malnourished) are more likely to that level than that of reference level. The corresponding odds ratio of a coefficient stays the same over all of the ordered levels of malnutrition. The negative value of the coefficient of children who born with healthy facility indicates negative associated with severe malnutrition, that is, children born with modern health facility are less likely to severe malnutrition than those who born at home or delivered by unskilled personnel or without any modern facility. The corresponding odds ratio of 0.74 indicates that for any nutritional level, the risk of severe stunting is 0.74 times less for children born with health facility than those who without such facility, after controlling effects of other variables. Gender of child is found to be insignificant in Models 1 and Model 2 of child nutrition but it is statistically significant in Model 3.

Table 3: Odds ratios of the risk factors associated with ordered malnourished of preschool children in Bangladesh

Predictor Variables	Model-1		Model-2		Model-3	
	Coefficient	Odds-ratios	Coefficient	Odds-ratios	Coefficient	Odds-ratios
Age child: <12 months						
12 – 23	-1.694 a	0.18	-1.740 a	0.18	-1.746 a	0.17
24 – 35	-0.307 a	0.74	-0.293 a	0.75	-0.285 a	0.75
36 – 47	-0.490 a	0.61	-0.444 a	0.64	-0.452 a	0.64
Sex of child: Male	-0.199 b	0.82	-0.148 c	0.86	-0.139 c	0.87
Birth Order: First	-0.070	1.07	-0.085	1.09	-0.094 c	1.10
2-3	-1.847 b	0.16	-1.988 b	0.14	-2.004 b	0.13
Birth Interval: First Birth	-0.437 a	0.65	-0.380 a	0.68	-0.292 a	0.75
< 24 months	1.537 c	4.65	1.747 c	5.74	1.870 b	6.49
Not currently Breastfeeding	0.189 b	1.21	0.182 b	1.20	0.155 c	1.17
Never breastfeed<12months	-0.458 a	0.63	-0.352 a	0.70	-0.341 a	0.71
BCG: No	-0.193	0.82	-0.091	0.91	-0.086	0.92
DPT: Not completed	0.292 b	1.34	0.306 b	1.36	0.311 b	1.37
Polio: Not Completed	1.196	3.31	1.106	3.02	1.199	3.32
<i>Morbidity last 2 weeks</i>	-1.339	0.26	-1.299	0.27	-1.427	0.24
No Measles						
No Measles	-0.060	0.94	-0.071	1.07	-0.112	1.12
Not having Diarrhea	-0.100	0.90	-0.027	1.03	-0.023	1.02
No Fever	-0.068	0.93	-0.073	1.08	-0.069	1.07
No Coughing	0.033	1.03	0.031	0.97	0.035	0.97
No Rapid Breathing	-0.254 a	0.78	-0.185 b	1.20	-0.142	1.15
Vitamin A Taken	0.015	1.02	0.092	0.91	0.129 c	0.88
Child Wanted then	-0.070	0.93	-0.069	0.93	-0.107	0.90
Spacer/wanted later	0.071	1.07	0.078	1.08	0.074	1.08
Delivery with health facility	-0.816 a	0.44	-0.492 a	0.61	-0.305 a	0.74
Mother's with NGO			0.160 a	1.17	0.124 b	1.13
Mother's Age: <25 years			0.041	1.04	0.005	1.01
25 – 34			-0.144	0.87	-0.134	0.87
Mother no education			0.348 a	1.42	0.143	1.15
Primary completed			0.255 a	1.29	0.106	1.11
Father no education			0.295 a	1.34	0.159 c	1.17
Primary completed			0.146 b	1.16	0.065	1.07
Mother does not earn			0.087	1.09	0.082	1.09
Mothers height (<145 cm)			0.911 a	2.49	0.927 a	2.53
Mothers BMI: CED			1.062 a	2.89	0.910 a	2.48
Normal			0.720 a	2.05	0.629 a	1.88
Residence in Urban					0.147 c	1.16
Muslim Child					0.262 b	1.30

Region: Barishal		0.072	1.08
Chittagong		0.129	1.14
Dhaka		-0.085	0.92
Khulna		-0.449 a	0.64
Rajshahi		-0.374 a	0.69
Drinking water: Piped		0.322	1.38
Tubewell		-0.193	0.82
Sanitation: Modern		-0.063	0.94
Pit Latrine		-0.096	0.91
No electric facility		0.063	1.06
House Floor: Katcha		0.227	1.26
Type of house: Pucca		-0.325	0.72
Semi-pucca		0.101	1.11
Wealth Index: Poorest		0.794 a	2.21
Poorer		0.587 a	1.80
Middle		0.422 a	1.52
Richer		0.495 a	1.64
Overall Model fit ¹			
Parallel hypothesis tests ²	669.31 (23) a	1007.39 (34) a	1146.20 (53) a
	31.03(23) (p>0.25)	49.90 (34) (p>0.20)	65.27 (53) (p>0.25)

where a, b, and c indicate one, five and ten percent level of significance. ¹ & ² are based on change of -2 log-likelihood

Children of age less than one year are significantly less likely to be malnourished than children of more than four years of age (reference group). Lower the children's age, the (almost) lower their odds of being in malnourished group as compared to the reference category (>4 years of age). In terms of the odds ratios of the levels of age the nutritional status of children deteriorated rapidly after one year of age and this estimate also showed that the nutritional status of children improves between 2 and 3 years of age, and after this age level the status of nutrition again deteriorated. Children who either never breastfed or stopped breastfeeding is found highly negative significant association with the levels of child malnutrition in all the fitted models as compared to those children who still being breastfed. Children of first birth order as compared to their birth order of four or more birth are 0.13 times significantly less likely to be severe stunted. As compared with children of birth order four or above, the risk of severe stunting is 0.75 times less for children with 2-3 births order. It is also observed that as the preceding birth interval of the child decreases, the likelihood of being severe malnourished increases. Children whose preceding birth interval is less than 24 months are 1.17 times significantly more likely to be severe malnourished as compared with children whose preceding birth interval is 24 months and more. While the risk of severe stunting is 6.5 times higher than the first birth children as compared to reference category. Other morbidity-related variables such as diarrhea, measles, fever and cough have no significant impact on nutritional status. Association of the factors-related to child immunization, such as DPT, BCG and polio with the levels of child malnutrition is also found insignificant except BCG. The magnitude, direction and significance of BCG remain almost unchanged in all three models.

In Model 2, both the mother's and father's education are appeared to be related to the levels of child malnutrition but in Model-3 mother's education does not appear to be associated with child nutrition while the father's education shows an association with a relatively low significance to child nutrition. This happened since most of the educated parents live in urban areas, the net effects both of these variables estimated after controlling the effects of spatial and other variables. Children whose mother's height is less than 145 cm is compared to those whose mother's height is more than or equal of that are 2.5 times more likely to be severe malnutrition, holding all other variables constant. Similarly the levels of mothers body mass index have a positive significant impact on child malnutrition. Children whose mothers with chronic energy deficiency are also 2.5 times more likely to

be severe malnutrition as compared to children with obese mothers. These findings signify the importance of maternal nutritional status in the growth and development of child. Similarly the net effect of the morbidity of rapid breathing within the last two weeks preceding the survey also has no significant effect in Model-3 but it is found significant in other two fitted models.

Model-3 also showed that children who reside in Khulna division (south-western part of the country) and Rajshahi division (northern region) are significantly less likely to malnutrition than those children reside in Sylhet division (eastern region). There is a significant difference between urban and rural children and between Muslim children and other religious. Household economic status, measured by wealth index, is another important correlates explaining child stunting. As compared with children whose household economic status is very high, the risk of severely stunting is 2.2 times more for children with very poor household economic condition. These results confirm the earlier findings that show economic status begins to have its effect on the nutritional status right from 'in-utero' and continues in the rapid stages of development leading to malnourished children]. Thus, it can be said that malnutrition is both a cause and consequence of economic status, which is a key determinant of nutritional status of children. Household background variables such as sources of drinking water, sanitation facility, type of house and type of house-floor where child usually slept have no significant impact on the child malnutrition. Mother's involvement with non-governmental organization has a significant impact on children's nutritional status. As unexpected, the risk of severe malnutrition of children whose mother's involvement with NGOs is 1.13 times more for children whose mother's have no involvement with NGO. This is perhaps because mother's work outside of the home has had negative consequences for childcare and breastfeeding practices, which may have out-weighed any potential benefit of mother's earning and her activities with NGOs.

Conclusion:

The situation of children malnutrition in this country is a silent emergency. Not only is malnutrition a direct cause of death among children, but it is also a significant underlying cause of morbide. In Bangladesh, forty three percent of all preschool (under aged five) children are stunted, forty-seven and half percent are underweight, and about thirteen percent are wasted. The extent of severe malnutrition is also substantial. About seventeen percent of the children are severely stunted, about thirteen percent are severely underweight, and one percent are severely wasted by international criteria. The low prevalence of wasting than stunting or underweight indicates that chronic malnutrition is more prevalent in the nation than acute malnutrition. There is a considerable variation in the prevalence of malnutrition by regional division. Among the divisions, Rajshahi and Khulna have the highest and the lowest prevalence of malnutrition respectively.

This study found evidence that about half of the selected biodemographic, socioeconomic and spatial variables have a significant influence on the odds of malnutrition of children. It is observed that the effects of many of these factors on the risk of stunting are generally as anticipated. Child nutrition is not a simple problem with a single solution. Multiple and interrelated correlates come into play; a series of approaches and policies therefore have to be evolved to deal with such kind of early health hazard. The relationship between household living standard and child stunting is still relatively strong if other variables that affect nutritional status are controlled. It is necessary to provide the governmental support to the very poor or poor households. The results showed that education of parents are at a lower risk of child malnutrition. Health and nutritional education should be an integral part of the education process. Though influence of mother's education on child nutrition disappeared, after controlling the effects of other variables, while the father's education seems to have little impact on nutritional status of children. It is therefore imperative that opportunities should be given to adult women and men to take part in non-formal education. Integrated health services programs might be organized for women in the setting of village meetings.

Close spacing birth (less than 24 months) also showed a significant nutritional deficient in preschool children. Though bivariate chi-square analysis showed no sex difference on nutritional status of children but multivariate analysis showed a clear significant difference of nutritional status of male and female children. Evidence suggests the biological consequences known to occur in later life, that is, malnourished female children grow up as short stature women and give birth to low birth-weight babies characterized by growth retardation throughout the growing period, thereby perpetuating a vicious cycle through generations. Findings also showed that the level of mothers body mass index have a positive significant impact on child malnutrition. The risk of severe malnutrition is found to be two and half times higher of children whose mothers with chronic energy deficiency as compared to children with obese mothers. As the severity of chronic energy deficiency of mothers increased, the proportion of severe malnutrition among children increased. Therefore improved maternal nutritional status is essential for the overall growth and development of children.

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Changing Status of Women and their Emancipation: A Bangladesh Scenario

Sabina Yeasmin *

ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is a resource-limited and overpopulated country where society is highly stratified, services and opportunities are determined by gender, class and location. The status of women still has a long way to go, but women have made several gains in achieving more legal rights in terms of marriage and land rights. More and more as with most societies in today's world, women in Bangladesh face huge discrimination in all aspects of life. The total development of Bangladesh will undoubtedly be hampered if the status of women, constituting about fifty percent of the country's population, remains as low as it is today. In Bangladesh the women feel deprived in every sphere of their lives. Right from their birth, women are neglected in food sharing, education, work, independent thinking, right to property, choice and matters of decision making. They face discriminations in both their "public" and "private" lives. Despite of the equality of men-women ratio in Bangladesh, the importance and potentialities of women have been disregarded in socio-economic development till today. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, the parliament, military, establishments, judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc. Gender-gaps still exist in every sphere of women's lives and women are deprived of their fundamental rights. Women's development is a global concern in this new millennium. However, since the early 1990's women have made significant improvements in their status and women's rights and issues are at the forefront of debate in Bangladesh and around the world. Although the role of women within the household and the community has been changing fast over the past decade or so, their position in terms of prestige, power and control over resources remains almost unchanged. As a result, though the quantitative indicators of changes in women's lives have improved in some cases, qualitative changes have not been remarkable.

* Assistant Professor, Open School, BOU

INTRODUCTION

Since last century there have been remarkable changes among the women in Bangladesh. Their emancipations in social, economic and even in political spheres are encouraging which exert a great impact on the development aspect of the country. A number of NGO's has emphasized on the basic areas of gender justice, empowering work, sexuality etc. Also a good deal of research has been done on the muslim women in the context of cultural history of Bangladesh, in the context of religion, in the context of media etc. Now time has come to evaluate their contribution and position in the overall context of the country. It can be said that now-a-days the women in Bangladesh are fighting for their rights and equal status in the patriarchal male-dominated society.

Bangladesh is a country with evenly distributed male and female population. From the very beginning of its journey as an independent country, it has been cherishing the harmonized growth of both male and female population. Women and men are equal according to the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, but in reality they are not (Islam 2000). Most on-going discussions and research related to women's development and women's rights in Bangladesh indicate that there are at least four mutually interdependent factors influencing the macro societal system. These include economic setting, political organization, legal system and ideology and religion. These factors often cocoon women in the social system (Epstein, 1986). There is a gross disparity between women and men in every sphere of life, especially in economic aspects, since the agricultural sector which dominates the national economy is controlled mostly by men. Traditionally, men are the breadwinners and economic dependence makes women socially backward and considered to be a burden on the family. However, the subordination of women in Bangladesh is a consequence of the existing patriarchal social system which determines power relations within households and the bargaining power of household members through the organization of the family, kinship and marriage, inheritance (Naved, 2000). Women's powerlessness arises from their illiteracy, lack of awareness, poor knowledge and skills and also from their lack of self esteem and confidence (Lazo, 1995). Thus, even though women constitute almost half of the population in

Bangladesh, their status has been ranked the lowest in the world on the basis of twenty indicators related to education, health, marriage, children, employment and social equality (NCBP, 2000). Bangladeshi women are the most battered in the world, an estimated 47 percent have suffered from different types of assault (Mahmood, 2004). Thus, most aspect of women's lives, particularly women's freedom of choice, decision-making power and access to resources are controlled by the norms of the

Patriarchal society (Sebstad and Cohen, 2002). Consequently, they are marginalized as production units for bearing and rearing children (Ahmad, 2001).

Women journalist centre (BWJC) convener Nasimun Ara Haq Minu said "A woman has to take care of her profession after looking after her husband, children, their education, and in-laws. She has to manage so many things in single hand." Moreover, prohibition and superstitions of various kinds socially exploit women. They cannot expose themselves as an independent being. So, before marriage they are dependent on their father and brother, and after marriage on their husband; and when the husband dies she becomes helpless. According to the UN report on female education (1985), at the fag end of the twentieth century, there were 637 million women in the world who could neither read nor write. In Bangladesh, traditionally the role of women had been that of daughter, wife and mother. Their activities in the socio-cultural milieu of Bangladesh are primarily domestic in nature, confined to the four walls of home. Women are vulnerable in every sector in Bangladesh. While development planners and policy makers have recognized the equal role of women and their contribution to the national economy, efforts towards consolidating women's position at the household, community, and national levels have been insufficient. An all-out effort towards improving the welfare of women and bridging the gap between men and women still remains unfinished in the national development and planning. In short, women are discriminated from home to parliament, in Bangladesh.

According to the Gender Development Index of UNDP in 2002, Bangladesh ranked 110 with an estimated earned income of PPP US \$ 1150 for females and PPP US \$ 2035 for males (PPP or purchasing

power parity means, \$ 1 has the same purchasing power in the domestic economy as \$ 1 has in the United States). This means, women are the poorest of the poor. The traditional society of Bangladesh is permeated with patriarchal values and norms of female's subordination, subservience, subjugation and segregation. These consequences result in discrimination of women at birth leading to deprivation of and access of all opportunities and benefits in family and societal life, thus putting women in the most disadvantageous position.

Objective of the Study:

The objective of this study is to focus light on the real status of women in Bangladesh. More specifically it is to identify the status of women in Bangladesh in different sections. A look at some important indicators that will make the status clearer are, women's education, health and nutrition, decision making, politics and administration, economic activities etc. It also deals with the violence against women in our country.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is basically based on the review of primary and secondary literature including books, journals, annual reports, newspapers etc. Relevant information is also collected from Internet browsing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic background of women in Bangladesh: Bangladesh an independent and sovereign state appeared on the world map on December 16, 1971 following the victory at the war of liberation from March 25 to December 16, 1971. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the population of the country was 111.4 in 1991 and assuming medium variant of declining fertility and mortality the country is expected to reach a population of 129.6 million by 2000 A.D. So with a male female ratio of 109:100, which is little less than half of total population, but for every 250 male literate there were only 100 female literate aged 5 and above (Ahmed,1985:17). According to the UN gender Development Index, Bangladesh is ranked 121st out of a total of 146 countries worldwide. Out of the total population, 48.9 percent is women, of whom nearly 86 percent live in rural areas. And

only about 16 percent women are literate, compared to a 30 percent rate of literacy for men. Demographic changes related to fertility and migration influences the Bangladesh economy and society to great extent. For years, Bangladesh was characterized by a youthful population structure with a heavy concentration of children (below 15 years) and an imbalance in the sex ratio. Over time, however, the fertility rate has declined remarkably and this significantly affected the population composition. In 1995-1996, about 53 percent of the population belonged to the active age group and 41 percent were children. The female population of reproductive age was 29.8 million in 1996. This number is likely to reach 37 million in 2010. There is little clear improvement in the overall sex ratio, which shows a preponderance of men over women. Over a period of more than two decades, the sex ratio decreased from 108 to 105. However it improved remarkably in urban areas, suggesting a greater volume of women's independent migration to cities and also a higher prevalence of family migration. In 1995-1996, sex ratio for rural and urban areas was estimated at 104 and 106, respectively. The fertility rate has dramatically fallen from 6.34 per women in 1997 to 3.8 in 1996. Fertility is higher in rural (2.76) than in urban areas (2.48). In rural areas the fertility rate is higher for women aged between 20 to 35 years. For urban women, women's increased participation in the labor force starting at adolescence contributes significantly to controlling fertility. The average age of marriage for girls in Bangladesh is between 13-16 years and almost all the girls are married before they are 25 years of age. As married life commonly starts at the age of 15 for most, a woman experiences 10-11 pregnancy in her lifetime, out of which the number of average surviving children is 3.2. With regard to mortality, the population belonging to 0-1 and 50 years and above is more vulnerable than any other age group. For the 0-1 age group, the mortality rate of the male population used to be higher than that of the female population, but now the death rate of female child is higher than that of the male child. Women are also gravely exposed to dangers of childbirth. A pervasive gender differential in entitlement of food, nutrition, and care leads to a higher death rate of the female child than the male child.

Indicator	National		Rural		Urban	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Adult literacy rate 15+, 1998	42.5	59.4	36.2	56.1	60.0	75.4
Net enrolment primary school, 1997	80.8	82.9	82.8	96.8	83.8	82.1
Net enrolment secondary school, 1995	19.0	23.0	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a
Dropout rate at secondary level 1996	48.4	37.8	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a

WOMEN'S EDUCATION, HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in terms of improving its literacy and health care, and is one of the very few countries which are on track for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. However, women are still discriminated in the intra-household allocation of resources, interims of food, education and health-care.

Till today, parents prefer spending more for the education of their boys than girls since a boy's education is seen as an investment for the parent's future. Girl's education is useless since they leave their parent's house after they are married and therefore cannot look after them during their old age. Also female labour is required for domestic help; therefore parents have no incentive to send them to school. Though the gross enrolment rate of female student to a male student both at the primary and secondary level is 1.03, this rate declines to only 0.53 at the tertiary level. Adult literacy rate is 44.2 percent for females compared to 56.3 for males. In 1990, Bangladesh signed the declaration on "Education for All". But the country is still far behind the desired literacy level. The overall literacy rate is 58 per cent, of which 67 per cent are male and 49.5 per cent are female. The ratio of male-female teachers in primary schools in 1990 was 79:21, this increased to 72:28 by 1996, registering an increase in favor of females. But the drop out rate at both primary and secondary level is comparatively higher for female students than that of male students. Consequently, the completion rate for girls is lower in both primary and secondary level. The situation is worse for women in higher and technical education; this is due to the fact that investment in education for girls is still considered as less useful, economically. Poor parents consider any expenses for educating a girl unproductive, as she leaves their family after marriage. A survey conducted in 1986 showed most men in rural Bangladesh considered educated women responsible for unhappy conjugal lives. Consequently, boys, not girls, get preference

when it comes to the question of educational investment. That is why very few women continue their education up to the overall rate of return from education and women's labor market entitlements.

Table 1: Educational status of women

Source: Sample vital Registration, Multiple Indicators cluster Survey, BBS: Statistical year book, 1997, BBS; UNESCO Paris, BANBEIS 1998.

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world, and among the poor, women are the poorest and most backward. This is due to poverty, unawareness of the benefit of education for women and other social stigma (for example, once female education was considered valueless.)

Table 2: Level of Education Enrolment Levels

	Primary		Lower Secondary		Upper Secondary		Tertiary	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Urban	7937 576	2624 484	2282 698	409305 7	4835 07	197566 9	1837 5	2346 00
Rural	2135 858	2624 484	1162 747	169894 2	6213 92	141699 4	1874 42	4656 54

Source: BBS 1998, Page 557

Table 3: Mortality rates

	Infant Mortality	Under 5 Mortality	Maternal Mortality	Number of children per woman (Total Fertility Rate)
Urban	50	7.5	850	2.48*
Rural	76	12	Per10,000	3.76*

Source: BBS 1998; * per 1000 women

Table 4: Mortality rates

Year	Child death rate		Mortality rate		Infant mortality rate		Child death rate (1-4)	
	F	M	R	U	F	M	F	M

1982	12.1	12.3	-	-	-	-	23.9	20.5
1990	-	-	5.0	4.3	-	-	-	-
1992	11.0	11.1	-	-	-	-	13.9	13.0
1994	-	-	11.1	3.9	76	77	-	-

Source: BBS 1995, Statistical pocket book, pp124-125, BBS 1994; Women and Men in Bangladesh, 1970-1990, p-33.

There are some differences between enrolment rates and education levels because of frequent dropouts. The government is encouraging more enrolment and wishes to reduce dropout rates, especially for women. Up to the primary level schooling is free for both sexes; up to class eight (lower secondary level) it is free for girls. The government also gives incentives (food for various education programs) to female students. The government has targeted eradication of illiteracy by the year 2003. Adult mass education programmers have been introduced with the collaboration of NGOs. Female's low educational levels affect the service program not only in terms of vacancies, but also in terms of the women who are recruited, since they are likely to represent a highly selected group. Different reasons are found in Bangladesh for not sending their daughters to school. One of the tendencies of the schools in Bangladesh is to reinforce prevailing attitudes than to transcend them. Some subjects (for example home Economics) are seen as appropriate or useful for girls and other for boys (e.g. Agricultural Science).

The health indicators show that women are in disadvantageous position compared to men in terms of health and nutrition. While facilities are limited for everyone in general, women's access to such facilities is even more limited. Women's role as wife and mother is glorified, and girls are married off at an early age, especially in the rural areas, and soon after that they enter into a pattern of high fertility. This creates health problems for women. Thirty-six percent of women in the age group of 15-19 are married. Long child-bearing span, with first birth at an early age, and high birth rate (an average of 2.9 children per women) aggravate women's malnutrition status, which is already poor due to inadequate food intake.

Improving the health of women requires addressing social issues. The approach adopted by the health services for women's healthcare is

mainly restricted to their reproductive health, while general health remains neglected. The motherhood of Bangladeshi women is characterized by young age, malnutrition, frequent pregnancies, and poor healthcare services. Maternal mortality is 570 per 100,000 women, which is higher than that of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

For women, in Bangladesh, generally life consists of high mortality, malnutrition and ill health. Women's general health care is greatly ignored and they face special health hazards due to severe anemic condition, poor health, inadequate nutrition, multiple pregnancies, abortion etc. Although a housewife has to take care of the health of all members of the family, there is hardly anyone to take care of hers. The daily per capital calorie intake of women (1599k. cal) is lower than that of a man (1927k. cal). The life expectancy of females (60.5 years) is lower than that of males (60.7 years). Women's low social status and poverty in turn lead to their poor health, high fertility and lack of access to essential health care. The ultimate outcome of these latter three factors is a high maternal mortality rate. The average weight of a Bangladeshi woman is about 40.9 kg, which is less than the mean weight of women in most third world countries. The low weight is a reflection of food deprivation. Poor environmental sanitation and lower food intake of female give them lower resistance capacity, thereby rendering them more vulnerable to diarrhea and communicable diseases, which cause the highest mortality and morbidity in this country. Though it is said that women are biologically more resistant to adverse health situation than men, women in Bangladesh have a lower life expectancy at birth (53.4) than men (54.2). Now the death rate of female child is higher than male child. Women are also gravely exposed to the dangers of childbirth. A pervasive gender differential in entitlement of food nutrition and care leads to a higher death rate of girl children than boy children. In effective use of indigenous abortion related methods cause about 10,000 deaths of women, per year in the country. Empirical data from a nutrition study in *Matlab* area shows that family allocation of food and health care discriminates against female children and causes higher female mortality in childhood. Table 4 reflects the same fact: Table 4 shows that maternal mortality rate in Bangladesh is still high though compared to previous years it has sharply declined. Infant mortality rate per 100 live births among male

children are higher than females. But child death rate (1-4) among female is higher. According to UNICEF, about 23,000 women die in pregnancy and childbirth every year, while 600,000 others suffer from various neo-natal complications in Bangladesh. Malnutrition, Environmental insanitation and shortage of medical services and above all a negative attitude towards female health have been the main causes of poor health of Bangladeshi women. The National Health Service has been too inadequate for the purpose and is traditionally curative in a nature and it is basically urban based. The above factors such as ill health, maternal mortality, and women's unnatural deaths have all made women more vulnerable than man.

WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING, POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION

Participating in politics or election is an important instrument to facilitate democracy in the society. But women are still fighting for their just and equitable participation in political processes. In Bangladesh women's participation in the political and national movement has been very negligible. Statistics show that women lag behind men substantially in indicators of economic participation and political participation. Political participation of women is low because of illiteracy and little involvement in public life and politics. The female members of the Union Parishad, the lowest tier of the Local Government, though elected in direct election, literally have fewer powers, lots of women voters at villages and women in the hill tracts are deprived of their voting rights also. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, the parliament, military establishments, judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc. In Bangladesh, nominating a few women candidates has been merely a ritual to (some) political parties to ensure election victory. Table 5, through comparison of women candidates as competitor in the general elections of previous years, gives us the idea that although the number of women participating has increased yet their number is not at all significant. On the other hand, women's participation in electoral race is very frustrating. Table 7 shows that although the participation of female voters have increased greatly, as far as exercising voting is concerned, such increase was less in fighting election as a candidate. Out of 300

seats only 37 women candidates contested for 48 seats including Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina. Among them only 6 candidates won in the National Assembly in the 8th parliament. Although in the parliament, the total number of elected representatives is 300; since 1972, the number of women contestants in general election is negligible.

Table 5: Participation in election

Year	No of seats	No of women candidates
1991	46	39
1996	48	36
2001	47	37

Source: Unnayan Podokkhep, 2001

Table 6: Women and national election

Year	Women candidates per hundred	Reserved seats for women	Percentage of women in nation assembly	Successful women candidates by direct elect election	Successful in by election as women candidates	Total successful women candidates
1973	.3	15	4.8	X	X	X
1979	.9	30	9.7	X	2	2
1986	.3	30	10.6	5	2	7
1988	.7	30	10.6	4	X	4
1991	1.5	30	10.6	4	2	6
1996	1.3	30	11.21	5	2	7
2001	2.0	X	2	6	X	6

Source: Unnayan podokkhep, 2001

Traditionally, women's participation in politics is very marginal in Bangladesh due to various reasons, including lack of appropriate organizational arrangements in political parties, low participation of women in the decision-making bodies of the political parties, and the existing political culture, which involve violence, the use of musclemen and money. However, there has been remarkable change in terms of women's participation in politics over the last two decades. The country has been run by female prime ministers for the last 18 years. Apart from the female quota, which ensured female presence in local bodies and in the parliament, women are also being directly elected nowadays by contesting with the male candidates. The participation of

female candidates in the election of 2008 has exceeded all previous records. A total of 60 candidates contested directly, out of which 19 won (Table 7).

Table 7: Situation of women in National Elections

Year	% of Women Candidates in Total Candidates	% of Total Elected Women Candidates in Total Elected Candidates
1973	0.3	0
1979	0.9	0.67
1986	1.3	2.00
1988	0.7	1.33
1991	1.5	3.00
1996	1.36	2.33
2001	1.79	2.00
2008	3.86	6.33

Source: Women for Women 1996; the Daily New Age, 31 December 2008

Women are also participating in local government elections. In 1997, a large number of women contested in the Union Parishad elections, and many of them won. The recent upazila elections also demonstrated the overwhelming participation of women, which was facilitated by reserving the vice chairmanship for female candidates. Women's participation as voters has also increased significantly in recent years. At present, five important ministries, including the Prime Minister's Office, are being run by competent female parliamentarians. According to the gender empowerment measure (GEM) rank, Bangladesh is placed at 140, a lower position than India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (Table 8).

Table 8: Gender Empowerment in Different Countries

Country	Gender empowerment measure (GEM) rank (HDR 2007-08)	Seats in parliament (% of women) as of May 2007	Legislatorss eni or officials and managers (% female) 1999-2005	Professional and Technical workers (% of women) 1994-2005	Female Income as % of Male Income
Norway	2	37.9	30	50	76.9
Sweden	6	47.3	30	51	80.5
Bangladesh	140	15.1	23	12	45.9
India	128	9	-	-	31.2
Pakistan	136	20.4	2	26	29.4
Sri Lanka	99	4.9	21	46	40.9

Source: UNDP 2008.

Legal status: In Bangladesh women have inadequate access to the law due to illiteracy, lack of legal literacy, information and resources, insensitivity and gender bias. They also lack awareness of women's human rights in general. The law-enforcement officials and the judiciary do not really know how to make law more gender sensitive. Women may also lack access to justice or Human rights because of race, ethnicity, culture, and religion. In Bangladesh the most important events in a woman's life, e.g. marriage, divorce, custody of children, inheritance etc., are governed by the personal laws, which in case of Muslims is the "Sharia (law) based on the Quran and Hadith (Sayings of Prophet Mohammad)". But civil laws are also exercised in some areas relating to these issues and it is hard to establish the logic regarding the jurisdiction of each. This question is more pertinent to Muslim women because, two most important things of women's life are affected critically by the exercise of discriminatory personal Laws: firstly, the sanction of co-wives and secondly, unequal inheritance right in father's property. Occasionally, proposals for revising these in the light of modern civil laws have been raised but they subsided for different reasons. Section 27 of the constitutions of the People's Republic of Bangladesh reads, "All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law". On the other hand section 28(1) reads, "The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth." But in our statute book there are many discriminative laws intermeshed directly and indirectly into our laws. We have not much information regarding the number of women rendered largely disadvantaged on account of it. Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid of Pakistan cited, "It gave me a new experience when from gender point of view I scrutinized those laws that I had studied as a lawyer for the last few decades and administered justice. The discrimination, which is clear, is easy to identify, but it is very hard to identify what we approve as rights in our subconscious mind - the foundation of inequality is intermeshed within our social manners and customs. As for example, some laws act to keep women as workers and yet some disapproving women's rights for abortion, and snatching their fundamental rights". In Bangladesh, we can see the same thing. Provisions of some preferential treatment regarding

women's employment in the labour force is also there for example, no deduction could be made from women's wage for breach of contract and there is a prohibition of employing women for night works. All these no doubt, show great concern of the law regarding women's vulnerable position in the society but they also limit their opportunities and scope to be treated as equals in spheres of life.

Economic activities: A woman in Bangladesh enjoys lesser importance. "She is little more than a free servant and a child bearing machine." The "good" women stay at home and look after her husband and her children. Where as the working women are portrayed as morally lax and the cause of disintegration of the family, social values and of society in general. Women's participation in economic activities is not valued at the national level because of patriarchal social structure, tradition and norms. In Bangladesh, women's participation in economic activities shows great variations by gender, nature of activity and place of residence. For example, more than three quarters of employed women of 15 years and above are found to be unpaid family labours as opposed to less than a tenth who are self employed and a few (6 per cent) contract workers. Women's household work remains unrecognized, uncounted and invisible. National Labour Force Survey also reflects the bias. Non-recognition of household work shows almost half the population as unemployed and inactive. Economically, women have always been involved in production, although their share in consumption as well as control over capital and cash has always been nominal and neglected. The agriculture sector is overwhelmed by unpaid family workers who are disproportionately represented by women. Self-employed or own account workers are predominantly found in trade, hotel and restaurant, transport, storage, and communications sectors where men's involvement is sizeable (nearly a quarter) and women's is negligible. Every four out of five workers in the construction sector are day or contract laborers, although this sector is represented by only 3 percent of the employed men and less than 1 percent of women. For women in the rural areas, the number working in the construction sector is likely to be higher. However, a sizeable chunk (nearly one fifth) of unpaid family helpers is found both in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors and they are disproportionately

represented by women. Hence, even in the informal sector, women are not only concentrated in a few sectors, but also their labor is largely consumed without any remuneration. By way of contrast, although men are also overwhelmingly found in the informal sector, they are mostly involved as self-employed or own account workers, suggesting their greater access to resources and economic opportunities. According to a UNICEF report the average age of female marriage is 14 years, on average men work at home 12 minutes a day while a woman is engaged in daily domestic work of 5 hours. The report also notes that women have a minimum say in terms of childbearing and her pastimes in hours of leisure. Economic exploitation of girls includes many of the same issues as it does for women inherited rights, social security, unequal wages and job opportunities and they also exploited by unvalued, often unpaid and harmful labour. Labour in Bangladesh is cheap, female labour is cheaper. The number of women workers is greater in the garments industries. A unit having capacity to produce 200 pieces of garments require 185 to 225 workers. Labour costs in the garments industry is less compared to other large and heavy industries. A garments factory can run with 50 percent unskilled labour. So a large number of rural and urban destitute women can get jobs in these factories. Wages for the positions of supervisor, machine operator, iron man (now women), packing man helper are very low. Among the helpers women do the unskilled work. There are males in most of the senior positions including manager, cutting master, cutting assistant. In addition to cheaper wages, one of the major causes behind the acceptance of women in this sector is the fact that they accept whatever is doled out to them. They are expected to work from more than eight hours and often they are not entitled for overtime payments and bonuses.

Table 9: Employed persons 15 years and above by employment status, hours worked, sex, and residence (percent)

Status	Bangladesh			Urban			Rural		
	Male	Female	Ratio	Male	Female	Ratio	Male	Female	Ratio
Total	48	26	54.2	51	34	66.7	47	24	51.1
Self-employer	48	31	64.5	52	29	55.8	47	31	66.0

Employer	48	6	33.3	58	14	24.1	35	17	48.6
Employee	53	49	92.5	53	51	96.2	53	46	86.8
Unpaid family helper	39	22	56.4	39	22	56.4	39	22	56.4
Day laborer	50	37	74.0	49	39	79.6	50	37	74.0
Average daily wage of day laborers (TK)	46	26	56.5	60	36	60.0	44	25	56.8
Average monthly Income of self-employed (TK)	2.240	827	36.1	2.899	847	29.2	2.073	821	39.6

Source: BBS, 1996.

BUILD POLICY-MAKING AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

As in other cases, problems related to women's development arise primarily because of policy failure and institutional failure. Lack of appropriate and operational policy to lessen and remove the problems of women has been the limitation in the development initiatives for women in Bangladesh.

Policies very often do not reflect the need of the concerned groups, or are ad hoc and compartmentalized in nature. Moreover, whatever policies are undertaken cannot be implemented due to lack of institutional capacity arising from resource constraints, both human and financial. The concerned government bodies are not equipped with qualified and able human resources, who can formulate and implement the policies and programs for the welfare of the women. Institutions do not have adequate information, or the arrangements and mechanisms to gather necessary data on the situation of women.

These limitations are coupled with lack of adequate financial support. Institutional failure also gives rise to uncoordinated initiatives. The institutions are not empowered with necessary administrative and legal back up. The ministry of Women's Affairs and the Directorate of Women's Affairs should be strengthened by training manpower and injecting more monetary resources, so that they can decide and act on their own.

Violence on the Vulnerable: Battered and Bruised for Life

Notwithstanding a change in social attitudes towards women's employment, and involvement in the community and public life during the last decade, social curses like dowry, rape and violence have not declined. In the marriage market, monetary and asset transaction still exist at all levels, indicating the commodity status of a girl, which costs very little in the society.

Insecurity and vulnerability prevail in the lives of women in Bangladesh; at home, in the streets and at the workplace. Incidences of divorce and desertion are increasing. The most explicit expression of this insecurity takes place in the form of assault, acid throwing, rape, and trafficking. Though a number of laws have been enacted to protect women's interest and provide security to them, they are yet to feel safe in the family and society. The sufferings of a woman who is violated are both physical and moral, because she not only faces complex legal procedures to get justice but is also looked down upon by the family and society for the rest of her life.

Astonishingly, much of the violence is performed within the four walls of the home. Studies show that about 40 percent of the women have been physically abused by their husbands, and about 19 percent of them experienced severe physical violence, is omnipresent across social strata and economic class. A field-level investigation by CPD among 200 victims of spousal violence in 11 districts of Bangladesh reveals that domestic violence is in fact more prevalent in the middle income and rich households compared to poor households (Khatun et al 2008b). Table 10 shows various types of domestic violence found in the aforesaid study.

The cost of such violence is enormous, and is both direct and indirect in nature. Direct costs are incurred in connection with health care, housing and refuge during displacement, informal *Shalish*, criminal justice and legal services. There are also several hidden costs, which can have long-term psychological impacts on the victim, her family members, particularly children, and in the end on the society and the economy, which may affect the gross national product.

Table 10: Experience of violence by Economic Class

Types of violence	Poor (13)	Middle Income (93)	Rich (94)
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	%	%	%
Physical Violence	92	95	92
Psychological Violence	92	81	85
Sexual Violence	8	11	15
Economic Violence	92	93	87

Source: Khatun et al 2008b.

Women awareness from different field's buildup: The traditional norm of women staying inside the house and men providing them protection has been changing as a result of economic and demographic developments. Recent trends show that women are increasingly taking up new challenges in the market economy. Female labour force participation has increased significantly since the late eighties, both in the traditional and the extended definition of work. As in other cases, problems related to women's development arise primarily because of policy failure and institutional failure. Lack of appropriate and operational policy to lessen and remove the problems of women has been the limitation in the development initiatives for women in Bangladesh. A bias against women is also reflected in the national budget, where most of the projects and allocations are gender-blind. In recognition of the much pronounced demand for gender responsive budget by the non-government organizations, civil society and women activists, the term "Gender Budgeting" was coined in the national budget of 2006-07. Ironically, apart from the lip service, there was not much reflection of increased gender responsiveness in the whole document, except for the usual allocation for the Ministry of Women and Children and allowance for destitute women and widows.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it becomes clear from various data and information of different sectors that women in Bangladesh are victims of inequality, abuse, suppression and exploitation, social customs and traditions, illiteracy and employment opportunities have hampered the total integration of women in the mainstream of development activities in Bangladesh. It is true that Bangladesh society is becoming increasingly intolerant, prone to violence and indiscipline. Political unrest has become a recurring affair and a regular feature of our

society, which defies all kinds of prohibitive measures. The basically conservative nature of our society has made our task much more difficult. So emancipation of women has become very important agenda in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world. Though we have no reasons to be complacent, still we can enthusiastically greet the onward move towards the uplifting of the status of women. A sign of that move can be seen in the proclamation of the order that compulsively the mother's name should be mentioned along with the father's in the papers and documents relating to the children. This is certainly recognition of the position of women. The High Court, in one of its recent verdict, has declared all 'fatwas' as illegal. This verdict will always be regarded as a milestone in the process of emancipation of women. Such noble act still offers us the stimulation to look head (Unnayan Podokkep: 2001). To improve the backwardness and unawareness of the situation, government of Bangladesh has taken many other initiatives. Various laws have been enacted and amended to protect women's rights. It had enacted several legislative measures, which have proven to be successful in reducing the incidences of violence. Such laws include the Dowry Prohibition Act, Cruelty to Women (Deterrent punishment) Ordinance, Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Ordinance, and the very recent Family Court Ordinance. Moreover in the constitution of Bangladesh especially in the sessions of fundamental rights, it has been noted that no discrimination should prevail against women irrespective of religion, race, caste, and place of birth. Women are supposed to enjoy equal opportunity in public employment, right to protection of law, protection of right to life and personal liberty, prohibition of forced labour and right to property. But it is very difficult for the government alone to improve the awareness of all the backward women in a short period of time, so the government helps and supports various nongovernmental organizations to work for these vulnerable women. NGOs are working with the government to establish the rights and overall development of women. NGOs enable their clients and beneficiaries to graduate into higher standards of living. In addition to their poverty alleviation programs, they set many motivational programs for the women at grassroots level. These programs have made women aware of their rights and the women have their platform to raise their voices. Though the constitution of

Bangladesh grants equal rights to women and men in all spheres of public life and even various laws have been enacted and amended to protect women's rights but women are not conscious of their rights and that is the main barrier for the government that prevents it from serving its purpose. For these reasons, women hold a marginal position in the sharing of decision making at all levels. Although government is taking initiatives to ensure the political rights, increase awareness, participation and empowerment but government have to be more sincere, active and give proper attention to increase the real awareness of the vulnerable and disadvantaged women by fully implementing the initiatives. Especially cooperation between government and NGOs can expedite the process of women development. Opportunities are growing for the NGOs through out developing world to work with government in helping the poor women to improve the quality of their lives. The institutional capacity of the government is weak and there is a gap in service delivery system especially at local level. On the other hand, some NGOs have higher-level management capabilities to organize and manage development programs at the grassroots level.

No doubt, Bangladeshi women have attracted attention at home and abroad for doing wonders in the RMG and micro-credit sectors, and have come out of the typical "poor, pregnant and powerless" image. However, the economic and social discrimination against women in Bangladesh is still alarming. The disparity is manifested through various faces of inequality, such as in health, education, employment, income, access to resources, ownership of assets, access to power, domestic violence and physical victimization. The instruments of bringing about changes in the existing system of dealing with women's development issues would include macro policies, resource allocation, regulation and monitoring, and public awareness. Without these initiatives the process of women's "power to do," which ensures greater access to information and support, mobility, visibility and control over production, cannot be materialized.

We often forget that gender inequality influences the lives and well-being not only of women but also of men, children, family and the society in the end. Unless the aspect of inequality is appreciated and addressed long-term social damage cannot be avoided – as Professor

Amartya Sen says: “Gender inequality is a far-reaching societal impairment, not merely a special deprivation of women. That social understanding is urgent as well as momentous.”

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Prime University Journal
ISSN: 1995-5332
Volume-3, Number-1
January-June: 2009

Shakespeare and Girish Chandra: A Comparative Study

M. Arshad Ali *

ABSTRACT

The most prolific Bengali playwright producing as many as eighty dramas and farces, Girish Chandra Ghose is a genius extra-ordinary in many respects. Combining the talented dramatist, successful actor, efficient stage manager and a skilful producer in him, Girish Chandra is the first Bengali dramatist to come out of the orbit of Sanskrit influence and writes dramas catering to the national taste that was engendered by the western system of education introduced by the English and the revival of the spirit of nationalism. In so doing, he drew copiously upon Shakespeare who was his avowed preceptor. A devout disciple of Shakespeare though Girish is, his strict adherence to his model could not stand in the way of his originality coming into play in transcending his works in some respects that have been identified in the article with the help of a simultaneous study of the two dramatists who have, among many other similarities, made dramas of their own with borrowed materials.

Of all the dramatists in Bengali, Girish Chandra Ghose is, perhaps, the most famous in that he is not only the most prolific contributor to dramatic literature but also it is during his time that the dramatic movement found its culmination. It was he who established theatre for the common people on December 7, 1872¹. He has been called the father of the Native stage². In him is combined the genius of a playwright, an actor, a producer and stage manager. Before he took up his pen, the Bengali theatre was producing the dramas of Madhusudan, Dinabandhu and dramatized versions of Bankim Chandra's novels, and their repetitions exhausted their charms for taste and acceptance of the audience who strongly desired for performance of new dramas³. They found echo in Girish's creative mind which went for composing new dramas (as many as eighty dramas and farces) for the audience and readers till the last day of his life arousing their thankful admiration⁴.

Girish Chandra knew it for certain that Sanskrit dramas did not conduce to the hopes and aspirations, ideals and visions of the Bengali nationhood. The national taste that made him abandon Valmiki and Vedavyas (writers of Ramayana and Mahabharata in Sanskrit) and accept Krittibas and Kashiram Das (writers of Ramayana and Mahabharata in Bengali) as his ideals engendered in him the awareness of ground realities that liberated him from any hesitation for absorption in his dramas the European or Shakespearean literary ethos and values which found favour with the educated Bangalis of the day. His frank confession in this regard is, "The great poet Kashiram Das and Krittibas are at the foundation of my language and their influence is noticeable in my works while, on the other hand, Shakespeare is my ideal and I have been following his suit"⁵. This self-revelation and commitment of Girish may be considered an indicator of how impressively Shakespeare has influenced the dramas of the Bengali playwright.

The emerging year of the 20th century (1900 A.D.) saw the translation by Girish Chandra Ghose of Shakespeare's Macbeth keeping greatly intact the theme, atmosphere and excellence of the original Shakespeare with the title unchanged. Combining the talented dramatist, successful actor, efficient stage manager and skilful producer in him, Girish Chandra Ghose translated Macbeth with exclusive

* M. Arshad Ali, Registrar, Prime University

fidelity. His translation is an ideal model of translation of foreign dramas into Bengali. All the dramatis personae here in Girish have made even their entrance and exit and put their dialogues and soliloquies in the closest similarity in respects of point in time, place and language with those in Shakespeare's Macbeth. In spite of the fact that he made a good acting version of Shakespeare's Macbeth, this strictly-adhered-to Bengali translation of the great tragedy could not cast the expected spell on the mind of the audience⁶. Having been deterred by the negative acceptance on the stage of his literary translation of Macbeth, no longer did he venture to produce anything of the sort; instead he made use of the indigenous stories in the form and character of the English ideal with commendable success. The effort at blending the local ideas, colour and setting with the foreign taste, flavour and treatment had already met success in Bengali poetry and that supplied the necessary stimuli to Girish's versatile genius to apply it in the composition of his dramas, the best of them being *Jana*. The source materials are derived from Kashiram Das's *Mahabharata* but the characterization of the heroine is entirely after the western model. *Jana* is not uprooted from its native soil and indigenous foundation, yet wonderfully enough, it takes on the English ideal in a way that earned an admirable success⁷.

Conglomerate of ideas and elements culled from different Shakespearean dramas, *Jana* has turned into an original drama in such a manner as Shakespeare's, for his treatment of the source materials has, like the greatest English dramatist, carved out a work of art which is entirely his own. The revengeful attitude of Jana towards Arjuna that borders her on lunacy is for the most part a resemblance of the behaviour of the widow of Henry VI in *King Richard III*. In her distraction for the bereavement of her husband and son Margaret says:

If heaven have any grievous plague in store
Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,
.....
No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,
Unless it be while some tormenting dream
Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils ! (Act I, Sc. III)

The emotions and sentiments as we find contained in the above extract

have found expression in the behaviour of Jana as evidenced from the 4th scene of Act III to the 3rd Scene Act V. Impelled by the same overwhelming desire for revenge, Jana says (transliterated by the author):

Pratihingsha -- pratihingsha
Mar praney pratihingsha jwaley
Putraghati pabey na nistar;
Pratihingsha -- pratihingsha jwaley.

The desire for revenge of the murders of husband and son rendered Margaret terrifying. The quotation above does not fall short of giving expression to the similar sense of revenge of Jana. Jana does well compare with the mannishness of Margaret in her courageous speeches and action arising out of her aggrieved motherhood⁸.

Also noticeable is the influence of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* on *Jana*. Madanmanjuri, Prabir's wife is as frightened as Virgilia, the wife of Coriolanus is to despatch her husband, the hero of the play, to the battle. Virgilia could not entertain the idea of sending her husband to the battle out of anxiety for the probable calamity. Coriolanus' mother Volumnia rebukes her daughter-in-law Virgilia in the language Jana makes use of while rebuking her daughter-in-law, Madanmanjuri when she makes entreaties to her for preventing her husband from waging the battle. The characteristic apprehension of a Bengali woman that cannot but find expression in Madanmanjuri in the wake of her husband going to battle was taken to task in the strongest term. Similarity is easily discernable in the characters of the two mothers-in-law. Just as Volumnia evinces the mother of a hero so does Jana, the wife of a king belonging to the warring caste of the Kshatriyas. Jana's voice rings with Volumnia's words of courage and intrepidity coupled with those of encouragement to Coriolanus. The two characters are almost equally endowed with formidability, respectability for bravery and a sense of excitement of the mother for her son's heroic deeds. A simultaneous reading of the two dramas (Act I Sc. III of *Coriolanus* and act II Sc. I of *Jana*) reveals in unmistakable terms that Girish Chandra full well consciously follows Shakespeare in his delineation of characters and composition of dialogues.

Shakespeare's art of characterisation makes an impact on the creation of the clowns in Girish Chandra, for example, the clown in *Jana* in emulation of the Fool in *King Lear*. Girish Chandra has, however, embellished his clowns with such individuality and originality as are capable enough to earn for him the appellation of an innovator in the creation of characters of the sort. The clown in *Jana* is so splendid by dint of characteristic peculiarity that the Fool in *King Lear* pales, to a great extent, in comparison with him. Girish might have drawn from the Yatra which exerts long lasting influence upon him.

Complementary to his reflection of *King Richard III*, *Coriolanus*, and *King Lear*, *Girish* has recourse to assistance from two other plays of the great dramatist in creating the atmosphere of *Jana*. He has conjured up a part of the Witch Scene from *Macbeth* [Act.IV, Sc.I] where the witches sing in the murky atmosphere of a dark cave with a boiling cauldron at the centre. In *Jana* the Sakhigan (heroine's girl friends) constitute the scene [Act III Sc. I] by disguising themselves as Dakinis (witches) in eeriness.

Girish Chandra also appears to have been influenced in the contrivance of the scene Mayakanon (enchanted garden) in *Jana* by the wonderful woodland scene we witness in Act II Sc. II of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Nayika O Sakhigan (the heroine and her girl friends) taking part in the scene resemble in their manner and behaviour those of "Titania, with her Train in Act II Sc. II of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, even the songs of the two scenes make use of the same feeling.

A resemblance of the great Shakespearean tragedy *King Lear* is also not hard to find in the conclusion of *Jana* as both, though primarily dramas of horror, pity and pathos, end in an atmosphere of peace as evident in the speech of Kent in the former and Sri Krishna in the latter⁹.

Shakespeare's characteristic tragic conception of *Macbeth* has bred contagion and infusion in *Prafulla*, another very successful play by Girish Ghose. In *Macbeth* is noticed, "The calamities proceed mainly from conscious, voluntary actions – actions expressive of character. In other words in Shakespearean tragedy character is Destiny"¹⁰

Similarity is evident in the case of Jogesh, the hero in '*Prafulla*' where tragic consequences follow from the flaw in his character – the seed of tragedy germinated in the heart of Jogesh. "He errs, by action or omission; and his error, joining with other causes, brings on him ruin."¹¹ "The calamities and catastrophe follow inevitably from the deeds of men and that the main source of the deeds is character."¹² Similar to Macbeth's ambition is Jogesh's lust for fame manifesting that Girish Chandra makes use of the Shakespearean tradition according as his taste and necessity warrant. That Girish is under the magical spell of Shakespearean tragedy is a truth well demonstrated in the analogous circumstances in *Othello* and *Prafulla*. Under the spell of Bacchus Cassio is so overdrunk that he neglects his duty and loses his job resulting in his lifelong suffering. Himself though not alone responsible for the drunkenness and negligence of duty, by means of the arrangements of facts and circumstances Shakespeare makes through the presentation of malignant role Fate plays in human life, this fault of Cassio and misery consequent upon his loss of job and Desdemona's repeated appeals to reinstate him in his position have rendered the tragic atmosphere of the drama tense and conflict-ridden. Drunkenness precedes the loss of job as well as of reputation in the case of Cassio whereas Jogesh in *Prafulla* falls prey to drunkenness after the loss of reputation as a result of failure of bank. He could not rid himself of the excessive addiction which plays havoc with him by way of the loss of reputation, to him the most valuable adornment of life. He is beside himself with utter dejection at the loss of reputation; his repentance knows no bounds. To Jogesh reputation is the quintessence of life, the very touchstone that turns all to gold.

Just as Iago tempts Cassio to addiction and engineers the events of the drama to run into tragic catastrophe, so does Ramesh lure Jogesh to drunkenness to bring him to ruination. Both Ramesh and Mohini are villains. Mohini has the slightest touch of softness in the form of love for a daughter but Ramesh is stripped off all relations. He is an Iago. Girish has turned Shakespeare's Richard III, the brother of Edward IV into Ramesh, the brother of Jogesh and showed: He has no mixture of common humanity, no regard for kindred nor posterity. He owes no fellowship with others, he is himself alone."¹³

The clownish Bhajahari in *Prafulla* is of the same neighbourhood of Shakespeare's Fool in *King Lear*. Bhajahari like Fool gives vent to his innermost anguish and torments garbed in pleasantries and humour. Ashutosh Bhattacharya comments, "Tremendous tribulation turns some to cynic and some to humorist; Bhajahari is no cynic, he is a humorist. Thus, his loose cloak, if overturned, will show the overcoat of the clown. Humour and pathos are the twin born of fate, a little close look at them will reveal the resemblances between the two."¹⁴

A close resemblance of *Prafulla* to *Othello* is also discovered if viewed from the standpoint of relationship of Ramesh and Iago with other characters in the respective drama. Iago assumes the malignant proportions of fate; neither does he have any obligation, social or familial, to life, to his wife nor to Othello. He has chosen evil as a part of his life, as his companion not out of any definite motive; it is unreasoned – his inherent imperfection and defectiveness. Ramesh is exactly unobligated to anyone by any sort of transparent relationship. As a result, both of them suffer from a loneliness that is negative as well as destructive. The loneliness haunts them constantly and they are not aware of how much success they have gained through their functions as a medium or agent of destruction.

A reflection of *The Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare is found in *Prafulla*. Antonio apprehends his imminent danger and sadly wavers, "I sooth I know not why I am so sad." (Act I, Sc. I). Likewise towards the end of the drama Prafulla's apprehension of the impending danger for her opposition to the evil deeds of her husband prompts her to say, "I'll live no longer, I have suffered colossal loss somewhere." (Act V, Sc. I) While commenting on the ruthless murder of Prafulla Debendranath Bose says:

The world has various types of justice. But poetic justice is absolutely different. The justice that proceeds from the admixture of the art of poetry and the principles of religion and that gives entire satisfaction to the audience is poetic justice. In life occur such incidents when it appears full of vexation and disappointment and it seems that death is a benediction, a reward and not a punishment. Prafulla would have been meted out the severest punishment had she been

reunited with Ramesh. This is why, it is in the death bed of innocent and guiltless Desdemona and in the self effacement of Cordelia executed by strangulation that dramas of such great lives find their oblation.¹⁵

Lust for reputation – the innate weakness of Jogesh – is responsible for his tragedy. Excessive perplexity even at false disrepute and self-oblivion causes loss of mental equanimity in Jogesh who devoutly worships an abstraction named reputation and leads to tragic calamity in the play. Just as Hamlet's inherent weakness makes the play a tragedy, revenge for the murder of the father being an incident only, so also the infirmity of mind of irresolute Jogesh in *Prafulla* causes tragedy that might have occurred even if Jogesh were not addicted to drinking¹⁶.

One of the famous historical dramas Girish wrote is *Serajuddowla* (1906) composed in the perspective of the partition of Bengal. The British Government did not feel secure of the play even with the changes made in it in compliance with the instruction of the police and banned its performance and circulation on the suspicion that it might incite the anti-British 'Swadeshi Andolon' (Indian National Movement) that was then gathering momentum¹⁷. The indigenous background, historical element, national movement that directly form the ingredients of the drama could not prove powerful enough to eradicate Shakespeare's influence which is distinctly at play herein. Girish draws upon a good number of Shakespearean dramas. The protagonist Sirajuddowla resembles King Richard II of the drama of the same title in a great measure. Seraj and Richard are luxurious, emotional and sentimental, not able enough to master the shrewd and complicated strategy of ruling the country. Despite their fascination for luxury and pleasure, they had a great love for the crown as well as for the people, though devoid of cool calculation of objective reality and requisite intelligence that provide bulwark for the throne and of the capability of dexterously waging war and taking appropriate measures against crooked political conspiracy. At the stroke of a malignant destiny, they had to lose their kingdom and suffer discomfiture and disappointment at the failure of the fulfillment of their ambition of life, and eventually miserable death engulfed them.

Their gnawing grief, excruciating anguish and above all the sad end of their life invest them with a similitude that their dialogues are almost interchangeable. Even their soliloquies are couched in the same language. King Richard soliloquizes in the dungeon in Pomfret Castle:

I have been studying how I may compare
This prison where I live unto the world,
And, for because the world is populous
And here is not a creature but myself
I cannot do it. [Act V, Sc. V]

Comparable is the soliloquy of Seraj in Murshidabad prison:

This desolate dark small building seems to be peopled with hundreds of men – hundreds of men bred by repentance – such a huge assembly was not found in the royal court. Those who trembled at the apprehension of my punishment at that time are now pronouncing punishment upon me with hundreds of tongues. Figures made of darkness are melting into darkness one by one. How horrible! How come that the figure of Lutfunnisa is not seen even for once nor does Mirmadan come at least once! Why does not that girl appear before me at all addressing me as Jonab (Your Excellency) in the hope of a kiss of mine! [ActV,Sc. III]

In their piteous cry of affliction is manifested the same fathomless pathos. Their soliloquies contain covert references to their past magnificence and majesty, pomp and splendour. Parallelism is also noticed in the scene design. Richard is soliloquising in the dungeon of Pomfret Castle and Serajuddin in his imprisonment in Murshidabad jail.

Shakespeare's *King Henry V* and Girish Chandra's *Serajuddin* have metamorphosed King Henry V and Serajuddin at the two dramatists' adroit handling of the two rulers. The drunken and infamous Henry transcends to an ideal king by the dexterous handling of Shakespeare, and Serajuddin overcomes the moral dissipation of his youth and retrieves the position of respect and is held in high popular esteem by virtue of the embellishment Girish

has adorned him with. The reformation of the two rulers is of the comparable degree.

Zohra in *Serajuddin*, mad with revenge for the murder of her husband, bears close resemblance with Margaret in *King Richard III*. Zohra has, however, made her presence felt in the entire drama by her retaliating onslaught to the wholesale destruction of her enemy by dint of her swiftness of a tempest, adroitness of a destiny and mental alertness of a Satan.

Karim Chacha in *Serajuddin* is another excellent creation of Girish Ghose inviting comparison with Shakespeare's Fool in *King Lear*. Girish has, however, given a free rein to his imagination in the characterisation of Karim who has surpassed the Fool in many respects. Karim Chacha is endowed with extraordinary qualities of head and heart – faithful, patriotic, farsighted, courageous, dauntless and never hesitant to speak the truth in the face of everybody, be he a man high or low, rich or poor. His insight is hidden in the guise of humour. Shakespeare's Jacques in *As You Like It* and Kent in *King Lear* if combined together will compare ill with Karim Chacha. Philosopher Jacques desires to be dressed as a clown to tell the unpalatable truth, "I am ambitious for a motley coat." On the other hand, he (Karim Chacha) is loyal, outspoken and courageous without assuming any disguise or resorting to any pretence.

Karim Chacha, when Mirzafar calls him a traitor, replies in a humorous language without any perturbation: "Treachery is not a monopoly of mine; I am not but a crane among the drakes. Had there been provision of punishment for breach of trust, rows of heads would have been razed to the ground" (Act V, Sc. IV)¹⁸ In fact, for portrayal of the clowns, Girish commands an uncommon inherent capability that acquires an advantage over Fool or Falstaff though the former are seemingly modelled upon the latter.

Girish Chandra's *Mirkashim* (1906) bears resemblances between its character of the wife of Mirkashim and Portia, wife of Brutus in *Julius Caesar* by Shakespeare. Portia's speech in Act II, Sc. I finds similarity in the speech of Mirkashim's Begum in Act I, Sc. IV in their anxiety for the welfare and desire for sharing the troubles and tribulations of their husbands.

Girish Chandra's *Bishad* (1889) deserves mention here. Despite her husband being a lecher and debauchee, Saraswati renders selfless service to him. This extreme devotion to her husband reminds us of Julia in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. The love of Ujjala for the disguised Saraswati serves to remind us of the countess Olivia's passion for Viola in the disguise of a young man in *Twelfth Night* by Shakespeare. (Act III, Sc. I)

The comic characters of Girish Chandra have aroused immense interest of the critics in them and enthused to evaluate them with reference to Falstaff, the unrivalled Shakespearean creation. Hemendranath Das Gupta puts in, "Falstaff is a wonderful creation of Shakespeare." Dr. Johnson estimates, "Falstaff is the summit of Shakespeare's comic invention." Bernard Shaw says, "Shakespeare's Falstaff is more vivid than any of the serious reflective characters." Hemendranath Dasgupta puts in:

Shakespeare had a living mysterious figure before him. One dwarf named Tarlton with a short nose and bulky body with his love and capacity for humour was so much skilled in making jokes that even Queen Elizabeth herself sought his company for relieving herself from the burden of seriousness impinging upon her mind. This real humorous character grew more humorous by the skilful handling of Shakespeare. But the prospect that could be realised in the figure of Birbala or Gopal Bhanrh was almost an impossibility in Bengal under foreign tutelage. Yet the dexterous pen of Girish, this barrier not withstanding, could turn out the like of Falstaff.¹⁹

This capacity is unfailingly exemplified in the character of Barunchand in his *Mukulmanjura* (1893). He is easily recognisable as the closest neighbour of Falstaff by dint of his extraordinary eloquence and ready wit."

Falstaff and those of the same genre he belongs to have prompted critics to comment:

Shakespeare's fools, along with somewhat of an overstraining for wit, which cannot altogether be avoided when wit becomes a separate profession, have for the most part an

incomparable humour, and an infinite abundance of intellect enough indeed to supply a whole host of ordinary wise men²⁰

The similarity between the performance of Barunchand in Act I, Sc. III and that of Falstaff in presence of Prince Henry in Act II Sc. IV of Shakespeare's *King Henry IV Part I* is borne out in their marvelousness and delectability.

Resemblance is also found in that both Falstaff and Barunchand excite the laughter of others without laughing themselves. Barun himself maintains a peculiar seriousness, yet provides food for uninterrupted laughter of others. Remarkably his laughter is innocent of coarseness and sauciness. Dishing out humour and pleasantry is, however, not the sole purpose of Barunchand; he is endowed with profound senses of morality and piety, for even under the possession of a strong dose of opium he does not lose his balance rather says, "You may not serve me with opium but I cannot defile the chastity of woman for nothing." (Act I, Sc. III) Dealer in light pleasantry and drollery though he is, God-fearing Barun again says, "There could be no better path than the straight one. Those who tread the straight path have to be worried over the move neither of the horse nor of the pawn." [Act II, Sc. I] Falstaff falls short of Barunchand viewed from the moral perspective.

The germ of the plot of *Adarsha Grihini or Grihalakshmi* (1912) of Girish Chandra is derived from Shakespeare's great tragedy *King Lear*. Upendranath in *Adarsha Grihini* is a great soul, honest and just. His love for his brother constitutes the tragic flaw in the drama resulting in catastrophe as does Lear's parental affection for his daughters.

Further study of Girish may reveal details of Shakespeare's influence on him and his indebtedness to him. And it sounds no surprising that Girish Chandra looks upto Shakespeare for his materials, techniques of construction, art of characterisation and style and diction on various occasions in various manners not only in external manifestation but also in internal decoration.

Girish's innovation in Bengali Prosody well-known as the Gairish Verse that he makes use of in the versified dialogues of his dramatic personae owes its origin more to Shakespeare than to Milton or

Madhusudan. This verse form has the strength to expedite the action and movement of events and characters of the dramas. "In spite of differences between Gairish measure and Shakespearean blank verse, the inspiration at the back of both was basically the same, to bring out the fullest dramatic capability of a language"²¹.

His indebtedness to Shakespeare also infiltrates into his conception of tragedy. He says, "Here is the inner conflict – the internal dramatic action that finds only insignificant and imperceptible manifestation. The portrayal of this internal dramatic action is the best literary art"²². Drawing upon the internal conflict from the nature of Shakespearean dramatic art, Girish has written his tragedies. But there lie some imperfections and limitations in Girish. He could not escape from the mindset of the devotional as engendered by the "New Hinduism" sentiment of the contemporary social milieu. The result was that even after attaining mastery over 'the best literary art' inherited from Shakespeare, his dramas saw the greatest development of devoutness and the highest excitement and exuberance of devotional love. The critic opines:

The great poet Girish Chandra was not devoid of originality even though he followed the great poet Shakespeare as his model. Let alone his self-contrived dramas, his own contribution to the dramas where he draws upon Shakespeare is immense. The great poet Shakespeare was devoted to action and the great poet Girish Chandra to religion. Shakespearean dramas develop through delineation of characters caught in the vortex of circumstances whereas the dramas of Girish develop towards the nourishment of sentiments. Shakespeare is a visionary though a realist but Girish Chandra is a positivist though a sentimentalist. Shakespeare has introduced the supernatural in some of his works but it is the national as well as natural right of Girish Chandra to inspire, discover and demonstrate in the mundane characters supermundane traits with the favour of circumstances in particular situations²³.

Shakespearean dramatic craftsmanship comes into play in some other aspects of Girish's workmanship. Shakespeare's division of a drama

into Five Acts is faithfully adhered to everywhere in Girish. Shakespeare wields his fearless pen to delineate the various evils and mischiefs that human society is festured with. His dramas portray the intense conflicts of elemental passions and powerful sentiments." Their themes are revenge, madness, tyranny, conspiracy, lust, adultery and jealousy. They abound in villainy, intrigue and slaughter"²⁴. Girish Chandra's plays are portrayal of conspiracy, intrigue, revenge, murder, adultery and the like sins and crimes. The struggle between the good and the evil is given monumental expression in the Shakespearean dramas. Like Shakespeare, Girish has made prose the vehicle of giving expression to the light, coarse and comic sides of life and poetry for its fine, mighty and serious issues. "In the use of verse and prose Shakespeare observes very nice distinctions according to the rank of the speakers, but still more according to their characters and disposition of mind"²⁵. Ghosts and witches are found to be participating in the Shakespearean plays like Hamlet, Macbeth, Julius Caesar. Similarly apparitions and spectres have marked appearances in *Chanda, Kalapaharh*, etc of Girish Ghose²⁶.

All these externalities and imitations could not, however, impose limitation on the transcendental genius of Girish. The peculiar 'Babu culture', the animosity of Ramkrishna, Keshab Sen and Brahma Samaj with the Young Bengal, and the new-born sense of nationalism bred in him an unprecedented Bengalicism that outspanned all the influences and earned for him the dignified position of the national dramatist of the Bangalis.²⁷

The foregoing discussion reveals quite clearly that his translation, transplantation and transcreation of Shakespeare, his avowed preceptor, were of a unique dimension that not only enriched his genius but also Bengali dramatic literature prompting Mohitlal, the celebrated poet and critic to say:

Girish Chandra is the last true Bengali genius, the ideal of the native Bengali drama and dramatics and even the innovator of a peculiar dramatic verse form in which intermingling of the Yatra (indigenous variety of drama before the modern drama came into being) and the English drama has been done in a

unique style and it is precisely what captivated the Bengali mind.²⁸

This characteristic feature of his genius – the power of synthesis – is the hall-mark of his individuality by virtue of which through his works he could win a place for Shakespeare in the deep recess of our heart. Girish fulfills his commitment to keeping to his ideal-adherence to Shakespeare-squarely. He proves to be the most faithful disciple of his preceptor. He treads the same path as Shakespeare does and his achievement parallels Shakespeare's in that he makes use of the dramatic materials of the latter as aptly as he (Shakespeare) does of Plutarch, Cinthio or Holinshed. His preceptor has earned ever abiding reputation as the greatest English dramatist and he, the Bengali national dramatist.

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Reading Skills of Undergraduates in Private Universities: A Schematic Perspective

Md. Minhajul Abedin *
Shorna Akter **
Md. Julhas Uddin ***

ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to unveil the reasons of incompetence in English reading skill of the undergraduate learners of some private universities (where English is the medium for learning) in Bangladesh and the relationship of schema theory with this inefficiency. It also tries to focus on the reading materials that are usually suggested to the learners of undergraduate level and how these materials sometimes act as obstacles in bridging the schemata of the learners and the content of the reading materials. In this connection, this study reveals how the inconsistency between the schemata of the learners and the reading materials stand apart to create poor readers. In this article some possible solutions of this problem are sought through data analysis and some suggestions have been made for designing reading materials incorporating the schema theory in improving the reading skill of undergraduate learners of private universities.

* Lecturer in English, Stamford University Bangladesh

** Lecturer in English, Dhaka City College

*** Lecturer in English, Darul Ihsan University

1. INTRODUCTION

A good reader uses his/her schemata to understand the content of the text to the full. Schema theory views that one's understanding of the world is based on his/her previous knowledge and experience (Anderson in Tahmina: 2005: 151). In our country, unfortunately, the learners at their school and college level are deprived of developing English skill properly. In short, the students sometimes do not achieve equal efficiency in all four skills- reading, writing, speaking and listening. In this paper, the authors have given their concentration on the reading skill of English of the learners at undergraduate level of private universities. Attention is given to the reasons of undergraduate learner's failure in attaining proficiency in the reading skill. They have tried to show the importance of schemata in developing the reading skill of the learners and significance of using schemata in the reading skill at the undergraduate level.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Schema Theory:

Schema theory is very significant and it contributes a lot to our knowledge of reading. Bartlett (1932) first used this term. According to him schema is that mental arrangement where knowledge is kept in a prearranged order to understand new idea and knowledge. 'Schemata' is the plural form of 'schema'. Bartlett (1932) again says that Schema theory implies that how the knowledge, that we have about our home and abroad is organized into interrelated patterns based on our previous knowledge and experience. In this regard Anderson (2000.b:17) says that readers interpret a text using their schemata through the activation of "networks of information stored in the brain which act as filters for incoming information". He (2000.b:8) further says: "Writers must make assumptions about their readers' knowledge, since total explicitness would lead to enormously unwieldy use of language... If readers do not possess that writers assume, then difficulties in literal understanding occur".

Readers are supposed to activate their schemata to cope with new information and knowledge they comprehend. These schemata permit the readers to give a prediction what may happen (McDonough and Shaw, 1993: 96). From this view, it can be said that schemata are related with prediction and prediction is based on previous knowledge and experience. When students at any level read something, they try to relate their previous knowledge (which is already achieved) with the content of the text they are reading. According to McDonough and Shaw (1993: 96) schema theory implies our idea of the interactive reading process a bit further by suggesting that skilled readers can connect texts to their previous knowledge of the world. Background knowledge or the development of the Schemata is very important for being skilled and quick readers. Brown and Yule (1938), McCarthy and Carter (1994), Cook (1997) and Nunan (1999) all try to prove that how this background knowledge can affect the comprehension process. They explain that the previous knowledge or developed schemata facilitate the learners to comprehend what is coming next or at least these schemata help them providing with clues to understand the present context. If the readers find similarity between the current text and the text they have read earlier, they can activate their schemata accordingly. For example, a regular reader of newspaper already knows about the type, format, and font of the newspaper. So, it becomes easier for them to find out important information and in this case it can be said that the schemata of the readers help them to be quick and successful readers (McDonough and Shaw, 1993: 97).

Cultural issue is very much vital here, if the readers can relate their cultural values with the content of the text; it becomes easier for them to understand their present topic of learning. McDonough and Shaw (1993: 97) say in favor of cultural background related materials for the activation of schemata of the readers. In this respect, Nunan (1999: 256) says, “We interpret what we read in terms of what we already know and we integrate what we already know with the content of what we are reading.” Tomlison (1998: 8) incorporates with the schema theory the usefulness of culturally

related reading materials. In this regard Tomlison ((1998: 8) says, “Materials can help learners to feel at ease in a number of ways. For example, I think that most learners... are more at ease with texts and illustrations that they can relate to their own culture than they are with those which are culturally exotic (and therefore potentially alien).” Carrell and Easterhold (1983: 553) affirm that reading comprehension involves one’s knowledge of the world, which may be “culturally based and culturally biased”.

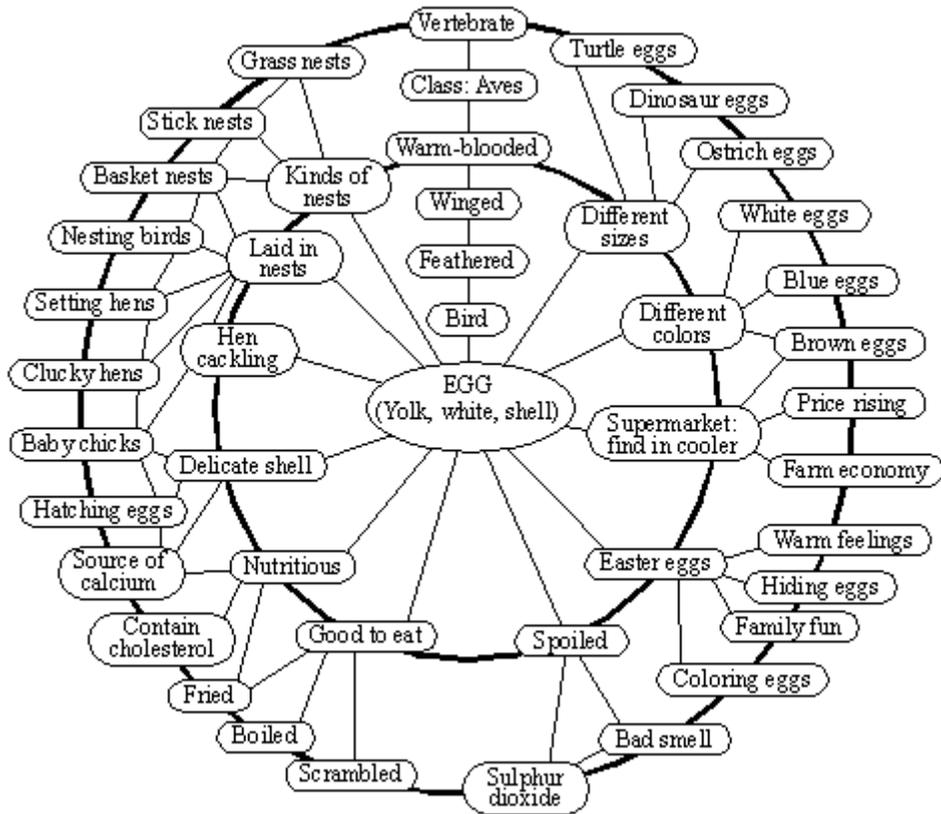
‘Schema theory’ doesn’t mean only background knowledge; it implies a broader concept of knowledge stored in our brain in an organized manner. It also emphasizes on the prior knowledge (schemata) and the new knowledge (would be acquired) and their connection. Carrell and Easterhold (1983: 553) suggests that language teachers can apply the principle of Schema theory in their reading classes where the learners face difficulties because of their insufficient general knowledge. Here are some characteristics of schemata according to Anderson (1977 b: 418-419 as is cited in Tahmina):

- Schemata are always organized meaningfully, can be added to, and, as an individual gains experience, develop to include more variables and more specificity.
- Each schema is embedded in other schemata and itself contains subschema.
- Schemata change moment by moment as information is received.
- They may also be reorganized when incoming data reveals a need to restructure the concept.
- The mental representations used during perception and comprehension, and which evolve as a result of these processes, combine to form a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts.

2.2 Schema Diagram: a sample

When a learner reads or hears any word, then and then he/she tries to activate his/her schemata unconsciously. Many ideas

related to that particular word come to his/her mind and these ideas totally depend on the background knowledge and experience of the readers. For example, McDnough and Shaw (1993: 97) explain the matter as, “the word ‘wedding’ in a British context could engender a complete schematic framework to accompany it; that is, ‘last Saturday’, registry office’, ‘Best Man’, and so on”. If the same word marriage is heard then and then some ideas will come in the mind of a Bengali reader like, ‘Bride’, ‘Bridegroom’, ‘Red Sari’, *Kazee*, *Gaia Holud* and so on. A person's schema of "egg" might refer to these components shown:



Diagram

(Schema theory: Davis, 1991: 21)

2.3 Reading Skills that should be acquired

The language teachers expect the students to learn basic techniques of reading like scanning, skimming etc irrespective of their levels of understanding. Initially the students need to be able to scan the text when they search for any particular information. This skill does not involve the students in reading every single line or word in particular rather this approach inhibits students to go through in details. The next step is obviously the skimming stage where, like scanning the students are not supposed to go through the text deeply rather here the students are supposed to cast their eyes on the surface to get an overall idea about the text. In this regard Grellet (1981:19) says:

Both skimming and scanning are specific reading techniques necessary for quick and efficient reading. When skimming, we go through the reading material quickly in order to get the gist of it, to know how it is organized, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer. When scanning, we only try to locate specific information and often we do not follow the linearity of the passage to do so. We simply let our eyes wander over the text until we find what we are looking for, whether it be a name, date, or a less specific piece of information.

He further adds that the teachers can contribute by teaching these two techniques for the use of reading in authentic reading situation and the teachers can contribute to build up the students' confidence by teaching them how much they can learn simply by looking at some particular parts or words of a paragraph. Again Grellet ((1981) gives emphasis on the schema theory for using these reading techniques because according to him, the development of a reader's schema can only help the students to read successfully in this regard. However, Scanning or skimming depends on what kind of text the readers are reading or what type of information they are looking for. Students especially at undergraduate level are required to read for detailed

comprehension. For total comprehension, students need full concentration on the text to get complete idea and this attempt of comprehension requires total involvement unlike scanning and skimming. This matter of total involvement refers to the idea of schema theory, where the students try to connect their schemata with the content of the text to comprehend it in the fullest.

Harmer (1998: 70) has mentioned about the principles of teaching reading. If we consider those basic principles of teaching reading skill, we will find how schema theory is very much associated with it:

In principle 1, reading skill is shown as an active skill that is a kind of active interaction. To interact properly readers have to understand what the words mean, they have to be able to see the pictures the words are illustrating and for doing so, readers (here the students) must relate their background knowledge and experience with text they are reading.

In principle 2, students are suggested to involve themselves fully with the reading materials. If the other environments in the class remain the same, students who are not involved with the reading text fail to understand the content of the text. For this involvement students need to connect their schemata with the reading text, unless definitely they will feel no interest.

In principle 3, students are asked to give feedback to the content of the text. In other words language and content should be given equal attention. While reading any text students should look at the type of language used in the reading text, but more importantly the meaning and the message of the text should be comprehended by the learners. If the content is familiar and matched with the background knowledge of the learners, it becomes easier for the learners to comprehend the meaning of the reading text.

In principle 4, the power of prediction has been given importance in case of reading. When students or any reader read any text, the illustration, the book cover, some highlighted words give a hint about the book or text and their brain starts predicting what they

are going to read and obviously if the setting is familiar and connected with the previous knowledge of the readers, it becomes comparatively easier to predict and to set the comprehension process with ease.

In principle 5, it is found that if the reading materials are explored fully the students /readers can comprehend easily. A reading text will turn into a mere combination of sentences, ideas, and descriptions unless students are not fully absorbed in it. A good teacher exploits any reading text to the full by making the text understandable to the learners and for this, a connection between the reading material and the schemata of the learners is essential.

3. THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

We find, most of the time our students are anxious about reading any text in English and behind this anxiety, they have shown many reasons like difficult language, content of the text describing something totally unknown to them, having no prior experience of reading etc. This reading problem is intense in the undergraduate level, where we find students from different educational background (students from both Bangla and English medium background, where Bangla medium students most of the time dominate in the class). Now, the question arises, why our students usually fail to activate their schema in response to the texts they are prescribed by some private universities. From the small scale of survey that has been conducted in this respect, very interesting information have been accumulated. Most of the students (specially from Bangla medium) are coming at tertiary level after completing secondary and higher secondary level and at these two levels students usually go through their English text books prescribed by NCTB (National Curriculum and Text Book Board) so, obviously they grow a habit of reading books that contain the text written in local setting, culture and therefore the context is familiar with the students. This situation is completely reverse in case of the students having English medium background where the prescribed books are mainly British and American. For this reason, students with English medium

background from the very beginning grow or develop their comprehension process in a way that the foreign setting and text written in foreign context become very familiar with them. As a result, they can activate their schemata in response to the texts of foreign setting comparatively easily than the students of Bangla medium students. The opposite scenario is found in case of the undergraduate students having Bangla medium background; when they are given reading materials of American or British origin, they really face problem as they cannot activate their schemata to cope with the materials and thus they struggle a lot. Apart than their educational background, some other factors also play vital role in building their schemata such as social background, extensive reading habit, and exposure to different TV channels, different cultural activities, and different kinds of social interactions. Bangladeshi undergraduate students usually get exposure to the surroundings they belong to, so, their schemata are consisted of the background knowledge of native culture. In this study, we have considered few language materials (used in fundamentals, composition or advanced level) where students confront with cultural conflict and sometimes fail to understand because they cannot bridge between their schemata and the content of the text. For example, in one of the private universities (in which the survey is done), Langan's 'English Skill' is prescribed as a reference book for language development. If we consider some passages from that book (English Skill: 2001), it will be clear why our students struggle to use existing schemata to cope with the content of the text:

- a. Asking Girls Out: There are several reasons I have trouble asking girls to go out with me. I have asked some girls out and have been turned down. This is one reason that I can't talk to them. At one time I was very shy and quiet, and people sometimes didn't even know I was present. I can talk to girls now as friends, but as soon as I want to ask them out, I usually start to become quiet, and a little bit

of shyness comes out. When I finally get the nerve up, the girl will turn me down, and I swear that I will never ask another one out again...

(Langan 155)

- b. My Senior Prom: My senior prom was nothing like what I expected it to be. From the start of my senior year, I had pictured getting dressed in a sleek silvery slip dress that my aunt would make and that would cost \$200 in any store. No one else would have a gown as attractive as mine. I imagined my boyfriend coming to the door with a lovely deep-red corsage, and I pictured myself happily inhaling its perfume all evening long. I saw setting off for the evening in his brother's 2000 BMW convertible. We would make a flourish as we swept in and out of a series of parties before the prom. Our evening would be capped by a delicious shrimp dinner at the prom and by dancing close together into the early morning ours...

(Langan 205)

- c. Let's Ban Prom: While many students regard proms as peak events in high school life, I believe that high school proms should be banned. One reason is that even before the prom takes place, it causes problems. Teenagers are separated into "the ones who were asked" and "the ones who weren't" Being one of those who weren't asked can be heartbreaking to a sensitive young person. Another pre-prom problem is money. The price of the various items needed can add up

quickly to a lot of money. The prom itself can be unpleasant and frustrating, too. At the beginning of the evening, the girls enviously compare dresses while the boys sweat nervously inside their rented suit ...

(Langan 269)

If we analyze these extracts taken from different passages, we understand that why our students struggle to use their schemata to comprehend these type of texts. In addition to that, if we consider the content of the text we find that there is a possibility of cultural conflict. For this reason, it can be said that sometimes some prescribed reading materials can act as obstacles; as a result poor reader is created. Our native students at undergraduate level usually find these reading materials totally unfamiliar with them; so, in most of the cases, they fail to activate their schemata to get into the reading materials. Here, the students usually find no match with their background knowledge and experience and the texts suggested to them. And, this inconsistency of 'no match' leads them to feel uncomfortable and inconsistent as reader.

4. STUDY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The authors of this paper desire to examine whether there is any relationship between the schemata and reading skill of undergraduate students. This paper focused on 200 students taken from three different private universities in undergraduate program of different departments. Most of the students were from Bangla medium background and it was their first experience for most of the students to face English instructions and going through American / British language books. They were from different social background but having almost same cultural values and thus having schemata of almost same standard. A sample questionnaire was set before them and before attempting the questionnaire they were given a briefing on schemata. A short interview was also taken. Based on students' response to the questionnaire and the interview we have categorized their answers into ten different tables. Among

200 students, 18 students did not complete the questionnaire properly. For better analysis and understanding numeric data have been shown in percentage of the information collected.

Table 1

Topic	Bangla medium	English medium
Medium of instruction at school and college	92%	8%

Table 2

Topic	Bangla	English	Mixture of Bangla & English
Current medium of instruction at university	0%	24%	76%

Table 3

Topic	Yes							No
	newspa per	story books	magazine	journals	comics	More than one materials	others	
Use of extra reading materials	34%	4%	4%	0%	2%	50%	2%	4%

Table 4

Topic	British books	American books	Indian books	Confused/not attempted
Prescribed/ followed language books	18%	42%	32%	8%

Table 5

Topic	Bangla	Hindi	English	More than one channel	Others
TV channels usually watched	28%	24%	12%	30%	6%

Table 6

Topic	Yes	No	Sometimes	Others
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Comfortable with text in foreign setting	6%	30%	60%	4%
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Table 7

Topic	Yes	No
English language books in local setting	94%	6%

Table 8

Topic	love	real life situation	adventure	sports	all	others
Theme in reading materials preferred	4%	50%	2%	0%	40%	4%

Table 9

Topic	Yes	No	Sometimes	Rarely
Easily cope with the foreign reading materials	16%	14%	60%	10%

Table 10

Topic	Complex language	Text on different culture	Anxiety about unfamiliar text	All	Others
Cause of being uncomfortable with English text	40%	16%	2%	32%	10%

The first question of the questionnaire was set to know the medium of instruction of the students' school and college level, and it was found that 92% students are from Bangla medium background and only 8% students are from English medium background (see table 1). The second question dealt with the current medium of instruction of the students at the university level and, the finding from that only Bangla is not used as a medium of instruction; only English is the medium of instruction in case of 24% students, and

both Bangla and English are used as the medium of instruction in case of 76% students (see table 2). The third question was regarding the use of extra reading materials by the students. It has been noticed that 34% students prefer newspaper, 4% story books, 4% magazine, 0% journal, 2% comics, 50% more than one materials, 2% prefer other materials as their extra reading material and 4% do not respond at all to this question (see table 3). The fourth question was about the prescribed or the followed language books at their (students') universities. It has been discovered that 18% students follow British books, 42% American books, 32% Indian books and 4% students do not respond to this question (see table 4). The fifth question was about students' preferred TV channels. It was found that 28% students like only Bangla TV channels, 24% prefer only Hindi, 12% like only English, more than one channels are liked by 30% and others channels watched by 6% students (see table 5). Question 6 was set to know whether they are comfortable with the language books in foreign context. It was ===== to know that 6% students like texts in foreign context, 30% students do not like texts in foreign setting, 60% students respond that they sometimes like the foreign setting and 4% students are confused (see table 6). Question 7 was regarding the suggestions of the students in respect of having English language books in local setting. The findings was that 94% students are inclined to have English language books in local setting whereas 6% students do not like the idea (see table 7). Question 8 was about their liking regarding the theme of reading material. The findings was that 4% students like love as a theme, 50% real life situation, 2% adventure, 0% sports (some students like sports but they prefer all the themes mentioned in the questionnaire), 40% prefer all, and 4% students like other themes which were not mentioned in the questionnaire (see table 8). Question 9 was set to know whether their background knowledge help them to cope with the American/British reading materials. It was found that 16% students' previous knowledge help them to understand foreign reading materials whereas 14% students can not connect their background knowledge with their reading materials

of foreign origin and 60% students sometimes are able to make bridge between the reading materials and their background knowledge (see table 9). This table also shows that 10% students hardly can cope with the foreign reading materials. Question 10 was set to find out the reasons of difficulty in understanding English texts by the students. It has been found that 40% students feel uncomfortable with English text because of complex language, 16% students feel difficulty because of exotic culture, 2% students are always anxious about English texts and 32% students identify all the reasons mentioned in the questionnaire for feeling uncomfortable with English text (see table 10).

5. FINDINGS

After analyzing the data gathered from the questionnaire, the researchers have got some interesting results that indicate the relationship between schemata and the reading skill of undergraduate students. Students are mostly from Bangla medium background hence their background knowledge is very much localized from the very beginning. Students' current medium of instruction is not solely English or solely Bangla, rather they receive instruction in a mixture of Bangla and English language. It has been found that half of the surveyed students read mainly the newspaper (English/Bangla) which gives information of their surrounding and they develop their schemata from that information in general. It is also found that private universities prescribe mainly American/ British books with which students hardly find any similarity with their schemata. The authors also come to know that students usually watch Bangla and Hindi TV channels and thus, develop their schemata accordingly. It has also been found that most of the students sometimes like the language books in foreign setting and sometimes they do not and it indicates that students are not always happy with the text in foreign setting and they sometimes find it difficult to understand as they always cannot activate their schemata consistently. It is very surprising that huge number of students (94%) suggest that it will be better if the language books are in local setting and this is a simple

compliance with the fact that they are having problem with language books in foreign setting. Another fact has also been revealed that students like 'real life situation' as the theme of reading materials which suit them the best. It can be easily said that with real life situation they actually can match their schemata. Researchers found that most of the students sometimes can cope with the reading materials with their background knowledge and sometimes they fail. This finding actually tells us when the students find the reading materials matching with their schemata they can cope easily with the text and when they find it against their background knowledge they just struggle. At last the authors find out that, most of the students identify the complex language as the main reason for the inefficiency of reading skill. As the language is complex it becomes difficult for them to understand context of the reading material that result in poor schemata connection. Here learners cannot activate their schemata as they struggle to comprehend the reading text.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Learners should get exposure to visual demonstration so that they can activate their schemata for better reading.
- Pre-reading discussion can be introduced for reading comprehension.
- The use of authentic illustrated reading materials can be a better idea for the development of the schemata of the undergraduate learners.
- Social and educational background is very important for the development of schemata. So, when the language teachers go to prescribe any reading materials for the students of undergraduate level they should think about students' educational, cultural and social background and above all their prior knowledge of the world.
- Teachers can contextualize the reading materials in foreign context when they feel it necessary.

- By doing proper need analysis of the learners, reading materials should be selected.
- In our country, English reading materials are insufficient in our context. So, reading materials should be designed in such a way that the learners get access to different reading material of their interest and need.
- In case of tertiary level students, teachers may sometimes need to use reading materials in foreign context; in that case the teachers should provide the students with necessary background knowledge.
- Overnight nobody can be good readers. For gaining effective reading skill our learners can be suggested to read newspaper, magazine, journal; story books in local setting as reading materials. Besides this, students should be encouraged to watch English movies, read English newspapers and hear English news of home and abroad etc and by this, students can equip their schemata with diverse knowledge and information which will help them to go through texts in a foreign a setting.

Conclusion can be drawn by saying that students' schemata play a vital role in understanding the reading materials. If the students are provided with the materials with which they activate their schemata, they can ultimately be good readers.

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Appendix

The following is the questionnaire that was produced before the students to gather data for the study.

Reading Skills of Undergraduates in Private Universities: A Schematic Perspective

(put a tick mark in the appropriate answer) ✓

1. What was the medium of instruction in your school and college?

a. Bangla

b. English

2. What is the current medium of instruction at your university?

a. Bangla

b. English

c. Mixture of English and Bangla

3. Do you read / go through any extra reading materials (out of syllabus books/ not for exam purpose)? Yes or No;

types of materials—

a. newspaper

b. books (story)

c. magazine

d. journals

e. comics

f. others (specify)-----

4. For your English language development what types books do you follow / what are the prescribed language books of the university?

a. British Books

Name:

b. American Books

c. Indian Books

5. What are the TV channels you usually watch?

a. Bangla

b. Hindi

c. English

d. others

6. Do you feel comfortable with the language books written in the foreign context or in foreign setting?

- a. yes
- b. no
- c. sometimes
- d. others

7. Do you think that it will be helpful for you if the English language books are written by the Bangladeshi writers in Bangladeshi context or in Bangladeshi setting?

- a. yes
- b. no

please specify the reason(s): -----

-----.

8. What kind of theme in reading materials suits you the best?

- a. love
- b. real life situation
- c. adventure
- d. sports
- e. all of these
- f. others (specify the reason)-----
-----.

9. Do you think that by using your knowledge and experience, you can easily cope with the American/British/Indian reading materials?

- a. yes
- b. no
- c. sometimes
- d. rarely

10. Why do you feel uncomfortable reading English texts?

- a. because of complex language
- b. because the text based on different culture

- c. anxiety about unfamiliar texts
- d. all
- e. others:-----

Davies in *The Caretaker*: A Portrait of Survival

Sheikh Mehedi Hasan *

ABSTRACT

*One of the most distinctive features of Pinter's plays is that they neither give clear details about characters, nor about their motives. The existence of Pinter's characters is akin to non-existence, their presence is absence, and communication is a breakdown, a failure. Mac Davies in *The Caretaker* is such a character that can be analysed in multiple ways. This article, however, attempts to show Davies caught in a dialectical dilemma of being and not being. Classified by "Look" of other forces dominant in society, he struggles to retain his identity that only energises him to survive. It also argues that Davies' existential crisis is more than his sense of absurdity. The paper then concludes how Pinter, unlike other Absurdists, characterises Davies in order to show the primeval nothingness and emptiness, the essential loneliness and isolation of man in a harsh world.*

Pinter's 'plays have inspired a vast amount of scholarly criticism and analysis which immediately suggests that there is a lot to be said about them, that they are significantly different from other people's work, and that they are open to a variety of interpretations' (Naismith 2). Stylistically, they are marked by theatrical pauses and silences and pregnant with provocative imageries and witty dialogues, and ornamented with ambiguity and irony. There is something new, original, fresh and uniquely disturbing in Pinter's dramaturgy though his plays are composed in an almost conventional style and manner.

The Caretaker, first produced at the Arts Theatre, London on April 27, 1960, was Pinter's first major success as a dramatist. It has been called 'a national masterpiece' in a review of its first London production (Marowitz 163). The play illuminates core failures in human relationships and dramatises not only how they fail but why they fail. It also reveals Pinter's most subtle and complex portrayal of power struggle. It is a play about human connection, friendship, loneliness, isolation, and distantly about love. Characters here battle for dominance or power in almost every line they speak. Pinter in this play shows that man's insatiable craving is to dominate his fellow man, and therefore all human relationships are based on a battle for dominance.

The Caretaker features three characters: the brothers Aston and Mick and an old tramp Davies. The elder brother, Aston, takes Davies in, after the latter has gotten involved in a fight and lost his job for his violent, prejudicial ways. Invited to stay and given a key, he sizes up the worth of some of Aston's meagre possessions, until he encounters the younger brother, Mick. Mick, although witty, intelligent, competent (he has his own business) and impressive, is as cruel and sadistic as his brother is kind to the old man. Mick believes that Davies has taken advantage of his elder brother's kindness, generosity and good nature. After a couple of encounters with this younger brother, Davies mistakenly comes to trust him. On the other hand, he fails to trust the one (Aston) who has proven his good will. When Aston confides to him, one night, that he has been to a mental hospital and received shock treatment, the old man uses this information as a weapon and, in an argument, pulls a knife on the kind Aston. Davies threatens Aston with his brother Mick's displeasure, but finds to his

* Lecturer, Department of English, Prime University

dismay that the bond of blood is stronger. Mick perplexes him with some technical requirements for the post of an interior decorator. Mick then breaks the statue of the Buddha that his brother loves and has set up in the room, and leaves. When Aston returns and tells Davies that he must leave—for he makes too much noise—the old man turns back cringing to Aston, professing undying loyalty, but is left begging to stay and in tears complaining about what will become of him.

Though a number of themes are generally discussed in commentaries on *The Caretaker*, ‘it is painful and frustrating to coin definitions about the play’ (Marowitz 164). However, with regard to the loneliness and isolation Davies, Aston and, to some extent Mick, suffer, the play can be seen as an authentic portrayal of the changing society of the 1950s in Britain where just after World War II, people felt isolated, frustrated and traumatised, having to live under the constant threats of insecurity and unstable social changes. Though Pinter always insisted that ‘I don’t think of themes when I’m writing’, he is equally aware that ‘theatre has always been a critical act, looking in a broad sense at the society in which we live...’ (Quoted in Naismith 90). Therefore, he captures a glimpse of that society through the characterisation of Davies who is an outcast, pathetically rootless, lonely and isolated.

Pinter’s major dramatic innovation here as elsewhere is in his use of language. A standard response to *The Caretaker* regarding its broken dialogues, pauses and silences (in the first page of the play there are three silences¹) has been to say that it is about ‘the breakdown in communication’² or ‘the failure of communication’ (Pinter, C.W. 15). However, to Pinter, pauses and silences do not amount to a breakdown in communication and he believes that the contrary is true. He says:

‘I think that we communicate only too well, in our silence, in what is unsaid, and that what takes place is a continual evasion, desperate rearguard attempts to keep ourselves to ourselves. Communication is too alarming. To enter into someone else’s life is too frightening’. (Pinter, *Complete Works* 15)

¹ Piner, *The Caretaker*, p-1

² Newton, Ken. *The Caretaker. The Literary Encyclopedia*. July 24, 2002. November 9, 2008. <<http://www.litencyc.com/php/sworks.php?rec=true&UID=1345>>

Basically, *The Caretaker* is a character study of a querulous, bigoted, demanding old man who is heartless, ungrateful, dishonest, and who lies constantly and misjudges everyone around him. He even fails to estimate human relationships or friendship with others as well as gauge their true feelings and ideas, not only about him, but about each other (for example, Mick’s ideas about Aston). He cares only for himself and is blindly heartless to Aston who took him in and provided the essentials for him. On certain occasions, he seems mad and blind: spiritually, morally and ethically. He is manipulative, merciless and violent attempting to manipulate and even terrorise Aston with a knife. When Aston confides to Davies his past traumatic experience in a mental hospital, Davies uses the information to wound and insult him and he even tells Aston to leave the room.

DAVIES. You! You better find somewhere else! (108)

However, a subtle analysis of his behaviour, manner and paranoia enables one to see the reason behind his apparent ungratefulness, dishonesty, cruelty, and rudeness. Helpless, torn and tormented, he is a sort of outcast who had been left to die on many occasions.

DAVIES. I been left for dead more than once. (10)

Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* describes the birth of the social in the “Look” of the other. He says—

‘In making me an object for his projects, the other alienates me from myself, displaces me from the subject position (the position from which the world is defined in its meaning and value) and constitutes me *as* something. Concretely, what I am constituted “as” is a function of the other’s project and not something that I can make myself be. I am constituted as a “Frenchman” in and through the hostility emanating from that German; I am constituted as a “man” in the resentment of that woman’³

“Look” not only determines a class, but it also alienates an individual. When his subjectivity is invaded by the subjectivity of another (for instance, Mick), Davies becomes aware of being looked at. Classified, his alienation can be justified by the Marxist claim that ‘it is not the

³ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existentialism/>

consciousness of man that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness⁴. Since he is classified as an item for someone's project, he becomes suspicious, retorting, cruel and manipulative. Therefore, though he sometimes is not in himself⁵, he does not forget to draw his knife when he is about to be attacked.

Davies desperately tries to cope with the barren, bleak world. His life has been at stake many times before; indeed, he has become so dependent that he needs very basic things such as a pair of shoes⁶. In fact, he has been reduced to a state of misery.

DAVIES. I said, what do you think I am, a dog? Nothing better than a dog.

What do you think I am, a wild animal? (14, 15)

Davies fails to express his identity properly— sometimes he presents himself as Mac Davies, and sometimes as Bernard Jenkins. He is actually someone who always has to assume a false identity. Certainly, he can never be himself.

ASTON. What name have you been going under?

DAVIES. Jenkins, Bernard Jenkins. That's my name. That's the name

I'm known, anyway.

But afterwards he tells Aston: 'That's not my real name'.

ASTON. What's your real name, then?

DAVIES. Mac Davies. That was before I changed my name. (25)

Davies is an outsider; he has no place in family and society. He is a man without any valid papers and someone who has been kicked out from every job he has undertaken only to associate himself with society once more, though he is the victim of its rudeness. He boasts of sleeping in plenty of beds and having relations with girls though the

claim seems hardly credible. He is always haunted by a fear— the fear of being thrown away and losing shelter. Characters like Davies in *The Caretaker* and Vladimir or Estragon in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* represent the bleak side of our existence. They have nothing but a strong urge to survive and somehow hope to survive in a world full of menace and violence.

DAVIES. There's nothing unfamiliar about me with beds. I slept in beds.

I don't make noises just because I sleep in a bed. I slept in plenty of beds. (31)

The extent of Davies' helplessness is difficult for one to imagine. Davies cannot sleep at all at night. He gets up frequently and is haunted by nightmares. Having been haunted by hallucinations or nightmares for a long time, he has become paranoid. Davies even groans and jabbars during his sleep. Aston complains: 'You were making groans. You were jabbering' (30).

In Sartre's vision man is born into a kind of void, a mud. He has the liberty to remain in this mud and thus lead a passive, supine, submissive existence in a 'semi-conscious' state and in which he is scarcely aware of himself. However, he may come out of his subjective, passive situation (in which case he stands out from), become increasingly aware of himself and, possibly, experience *angoisse* (a species of metaphysical and moral anguish). If so, he would then have a sense of the absurdity of his predicament and suffer despair. The energy deriving from this awareness would enable him to 'drag himself out of the mud', and begin to exist. By exercising his power of choice he can give meaning to existence and the universe (Cuddon 317).

Davies somehow tries to relate to existence and give essence to his existence. He then wants to exist by doing or not doing, by being or not being; however, he seems to be more aware of making his own self; that is, becoming aware of his identity. Hence, he prides himself on other occasions for having dinner with famous persons: 'I've had dinner with the best.'⁷ Davies has some hope of getting things done; he

⁴ <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm>

⁵ 'You get a bit out of your depth sometimes, don't you?' Pinter, *The Caretaker*, p- 71

⁶ Pinter, *The Caretaker*, p- 11-12

⁷ Ibid. p-4

is never without hope, even if it means a shambling survival. He lies saying that he is waiting for the weather to break so that he can get to Sidcup to fetch papers that will give him an identity and the right to live among civilised people.

DAVIES. If only I could get down to Sidcup! I've been waiting for the weather to break. He's got my papers, this man I left them with, it's got it all down there, I could prove everything. (26)

But he really does not want to go to Sidcup, for there is nothing for him there. In this regard Mick's estimation of his motives is worth quoting in full:

'What a strange man you are. Aren't you? You're really strange. Ever since you come into this house there's been nothing but trouble. Honest. I can take nothing you say at face value. Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. You're violent, you're erratic, you're just completely unpredictable. You're nothing else but a wild animal, when you come down to it. You're a barbarian. And to put the old tin lid on it, you stank from arse-hole to breakfast time. [...] You make a long speech about all the references you've got down at Sidcup, and what happens? I haven't noticed you go down to Sidcup to obtain them...'

(118,119)

Like a prehistoric mammal about to be extinct, Davies does his utmost to fight against any force opposing him in his attempt to ensure his survival in a harsh and cruel world. Stripped of all nonessentials, a pair of shoes is life and death to him (13). He has been forever looking for a permanent shelter where he can settle down. He wants to stay in Aston's room as he finds it to be as good a shelter as he has ever found:

DAVIES. Good luck. I can't go on like this. Can't get from one place to another. And I'll have to be moving about, you see, try to get fixed up.

(16)

Davies is ever complaining and is never satisfied with anything; a fear always lurks in his mind: 'You don't get much wind' (8). 'Gets very draughty' (9). He is a tramp who always shambles across the room⁸, which eventually implies his precarious state of mind. He is also a racist. Though he himself is an outsider, ironically he blames all

foreigners, outsiders— Blacks, Greeks and Poles— for all the miseries and misfortunes he has faced in life:

'All them Blacks had it, Blacks, Greeks, Poles, the lot of them, that's what, doing me out of a seat, treating me like dirt'. (2)

As Sartre puts it— social reality is in perpetual conflict—an Hegelian dialectic in which, for ontological reasons, there is no state of mutual recognition⁹. Davies quarrels with people who try to cast him out; he fights for dominance which is, to him, merely a shelter, a mechanism for his survival.

During his stay at the house, Davies is invited to take up the position of caretaker; but his selfish and inconsiderate behaviour towards Aston leads to his eventual expulsion from it. His attempt to gain the support of Mick fails and the play ends with Davies appealing pathetically to Aston to be allowed to stay, but the appeal looks doomed to fail. Mick shrewdly sorts out Davies:

MICK: You're stinking the place out. You're an old robber, there's no getting away from it. You're an old skate. You don't belong in a nice place like this. You're an old barbarian. ... You get a bit out of your depth sometimes, don't you? You're a bloody imposter, mate? (114, 116)

Much of Davies' dialogue is funny, but the story of his life is also tragic in that it reminds us of man's existential crisis in a cosmic void where a force or system is ruthlessly lurking to fling him into the realm of nothingness. Perhaps, Davies would have everything if the world

⁸ Pinter, *The Caretaker*, 11

⁹ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existentialism/>

around him could be a bit more welcoming to him. His cry at the end of the play makes a mockery of a social system or an order which is unable to ensure the survival of a human being, albeit one accused of having all nonhuman attributes:

But... but... look... listen... listen here... I mean...

ASTON *turns back to the window.*

What am I going to do?

Pause.

.....

Listen... if I... got down... if I was to... get my papers... would you... would you let... would you... if I got down... and got my...

Long silence. 124, 125)

It has been said that 'of all Pinter's [early] plays *The Caretaker* makes the most bitter commentary on the human condition; instead of allowing an old man to die beaten, the System insists on tantalising him with faint hope, thereby immeasurably increasing his final desperate anguish' (Cohn 119). The system is characteristic of a particular class or group as 'in a class society all beliefs are founded on class position' (Williams 55). Most of the systems stress the derivation of most human activity from an external cause: from God, from an abstracted nature or human nature.... (Ibid 206).

However, it must also be said that 'Davies is certainly in part responsible for his rejection at the end of the play. He has been offered security by Aston, but out of ignorance, selfishness and latent aggression he loses the opportunity and is cast out' (Naismith 100). It is also true that Davies has a number of anti-social characteristics, but the play does not omit to let us know that he is a survivor, someone who never loses hope. His identity may be elusive but he is unable to abide by a submissive role, he has a strong sense of individuality. Moreover, he shows a firm determination and spirit to live 'though living on the absolute fringe of society and fearful of all authorities' (ibid. 102).

The Caretaker is laden with comic humour and farcical elements. But 'the apparently bizarre or comic business in it should not be regarded as absurd' (ibid. 103). It is not meant to expose the meaninglessness of all actions as was the case in *Waiting for Godot*. Critics have opined that

Pinter writes like other Absurdist and that his plays are versions of the Theatre of the Absurd preceded on the stage by the work of his great predecessor Beckett. One can, for example, find similarities between the farcical scenes of these two playwrights. The shoe episode of *The Caretaker* and *Waiting for Godot* are thus quite similar. However, while Beckett's play highlights religious emptiness and existential barrenness, Pinter is more conscious of showing an individual's ability to survive in the face of the stern reality of existence. He depicts man's determination to negotiate all the oppressive forces trying to undermine his identity. Besides, no action in *Waiting for Godot* leads anywhere ('nothing to be done'); in contrast *The Caretaker* has a definite plot leading to the doom of an individual who is no more than a fate-driven and sorrow-stricken personality stripped of all nonessentials and somehow only just conveying the very basic form of human existence.

In other words, unlike other absurdist playwrights e.g. Beckett, Ionesco and Genet, Pinter cannot be associated completely with 'the Theatre of the Absurd'. Pinter's use of some of their dramatic conventions in *The Caretaker* does not prove that he belongs to their group. *The Caretaker*, in fact, is not as radical a play as is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, in which, 'famously, nothing happens twice' (Newton, unnumbered). In this regard, Naismith comments aptly:

'Harold Pinter is included in Esslin's book (as an absurdist playwright), but it is misleading to associate him closely with the other (absurdist) playwrights because he keeps very much to the tradition of surface naturalism and is committed to psychological realism, which the other Absurdist are not. Where Pinter *can* be regarded in this category, however, is in the existentialist definition of his characters' (102).

In short, through his manipulation of language (dialogues, pauses and silences) Pinter creates an environment in *The Caretaker* that cannot be said to be like that of *Waiting for Godot*. In addition, he shows that through the assertion of language one can dominate another. This can be seen in *The Birthday Party* when the two strangers question Stanley and in *The Caretaker* where Davies attempts to dominate Aston just as Mick tries to bully Davies. Such power play is characteristic of Pinter's plays.

Thus, Pinter in *The Caretaker* goes beyond the concept of the Theatre of the Absurd in the sense that he highlights more the existential predicament of characters. Through the characterisation of Davies, Pinter actually shows the primeval nothingness and emptiness, the essential aloneness and isolation of man in a harsh world. As Naismith puts it, 'The Caretaker might be seen as presenting a very bleak vision of the isolation of mid-century urban man' (125). The play makes one aware of the ambiguities and realities of existence. *The Caretaker* is, in fact, a play underscoring the essential human predicament resulting from the dominance of a system that classifies society through its "Look" towards individuals.

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The Debilitated Women in *Jane Eyre* and *Vanity Fair*

Srabonee Mustafiz *

ABSTRACT

Class difference and gender division are indispensable issues to the Victorian culture. The concept of the domestic ideology and respectable femininity is essentially related to the Victorian middle-class and the Victorian middle-class women. In this article an attempt to explore how the Victorian males and females were influenced by the notions of domestic ideology and feminine respectability. "In the first section of this article, I have focused on the definition and historical background of the domestic ideology, its establishment in the society through various ideological state apparatuses, gender division created by the ideology and some critics' comments on the ideology. The second part of this article discusses the binary relationship between a man and a woman and explores the relationship among the women in Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte and Vanity Fair by William Makepeace Thackeray.

In Victorian cultural milieu, the domestic ideology and the position of women are very closely connected. The emergence of bourgeois middle class actually led to the formation of the domestic ideology. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the domestic ideology developed with the separation of the home and the workplace (Nead 32). The skills needed for operating the growing mercantile economy of England were thought to be the "masculine gifts". Simultaneously the women of the upper and the middle classes were encouraged to occupy the place at home with a "state of gentility devoid of responsibility" (Altick 51). Thus masculinity and femininity became associated respectively with the working place and the home. Lynda Nead writes that the separation of the working place and the home left an important impact on gender constructions. Increasingly, the women were identified as domestic beings destined to perform maternal and domestic duties. But men were defined as dealers with the money-making world and the "world of business and politics" (32). She remarks, "For the industrial bourgeois home was emptied of its association with work and became defined instead around notions of recreation, leisure, privacy and shelter. The home was 'domesticated' as were the women who were located within this sphere. Masculinity and femininity were defined in relation to their different fields of activity- the public and the private- gender identities became organized around the ideology of separate spheres" (32-33).

The concept of domestic sphere poses two questions before us. What were the expectations from an ideal female within the domestic sphere? What was actually her position in it? The answer of the first question is related with the concept of respectable femininity. According to Lynda Nead, respectability was a complex whole involving "appropriate and acceptable modes of behaviour, language and appearances". These socially acceptable modes of behaviour defined gender and class identities (28). In other words, the concept of respectability was not the same for the males and the females. The feminine respectability was defined in terms of chastity, marriage, motherhood, "dependency, delicacy and fragility" of the middle-class women (24-28). An ideal middle-class woman's identity was formed on these just mentioned issues.

* Research Scholar, Department of English and Film Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

A brief discussion on these issues would help us to understand the expectation from a middle-class woman. First of all, the women were brought up to be good mothers and wives. As home was the basic unit of the society, the women were encouraged to look after the order and peace of the home. The purity of the home depended on the chastity of a woman. As Lynda Nead writes, “woman’s moral and sexual purity guaranteed the home as a haven and a source of social stability” (32-33). For women, independence was unnatural. Dependence was considered as a natural attribute to a middle-class woman (28-29). Marriage was the institution through which a woman’s dependence was consolidated. Motherhood was the “chief source of pleasure” and the sign of feminine health. “Maternal love was constructed as the apex of feminine purity and as an unattainable model for all other human relationships.” “The image of Madona and Child was a paradigm of maternal devotion and purity”(26). To ensure dependence physical weakness and delicacy were expected parts of feminine respectability. The women were constructed as fragile beings living in a “glassdome”. Leaning on a gentleman’s arms was a very common representation of a middle-class woman denoting her fragile existence (Altick 53).

However, the confinement of the middle-class women to the domestic sphere was represented in an idealized way. The constructed feminine virtues were not viewed as inferior attributes. Rather women’s virtues were thought to be different from those of men and the male and female virtues were regarded complimentary (Nead 34). John Ruskin writes, “Each has what the other has not: each completes the other and is completed by the other. They are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depends on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give.....Now their separate characters are briefly these. The man’s power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer and defender. His intellect is for speculation and invention, his energy for adventure, for war and for conquest...But the woman’s power is not for rule, nor for battle-and her intellect is not for invention and creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement and decision.....her great function is praise.” (qtd. in Nead: 34).

The innocent and supportive nature of women was lauded and idealized with an aura of an angel.

Nevertheless, the concept of respectable femininity makes it clear that women were never treated equally to men and being located inside the four walls of a home, they were deprived of freedom to establish themselves as independent beings. All the virtues expected from the middle-class women- chastity, dependence, fragility, supportive attitude, etc- were either self effacing or dedicated to support male interest.

Now the question is how the domestic ideology of which respectable femininity is a part, was established? Were the women themselves conscious of their exploitation? Was there any resistance from their part? If there was no collective resistance, why was that so?

Industrial Victorian England was typically a class based society. Like any class based society, the ruling ideology of powerful bourgeois class was established here. From an Althusserian perspective, the establishment of the domestic ideology can be interpreted. In Marx’s view “ideology is the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group” (Althusser 149). Althusser explains that family, educational institutions, legal and medical discourses, religion all are several ideological state apparatuses through which the ideologies of the ruling class are established in a society. When in a class based society the labour power is reproduced, it is reproduced being subjected to the ideologies of the ruling class (128). Through the process termed “interpellation” the individuals of the society are transformed as subjects to the ruling ideology (162-63). Very naturally, the industrial England that faced the growth of a new bourgeois class, could not deny its construction of different ideologies through various apparatuses.

How different apparatuses played roles to establish the concept of feminine respectability are focused in the following paragraphs.

According to Althusser, education is the most dominant ideological state apparatus (146). Victorian upper and middle-class women basically received education either from boarding school like Miss Pinkerton’s school at Chiswick or from governesses. Altick writes that

female education was limited to “the polite accomplishments which were calculated to help her first to win a husband and then, after that primary goal was reached, to infuse her household with an air of the softer graces so as to maintain its separation from the gritty world of affairs.” The education was void intellectual depth (54). Further analysis of contemporary education reports, students’ biographies and magazines also reflect the hollowness of female education. Frances Power Cobbe remembers her school days as time when “fine human material was deplorably wasted.” She continues, “Nobody dreamed that anyone of us could in later life be more or less than an ‘Ornament of society.’ That a pupil in that school should ever become an artist, or authoress, would have been looked upon by both Miss Runciman and Miss Roberts as a deplorable dereliction” (41). Music, dancing, knitting, learning foreign languages like French and Italian were the parts of learning in her school. She condemns that any of this learning in her later life failed to be useful. The education system even extinguished the students’ desire to learn.

A report (1845) on the state of Girls’ boarding schools published in *Fraser’s Magazine* found that in boarding schools, the concentration was basically given on the feminine accomplishments rather than on the development of reason and intellect. The following extract is indeed alarming.

“Women learn nothing thoroughly; in their education the reason of things is altogether left out, they are taught by rote instead of rule. Their memoirs are quickened, their imaginations excited, their passions stimulated; but their understandings are left to slumber.” (56-61). Though Hannah More in *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* criticizes the contemporary excessive emphasis on the female accomplishments and urges for pursuing an intellectually enriched learning, she too believed that the learning should be in accordance with the professions of motherhood and womanhood (65). She too thought that education should be differentiated based on gender.

A deep analysis of the above historical documents prove that for girls there was a different kind of education system which reproduced feminine labour power appropriate to serve the interest of male dominated family and to secure the domestic ideology.

The legal discourses also ensured women’s dependent position that the concept of feminine respectability demanded. On female inheritance there was the male control. Until 1870 no step was taken to reform the law by which a married woman’s property became the property of her husband (Altick 58). William Alexander notes that by contemporary British law every married woman was considered as a minor and had no legal right to do any economic transaction without the consent of her husband (173). He states, In the stature of wills, she is expressly prohibited from devising land and even from bequeathing goods and chattels without the leave of her husband; because all such goods and chattels are, without any limitation, his sole and absolute property; whether they were such as the wife brought along with her at the marriage, or such as she acquired even by her labour and industry afterward.” (174). Sir William Blackstone marks that by marriage a woman lost her individual legal and political existence and was incorporated into the existence of her husband. Under such legal condition, a woman was in truth solely under the protection of her husband (Book 1: 430). Until 1857, the availability of divorce was limited only to limited individuals. A husband could divorce his wife on the charge of adultery but a wife needed to prove adultery and an additional offense of the husband to get divorce (Altick 58).

It is needless to say that women were discriminated even by the contemporary laws of the state. While there was an increasing demand of reform of laws, many legal experts and commentators like William Alexander were in favour of continuing the contemporary laws. William Alexander could not find the suspension of a woman’s individual existence by marriage as a degrading situation. Rather he found that by marriage a woman could receive such privileges that a single woman was unable to get. For example a married woman’s debts were to be paid back by her husband and thus she was exempted from an economic burden. However, the laws viewed that women should be taken care of by the males and thus denied them any opportunity to come into being.

The church as an ideological state apparatus played a significant role in propagandizing sexual repression. Evangelical Anglicans and Methodists were obsessed against the lust of flesh and they left a strong

impression of morality regarding the control of sexual behaviour. People of all classes grown up in Evangelical England were more and less influenced by the religious teaching of repressing the sexual desire. Sexual activity was encouraged only between a married couple for the purpose of procreation (Goldfarb 20-29). Theoretically, though the church insisted both the males and the females to control sexual desire, practically, the women were more encouraged than the men to retain sexual purity. Because they were within the domestic ideological construction which supremely valued the idea of chastity of women as an important part of respectable femininity.

The medical discourses were rather controversial about the female sexuality. Some medical experts viewed that an ideal respectable woman was to be sexually ignorant and devoted only to her husband. Some argued that respectable women did not possess sexual desire at all. On the contrary, some other experts were also in the view that women actually felt sexual desire and it was healthy for them. But the sexual pleasure was the most healthy and enjoyable only within marriage (Nead 19-20).

It can be noted that the medical discourses also incorporated the idea of sexuality with respectable femininity. The discourses thus viewed sexuality not only from a biological perspective but from social angle too. That is why the medical discourses encouraged motherhood and marriage. A woman whose sexual demand was not in accordance with the expectation of respectability, was termed socially deviant and medically abnormal as well.

If we closely analyze the roles of ideological apparatuses in creating an image of a respectable woman, we find that women are constructed socially and are always in opposition with the males. In other words, the women are constructed in certain types by the male dominated apparatuses. And their status is inferior to that of males. The second question about the position of women that was posed in the beginning of this section thus can be answered. At the same time it is also clear how different institutions established the domestic ideology in the society.

About domestic ideology Mary Poovey argues that the idea of gender is not a natural phenomenon but a social construction; the organizations or institutions socially construct gender differences and gender relations (2). She studies sexual differences in binary oppositions (8). The above discussion on women's representation by different institutions basically is supported by Poovey's contention. But Poovey concentrates to show women as other in the gender biased Victorian society. The difference between self and other (male and female) is prominent. There is no focus on the internal relationship among the members of this 'other' or women's group. In the next section I will focus on the relationship among women in Jane Eyre and Vanity Fair.

Nancy Armstrong also deals with Victorian femininity but unlike Poovey she does not find women in a vulnerable position. In her view the political and cultural history are interrelated (10). She traces the relationship between female subjectivity and political power and argues that in 19th century domestic novels there can be found a new female ideal that cannot be distinguished from the rise of middle class (9). If we accept Armstrong's views, then we have to admit that women were politicized too. They were also interpellated by ruling ideology and class differences. In the next section while discussing the relationship among women in the two novels, I will also focus how they themselves were interpellated by domestic ideology and class difference. The answers of the questions mentioned in page four regarding women's consciousness of their own status and their resistance will be found out by analyzing woman-woman relationship too.

2

In Mary Poovey's view Victorian middle-class women are as much vulnerable as the working class women. The main reason of their vulnerability is their economic dependence (141-142). The female characters of Jane Eyre and Vanity Fair are essentially dependent on the males' income and inheritance. However, they are dependent in another sense too- they are not independent from the ideological construction. Here I would like to mention again that this ideological construction is essentially male dominated. In next several paragraphs I would explore the major female characters' vulnerability.

The Victorian middle class was divided into numerous subdivisions according to income, education, religion and occupation. But as a whole the middle-class was the moral heart of the society. Even many aristocrats also embraced the values of the middle-class (Altick 28-29). The ideologies of the middle-class influenced the working class too (Nead 38-39).

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane's parentage affirms that she actually belongs to the middle-class. However, her predicament in Gateshead and afterwards her admission into a charity school classify her as a working-class child. Abbot reminds her, "you are less than a servant" (9). Lowood school is for poor and orphan children who have to work to save the cost of the school (42-43). Later when Jane comes to Thornfield as a governess, she cannot fully efface her working-class identity. The position of a governess was an ambivalent one in Victorian culture. Like a middle-class woman a governess also received the learning of female accomplishments but her independence to earn her own livelihood associated her with a working-class woman. Until she inherits her uncle's property, her affiliation with the working class is never obliterated. On the other hand, Bertha, the half creole woman being the daughter of a rich West Indian planter and merchant belongs to an upper middle class. After marriage, she becomes a member of an English aristocratic family.

In spite of having class difference both Jane and Bertha are economically vulnerable. Jane does not inherit from her poor clergyman father and she also loses the hope to inherit anything from her mother's side, her mother having married a man of lower status.

In her very early life Jane realizes her economic insecurity when John Reed retorts, "you are a dependent, mamma says; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg and not live here with gentleman's children like us and eat the same meals we do and wear clothes at our mamma's expense." (8). That is why to Jane poverty is "synonymous with degradation." (20). Afterwards, when Rochester vexes her with his ironical word-game, she passionately remarks that if she had money, she would not let Rochester leave her (216). Jane cannot but admit that in marriage economic power is a necessary factor and she does not have that. On the other hand, though Bertha comes of

a well off family, according to the British Law for married woman's property discussed in section one, her sole property actually belongs to Rochester. Rochester admits that his father wanted to marry him off to Bertha so that his son could possess her large inheritance.

Both Jane and Bertha suffer from the constraints of the middle-class ideology. Mr. Brocklehurst's admonition to Miss Temple for serving bread and cheese to the girls of Lowood school may sound very ludicrous. But the lecture underscores the principle of sexual ideology that respectable women should not feel the lust of flesh. Brocklehurst's mission is to teach the girls how to be self denying. For this reason, he even does not allow anyone's hair to be naturally curly. His mission is to raise the girls with "shamefacedness and sobriety" repressing the minimum demand of their "vile bodies" (53-54). His order to the teachers to punish Jane's body for rescuing her soul may suggest his attempt to curb her extreme passion for which Mrs. Reed sent her away to the school. Brocklehurst also advises the students to ostracize Jane. It echoes the confinement of Bertha who has been imprisoned for her extreme passion too.

Rochester's treatment of Jane and Bertha demonstrates how domestic ideology works in their relationships. Rochester boasts of his twenty years' experience, his older age and continental traveling. In contrast he laughs at Jane's slow going, undiversified and quiet life. He tells her, "you have lived the life of a nun." (105). He repeatedly calls Jane "little girl" and "inexperienced girl". From the very beginning, Rochester places himself on the superior position of a strong, confident and commanding male figure who feels self complacency because of his multidimensional experiences. Though later he calls Jane his equal, his comments on her creative art are sarcastic- "You had not enough of the artist's skill and science to give it full being;" (108). Rochester denies to let Jane pursue her job of teaching because governessing and slavery are synonymous to him. As a governess Jane is dependent on him. But Rochester also wants her to be completely dependent on him as a wife. He tells Jane, "you seem to submit and I like the sense of pliancy you impart;" (222). It reminds us of the virtues of sweetness and obedience of a middle-class house wife. Rochester attempts to decorate her with costly drapery and jewellery in order to make his girl-bride a doll of the

glass-dome. The images of the diamond chain, the clasping bracelets and the fingers loaded with rings depict the picture of a dependent doll-bride. Rochester's declaration that he means to claim "your [Jane's] thoughts, conversation and company-for life" threatens to annihilate Jane's individual existence. Jane feels uneasy because Rochester wants to change her in accordance with the concept of the patriarchal marriage.

Even Bertha too could not protect herself from the patriarchal marriage. Her family wanted to marry her off to Rochester because he was from a good family background. After marriage Rochester begins to despise her because she fails to be a typical English housewife that the domestic ideology demands. A very interesting issue is what we know of Bertha, is totally from Rochester's perspective. His long dialogues reflect that he hates her because she had excessive physical passion (which ultimately led her to madness) and she had low tastes. Rochester never exactly clarifies what those low tastes are. Regarding her madness, Rochester like many medical experts such as William Wills Moseley and George Man Burrows believes that Bertha's madness is hereditary. Then it can be easily assumed that Rochester would not have a child from Bertha. Bertha here fails to achieve the goal of an ideal housewife-the motherhood. In section one I have already mentioned that the contemporary medical discourses view madness as a result of excessive sexual desire that upsets the concept of feminine respectability. That is why in Rochester's view Bertha's madness is shameful and a matter to hide. Nead notes that physical frailty was a sign of respectable femininity (29). Rochester loathes Bertha's robust frame because his aristocratic Englishness might associate it with the nuances of the working class. In a middle class English family the husband is the guardian who protects his other family members including his wife. The typical English wife is presented as a frail woman because she constantly needs the support of her husband. But Bertha's healthy, tall and passionate figure suggests that she did not need the protection of her husband. In my view as a typical Victorian husband, Rochester felt a kind of inferior complex before Bertha.

In *Vanity Fair*, both Amelia and Becky are victimized by the domestic ideology. As the daughter of a stockbroker Amelia is not less vulnerable than Becky whose father was a poor and dissolute artist. Amelia is a typical middle-class ideal female. She is always protected by the males and after George's death, without Dobbin's help, she might not have survived at all. The males take the most important decisions of her life. Mr. Sedley and Mr. Osborne arrange her marriage with George. Later both the fathers compel her to stop any communication with George. Her father in his better days keeps the ladies away from mercantile matters because business is not the area of the ladies. After the fall of his business, Amelia finds it really hard to earn money for the maintenance of the family. The learning of the female accomplishments from Miss Pinkerton's school might help her win the hearts of eligible bachelors, but in the hard real world, that proves to be futile. Both George and little George-the husband and the son- occupy all of her existence. Specially the marriage between George and Amelia is the reflection of an ideal middle-class marriage between a humble wife and a commanding husband. After the breach between Mr. Sedley and Mr. Osborne, when George first visits Amelia, she begins, "crying over George's hand and kissing it humbly as if he were her supreme chief and master"(196). On the other hand, "He [George] saw a slave before him in that simple, yielding faithful creature, and his soul within him thrilled secretly somehow at the knowledge of his power."(196). Amelia herself is charmed at George's glamour, talent and sacrifice for her. When she receives George's admiration, she glows and when George neglects her, she sighs. George is her Charming Prince, a Sultan whereas she is the Cinderella or a slave. After the death of George, his place is substituted by their son, the little Georgy. She becomes too much fussy about the child. She keeps it like a jewel and sacrifices the last remnants of her finery and energy for its welfare. She also performs the responsibility to take care of her old, poor and sick father. As a daughter, wife and mother, Amelia sacrifices her youth by supporting and taking care of the males of her family. Being constructed within the domestic ideology she becomes self-denying.

Becky's life is also affected by the middle-class ideology. Though she also gets education in Miss Pinkerton's school like Amelia, Becky

learns from the experiences of her poor life. While Amelia is unconsciously affected by the domestic ideology, Becky attempts to exploit the ideology. If the domestic ideology creates a woman's place into the home, Becky searches for a suitable home but to go upward by the social ladder. The moment she comes to Amelia's home in the beginning of the novel, she targets Jos Sedley as a potential husband to gain a home in India. Whereas the ideology demands that without marriage there no respectable choice is left for a woman, Becky marries in a respectable family but she tries to fulfill her ambition by exploiting her marriage. Using the name of the Crawley family, she manipulates the money-lenders. But at least in two points Becky too is affected by the domestic ideology. Firstly both Mrs. Sedley and George Osborne disapprove her approach to Jos. As a governess Becky's working class association threatens to infect the purity of a middle-class home. In spite of her beauty, intelligence, charm and wit, she must not be considered as a daughter-in-law of a respectable family because her poor class background is enough to spoil the innocence and submissiveness that a respectable middle-class woman must have. For the same reason, Miss Crawley who was once a great admirer of her, never relents towards her after she marries Rawdon Crawley and disinherits her nephew for the offense of marrying a governess. Secondly, when Rawdon leaves her after his conflict with Lord Steyne, Becky for the first time in her life feels that a husband's association is greatly necessary for acquiring respectability. The fops who once paid her homage turn to be disrespectful towards her because she is now not protected by her husband. "She began to feel that she was very lonely indeed. 'If he'd been here' she said, 'those cowards would never dared to insult me.'" (641). Even intelligent and calculative ladies like Becky are insecure without the company of the husbands.

From the above discussion we can come to the point that regardless of their class women are vulnerable in a society where domestic ideology dominates. Nobody-Jane, Bertha, Amelia and Becky- is beyond the dependence. Nevertheless, a middle-class woman suffers more than a governess. Because a middle-class woman does not have any place to go except her father's or her husband's home. Bertha can be sent to a madhouse. Amelia as George's widow can go back to Russell Square if Old Osborne allows her to enter his home. She can start a new life only

when she agrees to marry Dobbin. They do not have any place of their own. A governess too shares this lot. But a governess can change her place on her own will and also aspires for social mobility. She enjoys bit more freedom than a middle-class woman because of her little earning. Bertha and Amelia cannot move so much as Jane and Becky can and they move indeed from one place to another independently. Jane's lonely departure from Thornfield and Becky's return to England before Rawdon arrives to settle down with his creditors are bold steps for a woman.

In the above discussion I have focused how domestic ideology and the males constructed by it affect a woman's life. However it is yet to be discovered how a woman is affected by another woman in Jane's and Amelia's world. Sandra M Gilbert's article "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress" explores Jane's horror caused by the patriarchy. In this article the author argues that Rochester and his patriarchal marriage concept create an anxiety in Jane and Bertha's scream gives vent to Jane's mental turbulence. Thus Bertha is presented as Jane's subconscious self. Nevertheless, this article does not focus on how women themselves are constructed by patriarchal ideology. The article "Politics of Sexuality" breaks the typical image of a Victorian gentleman and focuses on the perversion of male desire behind the materialism and the victimization of women. But this article too does not discuss the relationship among women.

In the following part I would like to focus how women themselves are interpellated by the domestic ideology and class difference in Jane Eyre and Vanity Fair. Many female characters are unaware that they are already constructed by the patriarchal ideology. As a result women themselves are passive, indifferent and unconscious to another woman's vulnerability. Hence the resistance of 'other' is not collective but individual.

In her article "Jane Eyre Class-ified" Jina Politi argues that Jane Eyre is complicit in showing Jane very subtly sharing both national and patriarchal ideology. But it overlooks the relationship between Jane and Bertha.

If we closely look at the relationship between Jane and Bertha we find that Jane is very indifferent to Bertha's plight. After listening to Rochester's long description of his conjugal life with Bertha, Jane feels pity for him. She tells Rochester, "I do earnestly pity you." (261). Even Rochester's former mistresses too seem to her "poor girls" (266). But very surprisingly Jane does not show sympathy for Bertha except calling her "unfortunate"(257). She is very silent on Bertha's matter. She does not demand any verification of Rochester's complains against Bertha. It seems that very unconsciously she accepts what Rochester informs her.

Mrs. Reed is also interpellated by the domestic ideology and harsh to little Jane. Mrs. Reed has two problems with Jane. Firstly, her mother married a man of low status. To her Jane is a child embedded with poor class' germs. Brocklehurst announces before the teachers and pupils of Lowood school that Mrs Reed has sent her away to the school so that her corrupt nature cannot violate the purity of her (Mrs. Reed's) middle-class children. Secondly, in her view Jane has a passionate nature. On her death bed she declares that her "incomprehensible disposition" (197) irritated her. Moreover, Jane has been very plain looking since her childhood. She does not have "pink cheeks" and "golden curls" like Georgiana (12). Rather she has the strength of language. Jane can speak and she speaks against the family tyranny. Mrs. Reed suppresses her verbal power as she says, "Be seated somewhere, and until you can speak pleasantly, remain silent" (5). When Jane implores her to set her free from the Red Room, she says, "it is only on condition of perfect submission and stillness that I shall liberate you then."(14). The virtues that are expected from an ideal middle-class woman- sweetness, graceful look, self control, submissiveness-are absent in little Jane. So Mrs. Reed's middle-class temperament cannot tolerate her disposition.

Mrs. Reed is interpellated in another way too. In Gateshead John Reed is the only male member of the family. In my view, losing her husband's protection, the widow is emotionally dependent on her son. That is why, she ignores John Reed's bully to Jane. After he assaults Jane, she gives order to imprison Jane to the Red Room instead of punishing her son.

The servants of Gateshead also cannot share Jane's suffering. Abbot thinks that John Reed as the only male member of the family is Jane's master and she must not have misbehaved with him. Abbot also believes that a sweet look and submissive temperament might have saved Jane from Mrs. Reed's disgust. Though Bessie is sympathetic to her, she even cannot divulge the cruelty of Reed family to the doctor.

Helen is interpellated by religious ideology. She teaches Jane the doctrine of endurance, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and despitefully use you." (49). Because of her patience and tolerance, she does not protest Miss Scatcherd's flopping. Helen could have been the perfect angelic middle-class wife with her philosophy of self denial and patience. Though in Lowood school she is the only girl who soothes Jane's sorrow, she fails to convince her that a place of happiness and peace really exists somewhere. Helen cannot save herself in this cruel world and she would have failed to save Jane if she could survive.

There grows the wonderful friendship among Diana, Mary and Jane. Their intellectual amity makes them close with one another. However Diana would rather view marriage a better option for Jane. She tells Jane, "Mary and I had both concluded he (St. John) wished you to marry him." (353). In spite of knowing that St. John does not love Jane and he has an austere personality ("Diana Rivers had designated her brother 'inexorable as death.'") they would be gladder if Jane agreed to marry St. John. As the novelist writes, " Diana clapped her hands. 'That is just what we hoped and thought! And you will marry him Jane, Jane, won't you?'" (353). When Jane informs her that she does not love St. John as a husband, Diana gives stress on his look. She tells, "Yet he is a handsome fellow." (354). Upon Jane's comment on his cold feeling, Diana remarks, "And yet St. John is a good man." (354). Diana's emphasis on the word "yet" seems to suggest that Jane could have considered St. John as her husband. While Jane can think of the position of a female curate for herself, Diana can think of the position of a wife for Jane.

Elaine Showalter comments, "Thus the feminine heroine grows up in a world without female solidarity, where women in fact police each other on behalf of patriarchal tyranny. There is sporadic sisterhood and

kindness between the women in this world and Jane finds it ultimately at Marsh End with Diana and Mary Rivers, but on the whole these women are helpless to aid each other, even if they want to.”(71). However, Showalter does not explain why there is no solidarity among the women. In the above discussion, I have attempted to find that reason. As a whole it can be found that women in Jane’s world are not liberated from the patriarchal hegemony.

Because they are interpellated by the ideological construction in such a way that they themselves become passive to their fellow being’s frail situation.

The women of Vanity Fair are also constructed like those of Jane Eyre. Interpellation, class difference and material pursuit are the reasons behind the lack of female union. Conforming to the ideological construction, the mothers like Mrs. Sedley searches for suitable groom for their daughters. In Miss Pinkerton’s school the female teachers impart the education on female accomplishments like music, dancing, needle work, foreign language and other fashionable art. This genteel learning is only necessary to win a husband. The novelist remarks, “Of what else have young ladies to think but husbands?”(92).

Amelia is the sweetest and most innocent character in the money-driven world of Vanity Fair. She is sympathetic, kind and helpful to all. She is the only friend of Becky in Miss Pinkerton’s school. Yet she cannot criticize George when George plays roles to break up Jos’ and Rawdon’s attachment with Becky. She is hurt but she cannot go beyond George’s decision. Practically outside the school, Amelia can rarely help her poor friend Becky.

I have already mentioned that Miss Crawley and Mrs. Sedley are constructed by the middle-class ideology of feminine respectability in such a way that they deny to consider the governess as a family member. Interestingly Rose Crawley, Sir Pitt’s second wife faces antagonism from the ladies of other genteel baronet families. The reason is the women are also influenced by class barrier. An iron-monger’s social status is inferior to that of a baronet family. When Rose Crawley crosses that barrier, she becomes ostracized. Similarly, George’s sisters are also reluctant to accept Amelia as their sister-in-

law because the British merchant Osbrone’s family status is superior to John Sedley’s.

Because the women are constructed and indifferent to their own interpellation, we do not find any suggestion of collective resistance against the interpellation. But individual resistance is there. For example, Jane denies the patriarchal marriage concept. She remarks, “I never can bear being dressed like a doll by Mr. Rochester, or sitting like a second Danae with the golden shower falling daily round me.”(229). Whereas Jane’s resistance is direct, Becky’s resistance is subtle. Her dealing with the money transactions and ascending by the social ladder while never upsetting the nuances of the feminine respectability are her resistance against becoming a domestic and dependent woman.

In conclusion I would like to mention that the Victorian domestic ideology is male dominated and the ideological state apparatuses through which it was established were male controlled. But the women, who are represented as ‘other’, are more or less interpellated by the ruling ideology. In many cases, they are not even aware of the exploitation. Jane Eyre and Vanity Fair reflect the picture of those debilitated Victorian women though with the promise of individual resistance.

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Augmentation of Power System Stability by Using SMES System

M.R.I. Sheikh*
R. Takahashi**
J. Tamura***

ABSTRACT

In this paper a simple but novel control strategy has been developed for Superconducting Magnetic Energy Storage (SMES) unit. The SMES unit is used to improve the dynamic performance of power system. The gain of the controller is determined depending on the power system and the capacity of the SMES unit. A simple delayed function is used to determine the desired power from the SMES unit. Eigenvalue analysis and computer simulation results show that the proposed controller is very robust in dealing different types of disturbances.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the recent development of power electronic converter/inverter technology, the FACTS device like STATCOM is considered for stabilizing power system. However, since the traditional STATCOM has only an ability of reactive power control, its application is limited to reactive power support in the power system. STATCOM/BESS, i.e., STATCOM with battery energy storage system has emerged as more promising devices for power system applications including wind farm, as it has both real and reactive power control abilities. Flywheel and energy capacitor system (ECS) can also be considered to smooth the wind farm output power. All systems have some merits and demerits.

Another alternate and attractive solution is to use superconducting magnetic energy storage (SMES) system to enhance the stability of power system. Though SMES has high initial installation cost, intensive progress in power electronics and superconductivity has made it attractive to use SMES in power transmission and distribution systems. Since the successful commissioning test of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) 30 MJ unit [1], SMES systems have received much attention in power system applications. It has some merits superior to other types of storage systems, i.e., long service life due to having no mechanical part, high response speed in input/output of large power, and high storage efficiency of about more than 90% [2], etc. The real power as well as the reactive power can be absorbed (charging) by or released (discharging) from the SMES coil according to the system power requirements. Depending on the control loop of its power conversion unit and switching characteristics, the SMES system can respond very rapidly (MWs/milliseconds). For these reasons, during the past decade SMES Unit has attracted much attention from the researchers. Especially high temperature superconductor makes the SMES unit very attractive to the utility engineers. SMES systems have the capability of storing energy in their low resistance coils. This energy can be supplied to the power system by the SMES or received by it by controlling the voltage across the inductor, which is eventually controlled by the firing angles of the 12-pulse converter.

* Doctoral Student, EEE Department, Kitami Institute of Technology, Japan

** Associate Professor, Department of EEE, Kitami Institute of Technology, Japan

*** Professor, Department of EEE, Kitami Institute of Technology, Japan

SMES has been used for different applications in power systems [3-21]. Some researchers have used the SMES unit for the improvement in power system dynamic performance [3-13]. It has also been used for the improvement in damping of subsynchronous oscillations[14-16]. Effect of SMES on Automatic Generation Control has also been investigated[17-21]. Most of the SMES controllers fall under the following two categories:

- Proportional Integral (PI) / Proportional Integral Derivative (PID) controller
- Intelligent such as Fuzzy and Neural Network based controllers

The parameters of the PI or PID controllers are obtained by pole placement method. In case of intelligent controllers, most of the parameters are obtained on-line.

This paper introduces a novel idea of generating the compensating power from SMES unit by using a simple delay network. Pole placement technique is used to determine the gain of the controller. The controller is tested on a power system model and the results are compared to that of a PI controller.

2. POWER SYSTEM MODEL

The power system model shown in Fig. 1 has been used for the simulation for this work. The model system comprises a synchronous generator connected to the infinite bus system through transmission line and a SMES unit is connected at the generator terminal bus. The placement of the SMES unit is selected to achieve the best performance from it while improving the power system stabilization[5]. The power system is equipped with a governor and a static excitation system as same as that used in [5]. Without the SMES unit, there are 10 system state variables. The system is described by two-axis model[22]. Some important equations are given below:

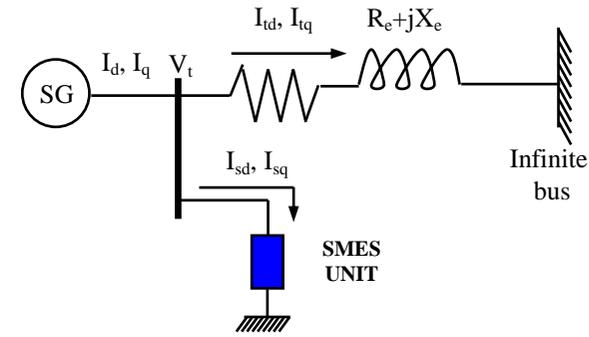


Fig. 1. The power system model with the SMES unit

$$\dot{E}_d' = [-E_d' - (X_q - X_d')I_q] / T_{d0}' \quad (1)$$

$$\dot{E}_q' = [-E_{fd} - E_q' + (X_q - X_d')I_q] / T_{d0}' \quad (2)$$

where E_{FD} is the field excitation voltage, and T'_{d0} and T'_{q0} represent d-axis and q-axis transient time constant, respectively. The swing and rotor angle equations can be written as

$$\dot{\omega} = [P_m - D_g \omega - P_e - P_{sm}] / M_g \quad (3)$$

$$\dot{\delta} = \omega - 1 \quad (4)$$

$$\dot{\omega} = [P_m - D_g \omega - P_e - P_{sm}] / M_g \quad (3)$$

$$\dot{\delta} = \omega - 1 \quad (4)$$

where P_m , D_g and M_g are the output power of the reheat steam turbine, damping coefficient and moment constant. P_e is the electromagnetic power transferred in the air gap. P_{sm} is stored power into the SMES. The terminal voltage which describe the relation between transmission line and generator are

$$V_d = E_d - R_a I_d - X'_d I_q$$

$$V_\infty \sin(\delta - \alpha) + R_e I_d + \omega L_e I_q \quad (5)$$

$$V_q = E_q - R_a I_q + X'_d I_d$$

$$V_\infty \cos(\delta - \alpha) + R_e I_q - \omega L_e I_d \quad (6)$$

$$V_t^2 = (V_d^2 + V_q^2)^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad (7)$$

where V_t and V_∞ represent terminal voltage of the synchronous generator and infinite bus voltage respectively.

3. SMES Unit and Its Control Strategy

The SMES inductor-converter unit consists of a dc superconducting inductor, a 12-pulse cascaded bridge type ac/dc converter and a Y-Y/ Δ step down transformer as shown in Fig. 2. Control of the converter firing angle (α), provides the means for continuous variation of the bridge voltage, V_{sm} , over a wide range of positive and negative values. If losses are assumed negligible, then, in per unit [5],

$$V_{sm} = V_{sm0} \cos \alpha - I_{sm} R_c \quad (8)$$

where α is the delay angle

V_{sm} is the per unit bridge voltage

V_{sm0} is the no load per unit bridge voltage

I_{sm} is the per unit bridge current, and

R_c is the per unit commutating resistance

For this lossless case the current I_{sm} can be expressed as

$$L_{sm} \frac{dI_{sm}}{dt} = V_{sm} \quad (9)$$

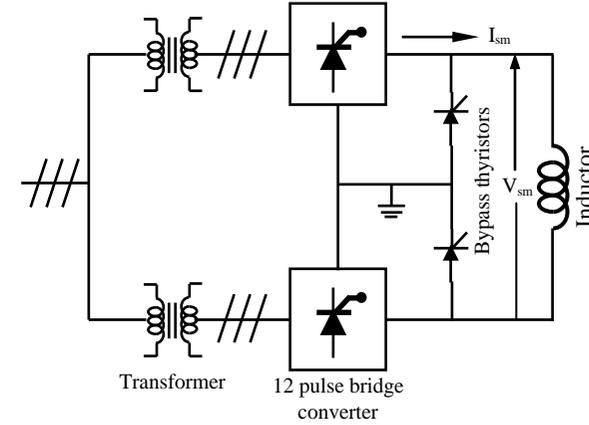


Fig. 2. Schematic diagram of the SMES unit

For “charging” at the maximum rate, V_{sm} should be held at its maximum value, which corresponds to rectifier operation with $\alpha = 0$. The current then builds up nearly as linear function of time until base current $I_{sm} = 1.0$ p.u. is reached. Then α must be adjusted so that this normal or rated current is held constant. From (8), this corresponds to $\alpha = 90^\circ$ for the normal operating conditions. At any time during the charging period, the stored energy is

$$W_L = \frac{1}{2} L_{sm} I_{sm}^2 \text{ p.u.} \quad (10)$$

With constant V_{sm} , the inductor current I_{sm} can be expressed as

$$I_{sm} = \frac{V_{sm}}{L_{sm}} t \text{ p.u.} \quad (11)$$

which shows that the time variation of load current is linear for a superconductive load.

While in power system stabilization, the compensation P_{sm} provided by the SMES is continuously controlled depending on the sensed speed deviation signal, $\Delta\omega$. The incremental change in the SMES power is given by

$$P'_{sm} = \frac{K_{sm}}{1 + ST_{dc}} \Delta\omega \quad (12)$$

where K_{sm} = Gain of the control loop
and T_{dc} = Converter time delay

The proposed control strategy is shown in Fig. 3. The gain of the controller K_{sm} can be determined by simulating a very large disturbance in the system. The maximum deviation in the system frequency can be obtained by two ways:

- (i) if the system is unstable, then observe the maximum deviation before the system becomes unstable.
- (ii) if the system is stable, then observe the maximum deviation in the simulation

Once the maximum value of the frequency deviation Δf_{max} is selected, the gain of the SMES controller can be calculated as

$$K_{sm} = \frac{V_{sm,max} I_{sm,max}}{\Delta f_{max}} \quad (13)$$

In the present study, the value of K_{sm} is found to be 172.5. When the system load increases the bus frequency falls. Consequently, a negative power P'_{sm} , shown in equation (12) is consumed by the SMES unit. This means that a negative voltage is impressed across the inductor. The inductor current being unidirectional, application of negative voltage across it results in withdrawal of energy. Since the amount of stored energy is finite, the inductor current falls.

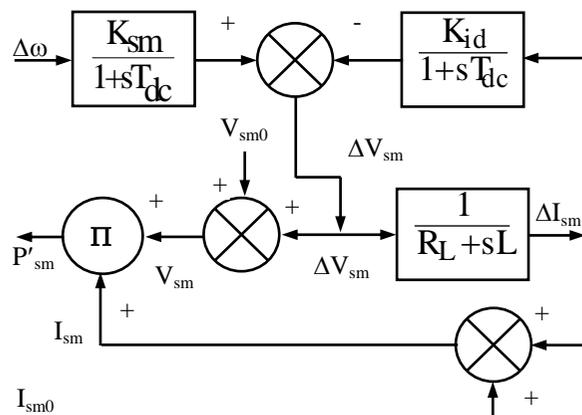


Fig. 3. SMES control system

In actual practice, the inductor current should not be allowed to reach zero to prevent the possibility of discontinuous conduction in the presence of large disturbance [4,5]. To avoid such problems, the lower limit to the inductor current is set to 30% of I_{sm0} . It is desirable to set the rated inductor current I_{sm0} such that the maximum allowable energy absorption equals the maximum allowable energy discharge. This makes the SMES equally effective in damping swings caused by sudden increase as well as decrease in load. Thus, if the lower current limit is chosen at $0.3 I_{sm0}$, the upper inductor current limit, based on the equal energy absorption/discharge criterion becomes $1.38 I_{sm0}$ [5]. When the inductor current reaches either of these limits, the dc voltage has to be brought to zero.

Figure 3 outlines the proposed simple control scheme for SMES, which is incorporated in the control area to minimize the rotor angle and also the speed to the acceptable nominal value. Firstly gain, K_{sm} and K_{id} are determined and finally $\Delta\omega$ is used as the input to the SMES controller. For quick restoration of the inductor current to its rated value as quickly as possible, inductor current deviation is sensed and used as negative feedback signal in the SMES control loop to achieve quick restoration of current and SMES energy level. The parameters of the controller are shown in Appendix.

4. DETERMINATION OF GAIN K_p AND K_i FOR PI CONTROLLER

$$Y=CX$$

Where $X=[\Delta\omega \Delta\delta \Delta E_{fd} \Delta V_{ST} \Delta E'_d \Delta E'_q \Delta P_m \Delta P_c \Delta P_H \Delta P_R \Delta U_{sm}]$

$$B = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ -3846 \end{bmatrix}$$

$U=V_{sm}$

efficient harnessing of the SMES power, P_{sm} , by proposed one, a better performance is obtained. It is evident from the Fig. 5 that the settling time of the speed reduced substantially when the proposed controller is used.

7. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the SMES unit is applied for the improvement of power system damping. A simple control strategy for the SMES unit is applied. The damping of the synchronous generator is greatly improved by the SMES unit with proposed mode of control system. The simulation results show that the SMES performs better when equipped with the proposed controller. The power compensation of the SMES unit is directly obtained depending on the speed deviation, which makes it more sensitive to the disturbance. The scheme proposed in the present paper makes effective use of active power modulation of the SMES unit. Hence, its economic advantage is expected to be stronger than that of earlier schemes. The control strategy is simple and does not require heavy computation; therefore, implementation is comparably easy.

Table 1: System Eigenvalues

$P_0=1.0$ p.u.		$P_0=1.2$ p.u.	
Without SMES	With SMES	Without SMES	With SMES
-217.80	-217.89	-217.89	-217.89
-41.55	-41.95	-41.70	-41.96
-19.45	-20.22	-19.47	-20.22
$-.09 \pm j10.2$	$-17.92 \pm j33.13$	$+.05 \pm j10.4$	$-17.83 \pm j33.07$
-11.63	-38.46	-11.59	-38.46
-4.32	-8.14	-4.30	-8.05
-2.25	-6.98	-2.35	-7.06
-1.51	-3.17	-1.50	-2.95
-0.13	-1.53 ± 0.47	-0.13	-1.68 ± 0.41

Electromechanical mode denoted in bold

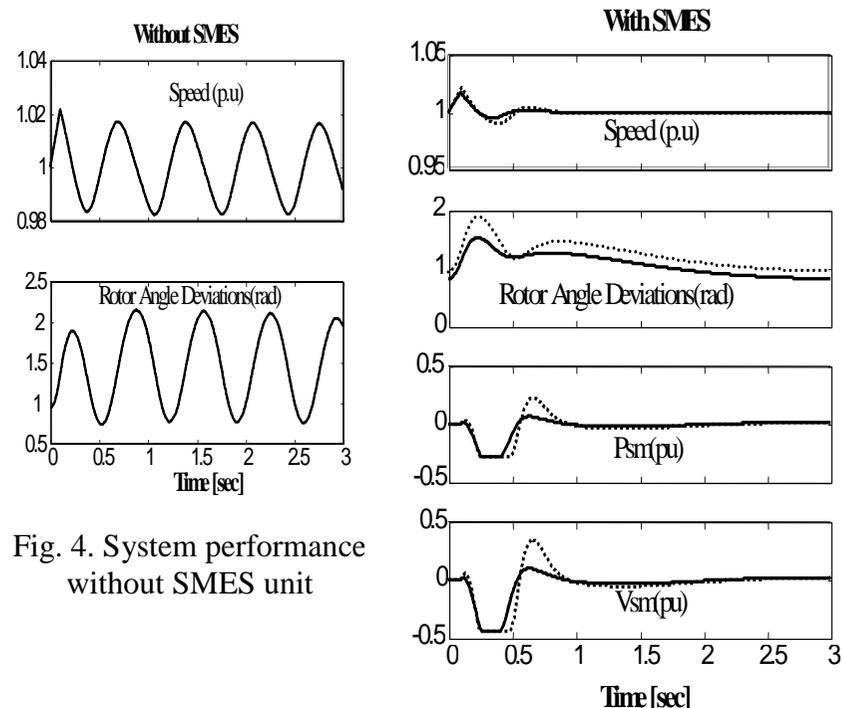


Fig. 4. System performance without SMES unit

Fig. 5. System performance of PI controller (.....) and of proposed controller () with the SMES unit

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Generator and transmission line

Base 160 MVA, 15 kV. Generator 160 MVA, 15 kV, 0.85 p.f.

Exciter 375 V, 926 A

$X'_d=0.245$ $X_d=1.70$ $X_q=1.64$ $R_a=0.001096$ $M_g=4.74$

$D_g=0$ $R_e=0.02$ $X_e=0.4$ $T'_{qo}=0.075$ s $T'_{do}=5.9$ s

SMES Unit

$I_{sm0}=0.6495$ p.u., $K_{id}=2.5$, $K_{sm}=172.5$ $V_{sm0}=0$ p.u. $L_{sm} =$

0.5 H $R_L=0.0$ Ω , $W_{sm0}=6.0$ MJ $T_{dc}=0.026$ secs

APPENDIX

System data and initial conditions[5,22]

All parameters are expressed in p.u. unless stated otherwise.

**BER simulation of a Reed-Solomon encoded Orthogonal
Frequency
Division Multiplexing wireless communication system**

Md. Nur Amin
Md. Anamul Islam
Shaikh Enayet Ullah
Md. Mahbubar Rahman

Abstract

This paper incorporates a comprehensive BER simulation study undertaken on the effectiveness of a Reed-Solomon encoded OFDM wireless communication system. The Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (OFDM) is a promising technique for high bit rate transmission in wireless communications systems. The OFDM system under present study has incorporated various digital modulation schemes (QPSK, 8PSK, 16PSK and 16QAM) over an Additive White Gaussian Noise (AWGN), Rayleigh and Rician fading channels. Computer simulation results on Bit error rate (BER) demonstrate that the OFDM system with QPSK modulation technique is highly effective to combat inherent interferences under AWGN, Rayleigh fading and Rician Fading channel. It is observed that the implementation of Reed-Solomon coding has improved the reliability of transmission. It has been anticipated from the present simulation study that the retrieving performance of the OFDM wireless communication system degrades with the lowering of the signal to noise ratio (SNR).

Keywords: Reed-Solomon coding (RSC), Orthogonal frequency division multiplexing (OFDM), Bit error rate (BER), Additive White Gaussian Noise (AWGN).

Introduction

Orthogonal frequency division multiplexing (OFDM) has found wide adoption in a widespread variety of high-data-rate communication systems including digital subscriber lines, wireless LANs (802.11a/g/n), digital audio broadcasting (DAB), digital video broadcasting and now WiMAX and other emerging wireless broadband systems such as the proprietary Flash-OFDM developed by Flarion (now QUALCOMM) and 3G LTE and fourth generation cellular systems. In November/2007, Mobile WiMAX, an OFDM based technology was successfully adopted by ITU as one of the IMT-2000 technologies. Mobile WiMAX has spurred tremendous interest from operators seeking to deploy high-performance yet cost-effective broadband wireless networks. Currently over 260 service providers are deploying fixed, portable and mobile WiMAX networks in 110 countries [1] [2]. In next generation (4G) broadband wireless communications, the combination of multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) wireless technology with orthogonal frequency division multiplexing (OFDM) has been recognized as one of the most promising techniques to be implemented to support high data rate and efficient performance) in highly dispersive channels [3].

In OFDM, generally, the transmitted bit stream is divided into many different sub streams and sent over many different sub channels. Typically the sub channels are orthogonal under ideal propagation conditions. The data rate on each of the sub channels are much less than the total data rate and the corresponding sub-channel bandwidth is much less than the total system bandwidth. The number of sub streams is chosen to insure that each sub channel has a bandwidth less than the coherence bandwidth of the channel, so the sub channels experience relatively flat fading with insignificant amount of ISI effect. In almost all applications of multi-carrier modulation, satisfactory performance cannot be achieved without the addition of some form of channel coding. In wireless systems subjected to fading, extremely high signal-to-noise ratios are required to achieve reasonable error probability. In addition, interference from other wireless channels is frequently severe. On wire-line systems, large constellation sizes are commonly employed to achieve high bit rates. Coding in this case is essential for achieving the highest possible rates in the presence of crosstalk and impulsive and

other interference. Channel coding in OFDM systems can be implemented in time and frequency domain such that both dimensions are utilized to achieve better immunity against frequency and time selective fading [5]. The BER performance of an OFDM wireless communication system using a concatenated interleaved FEC channel codes under different digital modulation schemes have been studied previously [6] [7]. In the present study, an effort has been made to make a comprehensive study on the reliable reception performance of a Reed-Solomon coded OFDM wireless communication system under different digital modulation schemes.

System Model

The block diagram of the simulated system model is shown in Figure 1. The synthetically generated input binary data stream is ensured against transmission errors with Forward Error Correction code (FEC). A block Reed Solomon (255, 239, and 8) code based on the Galois field $GF(2^8)$ with a symbol size of 8 bits is chosen that processes a block of 239 symbols and can correct up to 8 symbol errors calculating 16 redundant correction symbols. The RS encoded symbols are converted into each of the four complex modulation symbols de-mapped, de-interleaved and then de-decoded in order to recover the data transmitted.

Figure 1: Block Diagram of a Reed Solomon Encoded OFDM based Wireless Communication System

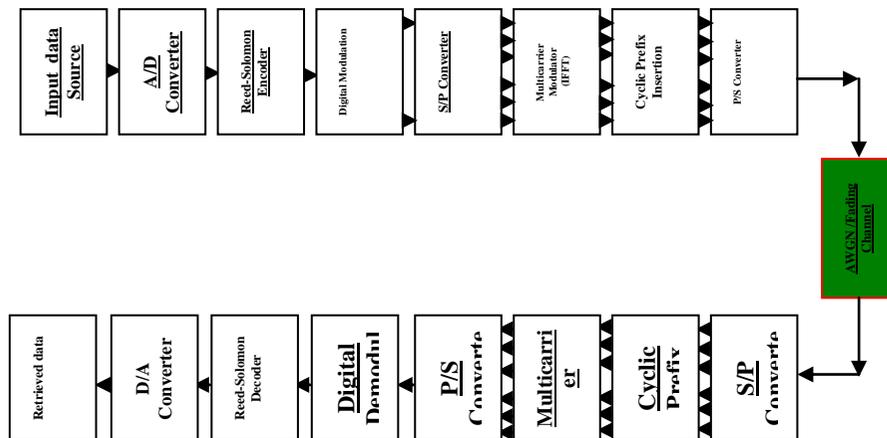
and fed to an OFDM modulator for transmission. In OFDM modulator, the digitally modulated information symbols are transmitted in parallel on sub-carriers through implementation as an inverse discrete Fourier transform (IDFT) on a block of information symbols followed by an analog-to-digital converter (ADC). To mitigate the effects of inter-symbol interference (ISI) caused by channel time spread, each block of IDFT coefficients is typically preceded by a cyclic prefix. The signal information is transmitted over an Additive White Gaussian Noise (AWGN), Rayleigh Fading and Rician fading channels. At the receiver side, the received signal is OFDM demodulated, de-mapped and then de-decoded in order to recover the data transmitted. [8] [9].

Results and Discussion

Figures 2 through 4 show the BER performance of a Reed-Solomon encoded OFDM system under four types of digital modulations (QPSK, 8PSK, 16QPSK and 16QAM) on both AWGN and fading channels. In all cases, the proposed system provides degraded performance in 32PSK and satisfactory performance in QPSK modulations. In all cases, the proposed system provides degraded performance in 16PSK and satisfactory performance in QPSK modulation.

In Figure 2, the BER values in QPSK modulation under coded and uncoded situation are 0.0347 and 0.1050 respectively for a typical SNR value of 6 dB viz. the system performance is improved by 4.81 dB due to implementation of Reed-Solomon coding. Under such typically assumed SNR value, the uncoded 16PSK with a BER value of 0.3379 on comparison with coded QPSK modulation, the system is found to have improved performance by 9.88 dB.

In Figure 3, it is quite obvious from graphical illustration that the BER performance in QPSK modulation under coded and uncoded situation is not well discriminated due to Rayleigh fading effect at low SNR values ranging from 0 to 10 dB. At 10 dB SNR, the BER is 0.01210 in coded QPSK modulation and the system performance is



improved by 11.99 dB as compared to uncoded 16PSK modulation with BER value of 0.19154 .

In figure 4 , the BERs in coded and uncoded QPSK modulation are 0.00513 and 0.01602 respectively at a SNR value of 10 dB viz. the system performance is improved by 4.95 dB due to channel coding in Rician fading channel. As compared to uncoded 16PSK modulation with a BER value of 0.17470, the system is found to have improved performance by 15.32 critical observation on the graphical illustrations of Figure 3 and Figure 4 in consideration with the combined effects of AWGN with Rayleigh and Rician fading channels confirm that the improvement of the system performance is linked with the directly transmitted significant wave component considered in Rician fading model.

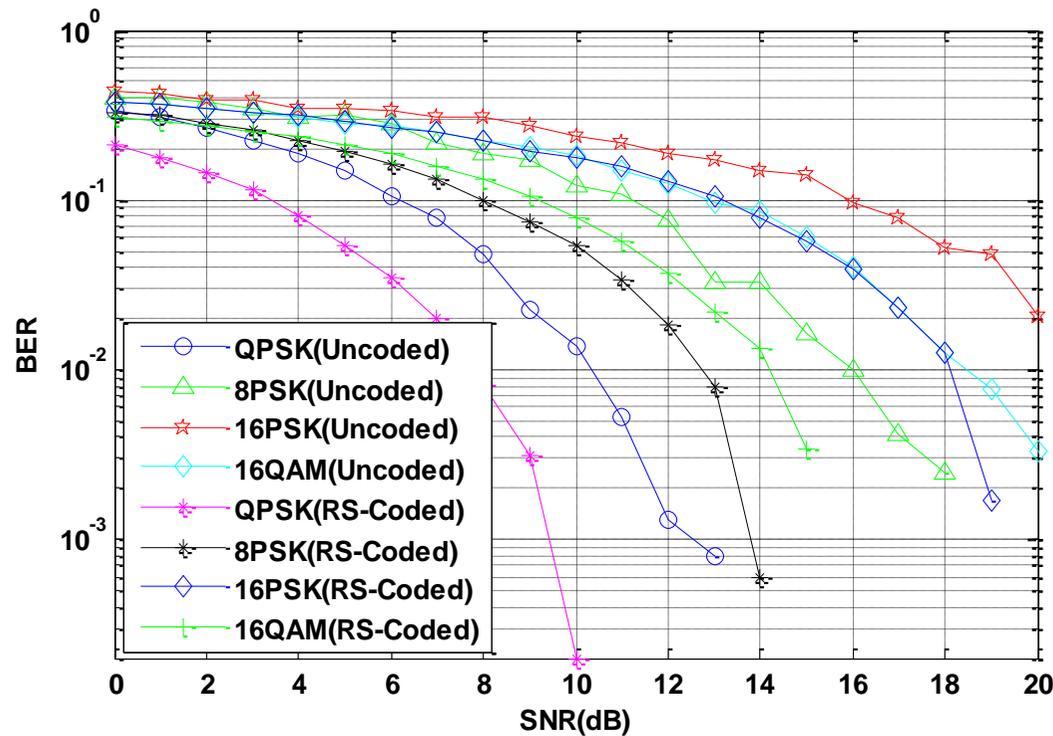


Figure 2: BER Simulation of a Reed-Solomon Encoded and Uncoded OFDM System under Different Modulation Schemes in an AWGN Channel.

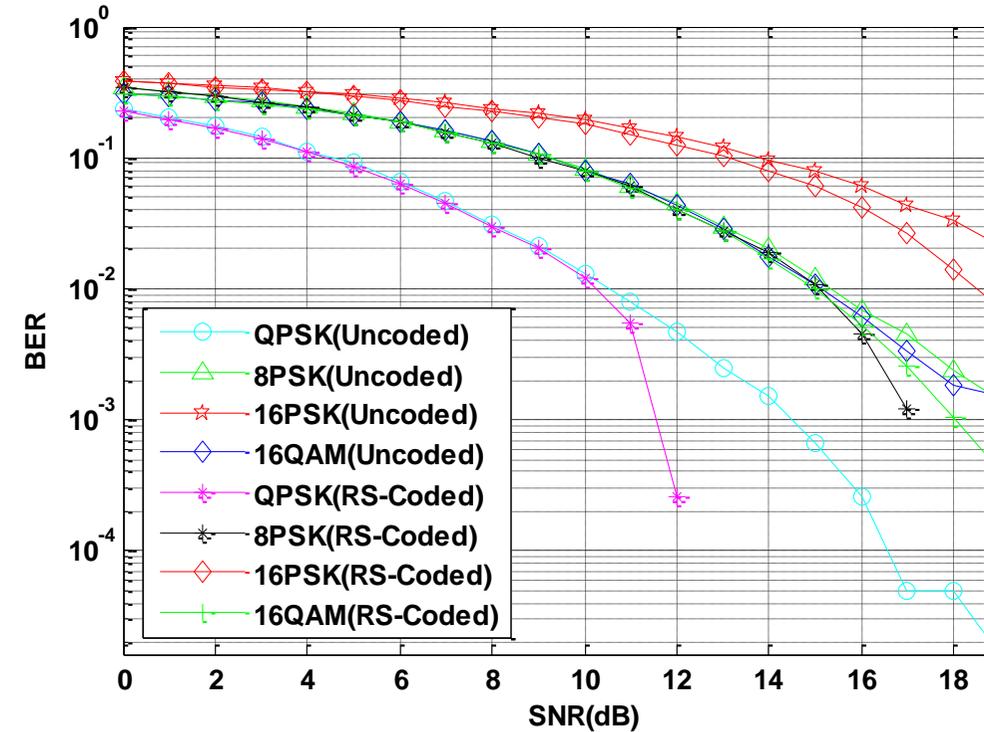


Figure 3: BER simulation of a Reed-solomon encoded and uncoded OFDM system with different modulation schemes under Rayleigh fading channel

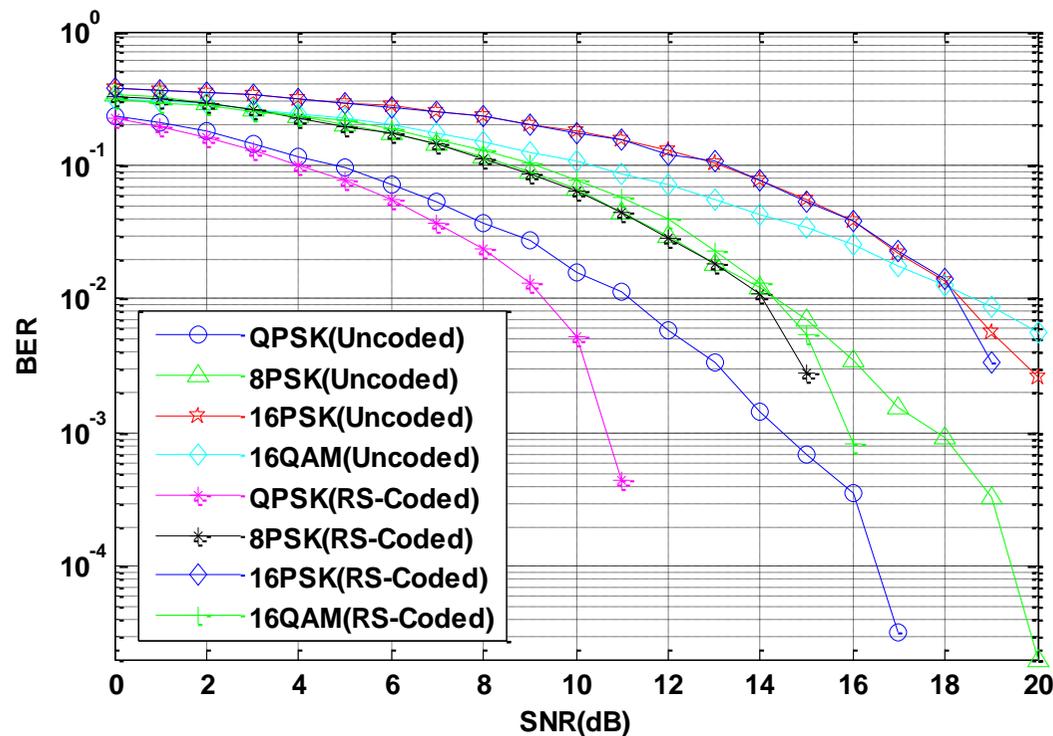


Figure 4: BER simulation of a Reed-solomon encoded and uncoded OFDM system with different modulation schemes under Rician fading channel.

Conclusion

A performance analysis of an Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing (OFDM) system adopting Reed Solomon channel encoding technique has been carried out. Performance results highlight the impact of modulation scheme and show that the implementation of a Reed Solomon code under QPSK modulation technique provides satisfactory performance among the four digital modulations considered.

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Prime University Journal Vol. 2 No. 2 July-December 2008

Masuma Akter

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