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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEGISLATURE IN BANGLADESH (2001-2006): A QUEST FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

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Abstract:

The research focus on how the legislature functions as a representative organ with its oversight mechanisms exercised upon the executive during 2001-2006 in Bangladesh. The study finds that 185 bills were passed among which 78% of the total bills were enacted without proper scrutiny in the eighth parliament. This study has illustrated that 166 of the total bills were passed escaping the committee stage. It is also found that the eighth parliament made no fruitful effort of establishing parliamentary norms, culture and legislative compromise. The conflict of opinion between the treasury and opposition bench made it impossible to turn the ground into an effective institution to bridge their gap and to settle policy differences on crucial national issues by debate, discussion and negotiations. The research shows that the constant walkout and boycott of the parliamentary opposition helped the ruling bench to exert discretion. It is located that the opposition boycotted 223 out of the 373 working days. That means 60% working days of the 8th parliament were totally boycotted by the parliament. Finally, the research explores some dysfunctions and ineffectiveness of the 8th parliament which are the barriers of good governance in Bangladesh.

Key Words:

Legislature, Good Governance, Effectiveness and Eighth Parliament.

1. Introduction

The parliament as an important branch of the state has a crucial role in promoting and protecting democracy as well as good governance. As a representative body directly elected by the people legislature is considered as one of the most important organ of all democratic system (Beetham 2006). It is the only representative organization among the three organs of the government. It has a far reaching effect to establish good governance. As the people's elected body, the parliament is expected to play many roles. Actually the main functions of the legislature are to formulate laws. But law making is not the only task of the parliament. It enjoys a control of representing and shadowing mechanism over the executive actions. Bangladesh adopted the parliamentary democratic system after its birth as an independent nation. Although it has been long time in Bangladesh practices parliamentary form of government, the role and status of legislature has never been as strong as it need to be as a representative organ. For this reason, the attainment of good governance is the question of the day in Bangladesh. This paper discusses the parliamentary responsibility in promoting rule of law and assesses the effectiveness of the Bangladesh Parliament in ensuring governmental accountability and promoting good governance during 2001-2006. This paper is projected to detail the role of legislatures in good governance. It begins with an assumption that good governance on a continuing basis requires an effective institutional infrastructure and that functioning legislatures have proven their worth as part of the set of core institutions (Ahmed 2012). A further assumption is that good governance and some level of functioning democracy are related. As the part of political institutions legislature can play a vital role in promoting good governance. This research is to evaluate the connection between the effectiveness of legislature and good governance.

2. Methodology of the Study

The methodological framework of this study consists of a thorough review of the parliamentary proceedings, research papers, journals, books, working papers, strategy papers, conference proceedings, monographs and e-materials. The paper consists of both theoretical and empirical analysis relating to good governance and effectiveness of legislature in Bangladesh. For the purpose of this study, a three-step review process has been conducted. First, the relevant parliamentary proceedings, research papers, and documents were collected from parliament library, world's leading journals and publication houses as well as the daily national newspaper. Second, the collected documents were securitized based on the relevance

and reliability. Third, the exclusively relevant research papers and statistical facts are analyzed. In the study the qualitative methodology has been used. Data are collected from both primary and secondary sources.

3. Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to identify the effectiveness of legislature in Bangladesh. Further study is to find:

- i) The research is to explore the problems of good governance regarding the effectiveness of legislature in Bangladesh during the period of four-party alliance government (2001-2006).
- ii) This research is to explore the relationship between the effectiveness of legislature and good governance; and
- iii) The paper is to find the role of the parliament (Jatiya Sangsad) in the process of law making and democratic consolidation in Bangladesh.

4. Conceptual Structure

This part aims to present a brief overview of various academic theories of good governance and the legislature.

4.1 Good Governance

Good Governance is that which is opposed to the bad or mal governance. Good governance is that which maintain law and order, creates institutions to protect property rights, encourage investments to establish basic structures and provides services for the poor and be accountable and transparent (UNDP, 1997). The vital focus of good governance is to see how the government enables, simplifies and authorizes its people, irrespective of differences of caste, creed, class, and political ideology and social origin to think, and take certain decisions which will be in their best interest, and which will enable them to lead a clean, decent, happy, and autonomous existence (UNDP 1997). Further, it is an indeterminate term used in international development literature to describe various normative accounts of how public institutions ought to conduct public affairs and manage public resources (Hye 2002). It requires an effective executive, functioning legislature, an independent judiciary and the effective separation and balance of power among the three organs of the government as well as organized party system (Bevir 2013).

4.2 Legislature

Legislature is the deliberative assembly with the authority to formulate laws. It is called the national representative institution and its effectiveness depend on maintaining proper legislation process and surveillance over the executive actions. Alexis De Tocqueville opined that, “Of all political institutions the legislature is the one that is most easily swayed by the will of the people (Tocqueville 2000: 264).” The legislature is one of the major attributes of democratic governance and its effectiveness is able to ensure good governance proving a forum of grass root representation. It is an organized body having the power to make laws for political units (Islam 2003). The Roman Republic (existing between 509 BC and 27 BC) is often credited as being the first in the western world to have a representative government. Scholars have noted that the modern day legislature or representatives democracies are inspired by Roman model of government in which citizens elected representatives to rule on their behalf. Ancient Greece was another society that practiced a democratic representation between the 4th and 5th century BC, although their decision making is more direct and had adult male citizens to represent themselves directly at councils rather than via a representative body (TIB 2011:29). The Indian council act 1861 is considered as an important milestone in the development of parliament in British India. Later the “Indian Legislative Council act of 1892”, “Morley-Minto Reformation Act” of 1909 and “Montague Chelmsford Act” of 1919 provide a ground for the evolution of to establish a representative arms of the government in Bangladesh which is popularly known as Janiya Sangsad (Hasanuzzaman 2009: 28-29). However, legislature is introduced in different connotation or get a variety of appellation from country to country.

5. The legislature of Bangladesh: An Assessment of Effectiveness

The legislature plays the most prominent role in establishing good governance within a country. It plays a pro-active role not only in law making but also to hold the government responsible and accountable to its people (Hasanuzzaman 2009: 28-29). To practice the culture of good governance based on accountability and transparency the effectiveness of the parliament has to be considered. In order to measure the effectiveness and the role of the parliament in Bangladesh, it is important to scrutinize the proper functions and practice as well. In favor of the assessment, functions of the 8th parliament (October 2001 up to 2006) have been taken and highlighted as a research mechanism.

Table 1: Total working Days of Eighth Parliament

| Year | Number of Session | Total Spent Hour | Total Working Days | Average Time Per Each Working Days(Hours/Minutes) |
|-----------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Oct. 2001 | 1 | 58:12:04 | 19 | 3:03 |
| 2002 | 4 | 244:34:00 | 75 | 3:15 |
| 2003 | 5 | 232:18:00 | 63 | 3:41 |
| 2004 | 4 | 267:46:00 | 83 | 3:13 |
| 2005 | 5 | 184:18:00 | 62 | 2:59 |
| 2006 | 4 | 202:21:16 | 71 | 2:51 |
| Total | 23 | 1189:29:20 | 373 | 3:11 |

Source: TIB, Eighth Parliament in Democratic Consolidation, 2001-2006, 12 February 2007, p.14

5.1 Legislation

One of the main functions of the parliament is making laws. Laws are the roadmaps to be followed by the government. These are the guidelines to be followed by the executives of the government in running its different functions to achieve a desired society especially to achieve rule of law (Halim 2012:187). When there is a scope of adequate deliberation and discussion over a bill, it creates environment to remove undemocratic provisions from it. As a core laws making ground, the parliament plays a very important role in the establishment of rule of law which paves the way of good governance. That's why an effective parliament is an indispensable part of a country. Article 65(1) of the constitution of Bangladesh stipulates that, There shall be a Parliament for Bangladesh (to be known as the House of the Nation) in which subject to the provisions of the constitution, shall be vested the legislative powers of the republic (The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 2011).

The parliament of Bangladesh (Jatiya Sangshad) had been vested the legislative powers by the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in 1972. Following the tradition, the 8th parliament in its tenure of 2001-2006, total 185 laws were passed by the parliament in its 23 sessions within 5 years that includes both the amendment of existing laws as well as new laws (Haq 2014:207-208). Out of these laws, 55 were passed by the Jatiya Sangshad according to its own initiative and the remaining 130 laws were processed by the relevant administrative ministry (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs 2006). Out of the 185 bills, 178 were basic bills and 6 were Ordinances issued at the interim session of the parliament

(Hasanuzzaman 2009:50). The maximum laws were passed in the middle of the year between the 8th parliament and in the end of the year of 2003 and 2006 (TIB 2011: 33-37). The trend of passing laws in such a way were increasing in 2003 but in 2004 and 2005 it was slightly reduced. However, in the year of 2006 this tendency turned out doubled than that of 2005. Due to the article 70, as the MPs cannot express any disagreement on each bill (Halim 2012:183-188), it may be either democratic or undemocratic, gets quickly passed or approved. But one day before the last parliamentary working days, the debated four bills without quorum were passed forcibly in a completely unconstitutional way despite extremely opposed by the major opposition party and the members of other opposition parties (TIB 2011:33-37). The leader of the Krishok Shromik Janata League Kader Siddiki said that the speaker created an unprecedented episode in the last moment to proceed the legal actions without quorum and also added that even the law was passed, it will never be correct (Daily Jugantor 2006). The eighth JS like its predecessor did not set up any special committee to examine the government bills. Therefore, compared to the seventh Jatiya Sangsad a large number of bills (33%) were passed in the House without scrutiny by any committee (Khan 2008: 120).

5.1.1 Legislation through Ordinances

Although the parliament enjoys the ultimate power to make laws for a country or any part of it, in some special situation the constitution of certain developing countries provide for provision of legislation by the nominal head of the country, the President. The power to make ordinances is acceptable to deal with the sudden and immediate situation and necessary for peace and good government in the country (Halim 2012:265). Under the article of 93(1) the President may make ordinances in following two situation: i) Parliament is not in session; ii) parliament stands dissolved.

Only in cases of above two situation, the President can promulgate ordinances to meet the emerging challenges. Most often the government tries to avoid debate and passes laws by ordinance and later get them approved by the parliament which destroy the spirit of rule of law. The trends of passing ordinances and then get them approved by the parliament is quite remarkable in the history of parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh. The 8th parliament was highly dominated by the executive. The following chart presents a statistics of passing laws through ordinances:

Table 2: Statistics of Ordinances Passed by the 8th Parliament (28 October 2001- 27 October, 2006)

| Session | Number of Bills Passed Which Have Been Initiated from Ordinances | Total Ordinances Promulgated between Two Sessions |
|------------------|--|---|
| 1 st | 2 | 2 |
| 2 nd | 0 | 0 |
| 3 rd | 0 | 0 |
| 4 th | 0 | 0 |
| 5 th | 2 | 2 |
| 6 th | 1 | 1 |
| 7 th | 0 | 0 |
| 8 th | 0 | 0 |
| 9 th | 0 | 0 |
| 10 th | 0 | 0 |
| 11 th | 0 | 0 |
| 12 th | 0 | 0 |
| 13 th | 0 | 0 |
| 14 th | 0 | 0 |
| 15 th | 0 | 0 |
| 16 th | 0 | 0 |
| 17 th | 0 | 0 |
| 18 th | 0 | 0 |
| 19 th | 1 | 1 |
| 20 th | 0 | 0 |
| 21 st | 0 | 0 |
| 22 nd | 0 | 0 |
| 23 rd | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 6 | 6 |

Source: Halim, Md. Abdul: Constitution, Constitutional Law and Politics- Bangladesh Perspective, p.270.

The above discussion clarifies that, the major functions that is making law, has become a mere formality. Government drafts laws as per their choices and these are passed by the parliament exactly as desired by the government with the help of the majority number of ruling party MPs who are not allowed to differ for the restriction as per the provision of

article 70. So for the purpose of law making of the parliament has been reduced to nothing but a rubber stamp of legality for all government activities.

6. Legislative Control over the Executive

There are provision of legislative control over the executive in many countries. In Bangladesh the constitution of 1972, made that the executive body have to be responsible to the legislature jointly (The Constitution of Peoples Republic). As per the article 55(3) of the constitution of Bangladesh parliament has been bestowed with another important function that is to ensure accountability of the government. The responsibility of asking for and ensuring accountability of the government lies not only with the MPs belonging to the opposition parties but also MPs of the ruling parties are also equally responsible for demanding and ensuring accountability of the government for all its activities through the parliament. According to the functional rules of legislature by parliamentary question, adjournment motion, vote of censure, cut motion, vote of no confidence etc. The Constitution states that the Cabinet shall be collectively responsible to Parliament. The Rules of Procedure of Parliament has prescribed a number of devices to make the Government answerable and accountable to Parliament. These are as included: Half-an-hour Discussion, Call Attention, Resolution, Discussion for Short Duration, Motion (General), Adjournment Motion, and No-confidence Motion Question.

Among these devices, questions and call attention notices feature in almost all sittings. It is followed by call attention notices. Questions and call attention notices are the most common devices used to raise discussions on the floor of the House.

6.1 Parliamentary Questions

This is one of the common and effective devices of ensuring control is asking questions to ministers. Chapter VIII of the Rules of Procedure of the parliament provides for questions and short notice questions. In fact, the first hour of every sitting, unless otherwise directed by the Speaker, is earmarked for Members to ask questions on matters of public importance (Halim 2012:211). Ministers answer all questions in writing. However, oral answers are also given to 'starred' questions i.e. questions marked with asterisks by Members (Halim 2012: 212). Once a starred question has been answered, Members can ask supplementary questions. Parliamentary questions tend to keep the ministers constantly conscious of the fact that they will be called upon to give an account of what they do (Halim 2012: 210) At every sitting of

the Sangshad one hour is allotted to put questions to the minister. It helps to bring the work of various department under the public scrutiny. Prof. Lowell said that question time is search light upon every corner of the public service. The presence of the members in this phase make the parliament lively and more effective. It enables the public to get the information of day to day administration of the government through their representatives.

An assessment of 8th parliament shows that the ruling party MPs had an upper hand asserted 70% of the total questions (Hussain 2012). Thus the leader of the house answered 112 of questions of which more than 90% were asked by the treasury MPS (The Executive Summary of Jatiya Sangsad).

Besides the prime Minister answer the questions twice a week. The prime minister question time since the seventh parliament was considered to be an effective weapon in the disposal of the opposition to censure the activities of the treasury and criticize the ruling party measures. But it had proved futile because of several factors such as: Opposition Walkouts during the Prime Minister's Question Time (PMQT); Total unwillingness of the leaders of opposition to play a vital part in it; Tendency of the Prime Minister to select questions that would enable her to scrutinize the opponents avoiding unpleasant questions which might expose the failure of government policies undermining their credibility.

6.2 Call Attention

Once a starred question has been answered, Members can ask supplementary questions. It is followed by call attention notices. Questions and call attention notices are the most common devices used to raise discussions on the floor of the House (Haq 2014: 213). In matters of calling attention as per the rule 71 of the rules of procedures of the Parliament, a total of 10,411 motions were raised of which 645 were tabled but discussion took place on 418 motions in the 8th parliament (Haq 2014: 211).

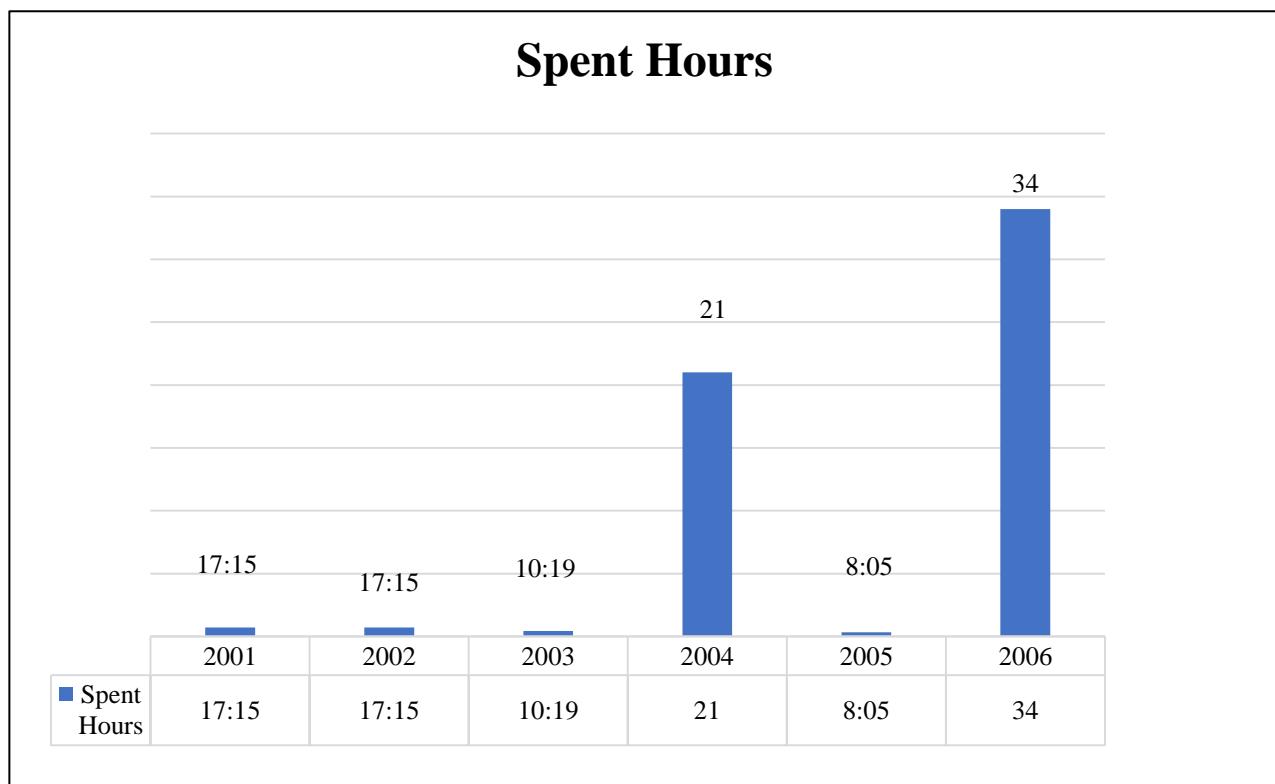
6.3 Adjournment Motion

An MP with the consent of the speaker for resolving the scheduled work of the parliament for the purpose of negotiating a recent and urgent issue can uphold the proposal of adjournment motion. However, the 8th parliament fell short of accepting none of the 2495 notices placed on the significant legislative device as per the rule 61. Besides, the opposition MPS took to the street when the speaker allegedly refused to allow discussion on the grenade attacks of the 21 August, 2004 (Hussain 2012: 151).

7. Unscheduled and Irrelevant Discussion

The importance of the participation of the ruling party in the parliamentary session is beyond explanation which is considered as their constitutional duty as the representatives of respective constituencies. They have to attend the meeting of the parliament and discuss on important public affairs. During the meeting of the parliament, the code of conduct of the MPS are discussed in detail in the statutes of 267, 270 and 273 of the rules of procedure of the parliament (The Parliamentary Rules of Procedures). Despite that most often the precious times of the parliament was wasted , not being used for the discussion on public welfare, by the MPS unscheduled and illogical discussion on unwanted praising of the Leaders or criticizing opposition MPS. An observed of the 8th parliament depicted that the MPS of both sides got involved in debates on unscheduled discussion and altercation took place on point of order, utterance of un- parliamentary terms and expunging those.

Graph 1: Total Wastage of Time on point of Order or Unscheduled Discussion



Source: Compiled by the Researcher

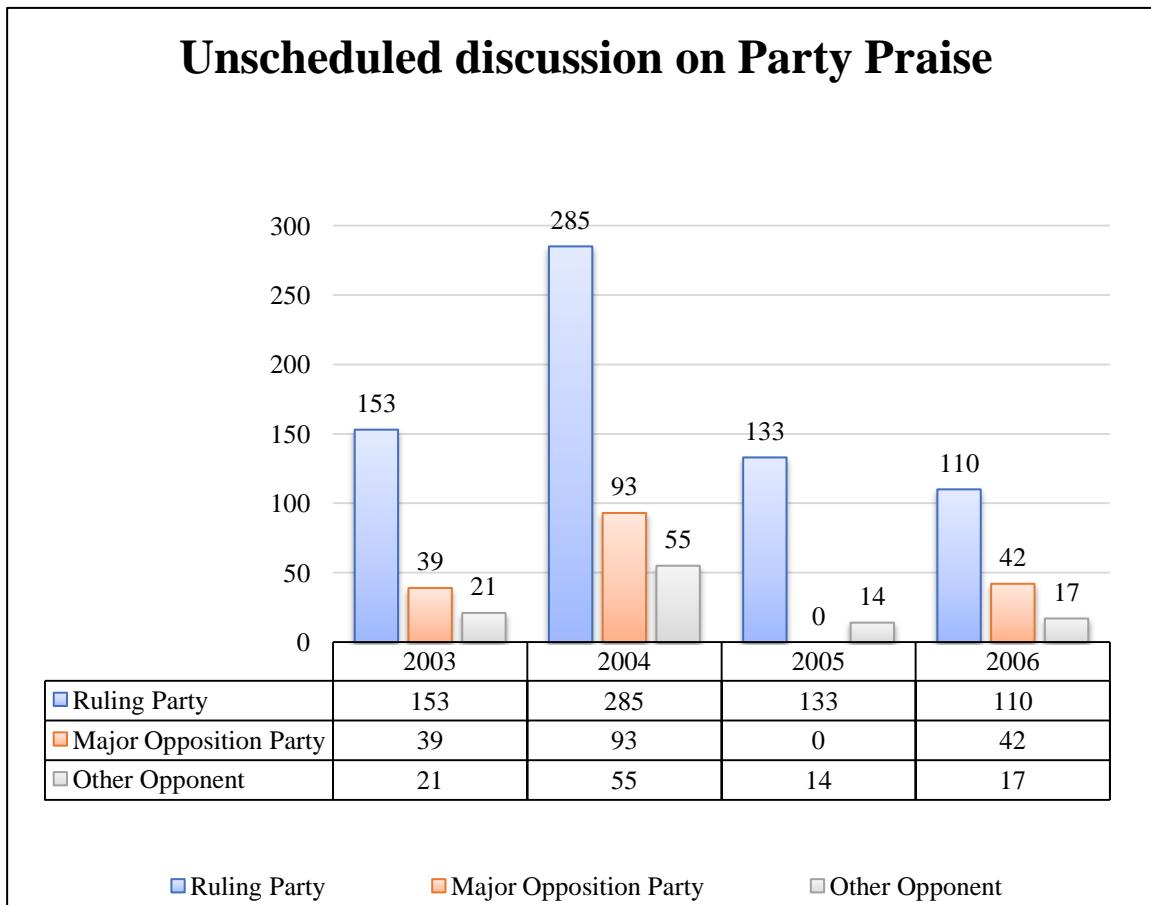
Table 3: Incidents of Unscheduled Discussion on Party Praise

| Year | Party Praise | Scrutiny of Opposition Party | Discussion on Irrelevant Topic |
|-------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2001 | 00 | 00 | 00 |
| 2002 | 00 | 00 | 00 |
| 2003 | 115 | 215 | 213 |
| 2004 | 626 | 491 | 433 |
| 2005 | 202 | 128 | 147 |
| 2006 | 115 | 156 | 169 |
| Total | 1058 | 990 | 962 |

Source: Compiled by the researcher from annual reports published by TIB

The above discussion gives us an idea that it is seemingly impossible for the MPS to exercise “De Jure” control over the government rather they are extremely controlled by the government. Because Article 55(1) which stipulates that: There shall be a cabinet for Bangladesh having the Prime Minister at its head and comprising also such other Ministers as the Prime Minister may from time to time designate (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh 2011). Article 55(2) illustrates that the executive power of the Republic shall, in accordance with this constitution, be exercised by or on the authority of the Prime Minister (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh 2011). Article 56(3) depicts that The President shall appoint as the Prime Minister who appears to him to command the support of the majority of the members of the parliament (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh 2011).

Figure 3: Incidents of Unscheduled Discussion on Party Praise



Source: Compiled by the Researcher

8. Article 70 and Mystery of Parliamentary Democracy

The essence of parliamentary democracy is that the government have to be accountable to the parliament directly which denotes that the executive has no definite tenure to run the country. Article 57(2) states that, if the prime minister ceases to retain the support of the majority of the members of the parliament, he shall either resign his office or advise the president in writing to dissolve parliament, and if he so advises the president shall, if he is satisfied that no other member of parliament commands the support of the majority of the members of the parliament, dissolve parliament accordingly (The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 2011).

The above article makes the provision that the executive can govern as long as it can retain the majority members of the parliament. No sooner had it lost the support of the majority members, it fell. That's why the parliamentary government has to run the country always in

fear and it has always to be attentive to its members but the provision of article 70 has turned the parliamentary democracy into elected dictatorship (Halim 2012: 185). Article 70(1) puts a new dimension to this clout of the Prime Minister. It says that, A person elected as a member of parliament at an election at which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he/she

- a) Resigns from the party;
- b) Votes in the parliament against that party; (The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 2011).

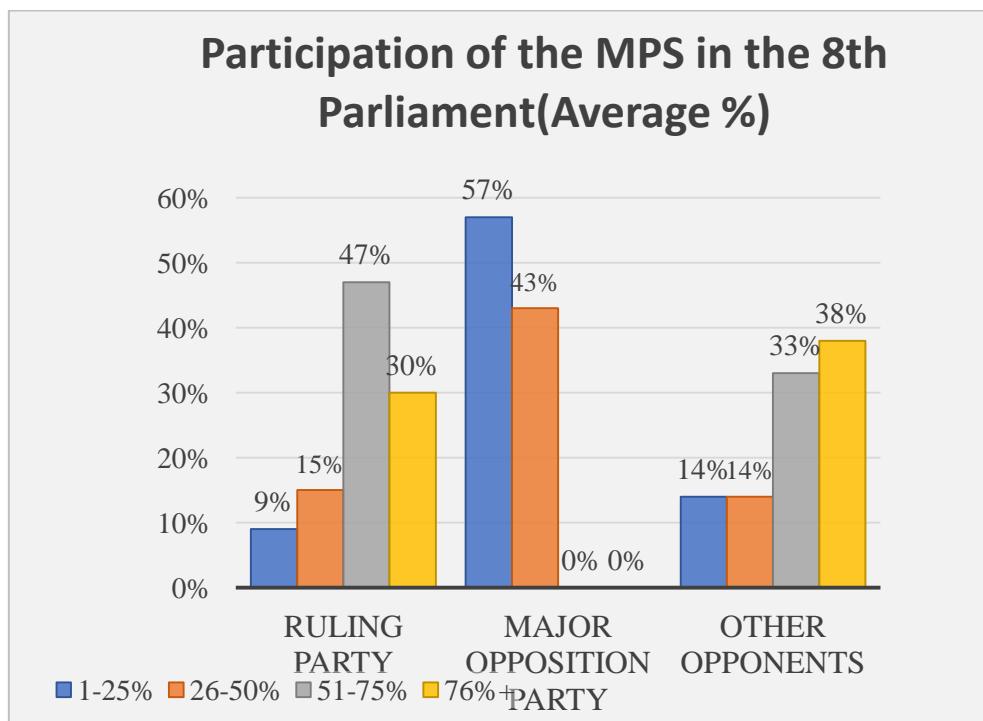
Be shall not thereby be disqualified for subsequent election as a member of the parliament. A member of parliament who has the people's mandate is expected to act democratically but the provision of this article is the bar to exercise their right to vote against party decision, or to be absent in the House in protest of party's undemocratic decision. Article 55 provides that the cabinet shall be collectively responsible to the parliament which has become a dead lock because of the Article 70, the cabinet is always sure that it is not going to be defeated by no-confidence motion. Further due to this Article 70, as the MPs cannot show any disagreement, every bill, it may be either democratic or undemocratic, gets quickly passed or approved. Most often the government tries to avoid debate and passes laws by ordinance and later get them approved by the parliament which destroy the spirit of rule of law. So the provisions of the constitution make the MPs subject to the executive, not the executive to the parliament. As a result the parliament fails to perform its duty as a representative organ of the people.

9. Participation of the Members in Parliament Session

The effectiveness of parliament is highly depended on to what extent of the members of the parliament are responsible to attend the meeting. The regular and vibrant presence of the members gives the parliament the real form of a representative organ. The spontaneous participation of the MPS is one of the preconditions to make the legislature effective. Besides the opposition party can play a dynamic role in order to maintain a balance with the members of the ruling party as well as to establish accountability and responsibility of the governing body by logical scrutiny of them in the parliament. The ruling party are also free to scrutinize the opposition vise- versa. The most important thing to establish such a culture is nothing but the participation of the members in the house. In fact it is the platform for the MPs to discuss on public affairs as well as the platform for the settlement of mutual conflict. However this culture is ignored by the MPS of both sides. In perspective of Bangladesh it can be easily

understood that there prevails a bad culture of confrontational politics inside the parliament as well as outside of this house. That's why when the opposition party remain present in the parliament, the ruling party and other opposition leaders make a depredation on them by using unconstitutional language. Consequently it becomes likely impossible to create an environment for a healthy debate. When the ruling party tries to sniffle the opposition, they become bound to boycott the parliament. However this is absolutely true but sometimes the opposition party intentionally uses this unacceptable practices abnormally on their political decision. However the parliament has to stumble in the middle of the journey to achieve good governance.

Figure 4: Participation of the Members in Parliament Session



Source: Compiled by the Author

Table 4: Absence rate of MPs in the 8th Parliament

| Absence Rate of MPS in Total Working Days of the 8 th Parliament (%) | | | | | |
|---|---------|----------|----------|--------|-------|
| Party | (1-25)% | (25-50)% | (51-75)% | (76+)% | total |
| Government | 80 | 94 | 30 | 17 | 221 |
| Major opposition party | 0 | 0 | 28 | 28 | 56 |
| Others opposition party | 8 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 21 |
| total | 88 | 101 | 61 | 48 | 298 |

Source: Transparency International Bangladesh, 2008

10. Opposition's Walkout and Boycott

In a democratic system the opposition party bears the responsibility of establishing an effective and vibrant parliament. The opposition party plays a vital role to maintain balance of government power and to hold the government responsible for each decisions by their constructive criticism, comments and opposing power. Not only scrutiny but also to help the ruling party in many crucial issue is another important responsibility of the opposition MPs. The absence of the opposition parties in the parliamentary session decreases the quality of debate while passing any bills or other activities. So it is the constitutional duty of the opposition party is to highlight the government's misdeed and inaccuracies to the public. The illogical and excessive application of walkout and boycott turns the parliament come to a standstill and ultimately paves the way of parliamentary autocracy of the ruling parties. During the 8th parliament the constant practice of walkout and boycott by the MPs rehashed the parliamentary development within this country. The history of the Bangladesh parliament is the history of walkouts and boycotts. This is especially relevant for the fifth, the seventh, the eighth and the ninth parliaments. Walkouts and boycotts have not only spoiled the maximum working days of these four parliaments but also posed a threat to the very lively existence of them. Walkouts and boycotts are dominant features of the Bangladesh Parliaments (Firoz 2013).

10. 1 Walkout

The word 'walkout' means 'coming out'. In the parliamentary usage 'walkout' means walking out of the House of the parliament by the parliamentarians. The parliamentarians

stage walkout for a short period. Walkout is a form of protest. Protest may be made against any decision/ruling of the Chair, any action/decision of the government or any member of the House. Usually the non-ruling party members use this tool of protest. The opposition members can walkout from the parliament to speak on behalf of the public interest.

The culture should be practiced on logical grounds only, but if we assess the 8th parliament it can be seen that the then opposition parties walked out from the parliament for 99 times in total working days among which the major opponents -Awami League staged 66 walkouts for 73 times and Krisok Shromik League for 15 times while Jatiya Party for 7 times and the Independent Members for 4 while Bikolpo Dhara made this for a time only (Jahan and Amundsen 2012).

Table 5: Total Walkout in 8th Parliament

| Meetings | Awami League | Jatiya Party | Krisok Shromik League | Bikolpo Dhara | Satantra |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------|
| 1 st | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 nd | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 3 rd | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 th | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 th | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 th | 11 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 th | 6 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 8 th | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 th | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 th | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 th | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 th | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 13 th | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 th | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 15 th | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 th | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 st | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 nd | 9 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 rd | 9 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 82 | 7 | 15 | 1 | 2 |

Source: TIB reports on the eighth parliament and compiled by researcher

10.2 Boycott

In the parliamentary terminology ‘boycott’ means abstaining from the parliament, that is to say keeping relinquished from the parliament. Abstaining or boycotting parliament is also a tool of protest (Firoz 2013:84). Usually the opposition members in the House use this tool in a protest against the decision/ruling of the Speaker or any action/decision of the government or treasury bench members. Boycott lasts for a longer period of time. Sometimes walkouts turn into boycotts. The 8th parliament was summoned on October 28, 2001 started with the boycott by the dominant opposition party Awami League (Firoz 2013: 110). They didn’t attend the first session of the parliament. They boycotted each of 56 working days in total of the first and second parliament meetings as a mark of protest against election rigging and the subsequent repressive acts against their workers and supporters. However, sometimes boycott is acceptable as a method of protest, but illogical and constant uses of boycott is neither acceptable nor conducive to an effective and smooth functioning of the parliament. In 2001-2006 the walkout and boycott tendency was remarkable which led the parliament to ineffectiveness.

Table 6: Oppositions Boycott in the 8th Parliament

| Parliament | Total Working Days | Boycotted by the Opposition | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| First | 134 | 1 | 0.74 |
| Second | 206 | 67 | 32.52 |
| Third | 75 | 29 | 38.66 |
| Fourth | 168 | 3 | 1.78 |
| Fifth | 395 | 135 | 34.17 |
| Sixth | 4 | NA | NA |
| Seventh | 383 | 163 | 42.55 |

Source: Jalal Firoz: Forty Years of Bangladesh Parliament.

11. Quorum Crisis

Article 75(2) of the constitution of Bangladesh stipulates that, “If at any time during which parliament is in session the attention of the person presiding is drawn to the fact that the number of members present is less than sixty, he shall either suspend the meeting until at least sixty members are present, or adjourn it.”

In parliamentary democracy the delay in parliamentary meeting is nothing new due to the absence of quorum. But despite having the two third majority of the BNP with its pro- Islamic

allies, quorum crisis had become a regular subject in the 8th parliament. Although in the absence of quorum, the meeting of the parliament delayed for 45 minutes before, in the 8th parliament a new dimension added to that crisis which reached to 51 minutes. It is reported that most of the younger members of the treasury bench has stopped coming to the parliament (The Daily Star 2001). Parliamentary proceedings had to be cancelled due to a lack of quorum. However, overall in the 8th parliament, due to the quorum crisis, 13635 hours is wasted which is 1.5% of the total working hours of that respective parliament. Besides in the 8th parliament the parliamentary meeting were held only in nine working days (TIB 2011). In addition to that in the 23 sessions of Jatiya Sangsad, as the session was delayed due to the quorum crisis, the amount of wasted money was twenty crores and 45 lacs (TIB 2011). Scholar noted that the most worrying thing is that the ruling party doesn't feel worried or embarrassed about that rather they blame the opposition party for this crisis. Apart from that is a matter of concern that the Prime Minister popularly known as the leader of the house remain absent from the House (Daily Prothom Alo, Daily Ittefaq 2003). She is not playing the role to make the parliament effective. Even the leaders of the BNP, feel unnecessary to obey the rules of the parliament. Moreover the speaker announced that there is no such thing that 60 people needed to be attended in the parliament. Barrister Moudud suggested the Deputy Speaker that He can ignore the quorum fact. It has been proved that the MPs assess themselves neither as a lawmaker nor a national policy maker. Article 67(1) (b) of the constitution of Bangladesh stipulates that, if a member of parliament is absent from parliament for 90 consecutive days without leave, his/her seat shall be declared vacant.

To avoid this provision the boycotting members hypocritically returned to the session for a day or two only to keep their membership alive. The facade of this boycotting culture is that, despite the absence from the parliament the boycotting members enjoys every rights. However the good will and keenness of the MPs needed to solve this problem. They should bear in mind that they are the voice of the people and have to be accountable to them rather than achieving party interest.

Figure 5: Session wise Maximum Wastage of Time Due to Quorum Crisis

| Session Wise Maximum Wastage of Time | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Year | Total Session | Total Working Days | Misuse of Time Due to Quorum Crisis(Minutes) | Average Wastage of Time(Minutes) | |
| 2001 | 1 | 19 | 598 | 31 | |
| 2002 | 3 | 75 | 2946 | 39 | |
| 2003 | 5 | 63 | 2946 | 46 | |
| 2004 | 4 | 83 | 3061 | 37 | |
| 2005 | 4 | 62 | 1737 | 29 | |
| 2006 | 5 | 71 | 2347 | 33 | |
| Total | 23 | 373 | 13635 | 35.83 | |

Source: Transparency International Bangladesh: The 8th Jatiya Sangsad to the Institutionalization of Democracy (2001-2006), 12 February 2007, p.38

12. Conclusion

An appraisal of above discussion regarding the 8th parliament depicts that quorum crisis, constant exercise of walkout and boycott, discretionary control over the Members by Executive Head, MPs inefficiency in conducting parliamentary activities, procrastination in forming the standing committees and their irregular meeting held the parliament ineffective. The effectiveness of parliament depends on the spontaneous participation of the parliament. In the 8th parliament 23 parliamentary session were held within its 373 working days the presence of the MPs in the working of the House was not remarkable and the average participation rate was 55%. Most often the Members of the house waste their time on unscheduled discussion, unnecessary party appreciation and scrutiny of the opposition party. Besides the domination of businessman in the parliament was noticeable. Although the opposition party is the vital element to ensure an effective parliament, the opposition's walkout and boycott tendency crippled this institution. The opposition party boycotted 273 out of the 373 working days of the 8th parliament. Both the ruling and the opposition party barely shows any tolerance to each other to run the parliament.

The above discussion demonstrates that the 8th parliament passed 185 laws among which 58% of the total laws were modified. Most of the bills were passed within a short time without

ample discussion because of the absence of the opposition party or even for quorum crisis. Besides there was a tendency of passing laws through ordinances. There are some progressive approach of the 8th parliament. The new laws passed in the parliament in the reform of justice system including -The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act 2003, Repression of Women and Children (Amendment) Act 2003; the Disruption Offences (Speedy Trial) Act, 2002, Speedy Judicial Tribunal Act 2002 were notable. However having a two thirds majority the ruling party didn't show a little interest to pass the Code of Criminal Procedure Amendment Act (2006) and the Ombudsman act 1980 in order to separate the judicial and executive activities. So the 8th parliament paves the way to establish rule of man rather than a responsible one. The legislature failed to establish a responsible government rather the executive head exercise control over the House. Effective parliamentary committees reflects the functions and the standards of parliament as well as ensure the accountability and responsibility of the government. But the standing committees of the 8th parliament was delayed to form for about 14 months and failed to join the meeting as per the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure. An assessment on the working of those committees demonstrate that scarcity of political willingness, non- submission of reports and non- implementation of reports submitted hindered the committees to perform due responsibilities. After the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1990 Bangladesh experienced the functioning of six parliaments. The problems discussed above was found almost in all the parliaments, difference was in its extent. However, if this practices continues, the parliament comes out unsuccessful to reach to achieve the desired form of governance.

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Original Article

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WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELF HELP GROUPS: A CASE STUDY OF COMILLA DISTRICT

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Abstract:

Women's economic empowerment is an inevitable part of development discourse. Excluding women from the mainstream development program, institutionalization of a sustainable development process is just unthinkable. Bangladesh has great entrepreneurial potential. Entrepreneurships enhance financial independence and self esteem of women. About 83% of enterprises in the sample were established between the years 2000-2007 indicating that young women are gradually becoming interested in business and entrepreneurial activities and women's visibility in economic sector is increasing. Consequently, under successive Five-Year-Plans, women's development initiatives have been gradually integrated into the macro framework and multi-sectoral economy to bring women into the mainstream of economic development and encourage potential women entrepreneurs realizing their business plans. Women's contribution to household income and family welfare, increasing women's participation in household decisions about expenditure and other issues leading to greater expenditure on women's welfare. The purpose of this paper is to show empowerment of women through SHGs.

Key Words:

*Women Empowerment,
Entrepreneurship, Self Help
Groups, Micro Finance,
Bangladesh..*

1. Introduction

Existing sex ratio in demographic structure of Bangladesh indicates that women comprise almost 50% of the total population. They are essential part of nation's human resources. Due to this demographic structure, the issue of the participation of women in the mainstream economy is imperative. Without a meaningful and active participation of women, half of the total population, in regular economic activities, a dynamic and sustainable economy is impossible. A sustainable economy is a precondition for national growth and prosperity including institutionalization of a democratic system. It is also impossible to achieve the target of a poverty-free society without incorporation of women in the mainstream economy. Women in Bangladesh are employed in low category jobs. Most of them are employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery sectors, where the share of the women employees is 78.8%. Even in clerical jobs women are poorly represented. In administrative function, there is little woman participation, which clearly shows the frustrating job situation for the women in Bangladesh (Aktaruddin, M. 2000). Due to the grace of the emergence and growth of the Ready Made Garments sector, the share of women in production has increased. The share of women in this sector is 10%. Only in services sector, the job share of women is more than their male colleagues; the share of women in this sector is 5.4 % whereas the male only comprises 2.4% of the jobs of this category.

Development alone cannot bring peace and prosperity unless social justice and gender equality are ensured. It has been well accepted that various development programmes have bypassed women who constitute about half of the population of the country. International conventions and conferences, legal enactments, constitutional provisions etc. highlighted the imperative need for gender equality and women empowerment. The rural poor, with the intermediation of voluntary organizations join together for self help to secure better economic growth. This has resulted in the formation of a large number of self help groups in the country, which mobilize savings and recycle the resources generated among the members. SHG's are necessary to overcome exploitation, create confidence for the economic self-reliance of the rural poor, particularly among women who are mostly invisible in the social structure. These groups enable them to come together for a common objective and gain strength from each other to deal with exploitation, which they are facing, in several forms. A group becomes the basis for action and change. Significantly, credit is a major factor in boosting economic development if it is effectively utilized (Begum, R. 1993). The government's recent initiatives to streamline credit operations and delivery system through

micro-finance movement and strengthening and expansion of credit institutions (SHGs) can definitely help in the revival of rural economy and empowerment of the rural poor. Micro Finance as a tool of poverty alleviation and women empowerment has gained acceptance in development dialogue the world over. There is an acute need among the poor for credit, both for consumption and production, which often forms the declining line between survival and succumbing to poverty. It has been found that besides food, credit is also needed for health, housing education. These needs are also critical for survival. The success of SHGs as a development tool depends on the availability of Micro Finance.

By nature, it is an explorative study aiming at having an overview of the situation of women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The main thematic issues covered by this study are socio-demographic profile of women entrepreneurs, types of women-owned enterprises, regulatory procedures including tax, VAT, company registration, training and capacity buildings and human resources (Goswami, Arun Kumar, 1998). The study also focused women's access to finance, business management, product and design development, marketing and the issues related to business promotion. The study tried to explore the social perspectives of women entrepreneurs, their conditions and position in family.

2. Objectives

The overall objective of the study is to have an overview of the existing situation of women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh in line with their problems and prospects. The objectives of this study are delineating below:

- To have clear idea about Socio-demographic profile of women entrepreneurs
- To improve the legislative environment in which women entrepreneurs operates in Bangladesh, nationally and locally.
- To encourage women empowerment among the women for eradicate of poverty.

3. Methodology and Data

Considering the objectives of the study, geographical areas, time, types of respondents, major thematic areas under the study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods and procedures were applied to explore pertinent information for this study. In this study woman entrepreneurs were selected for questionnaire survey. In addition, the qualitative information was collected from various stakeholders, who are directly or indirectly related with women entrepreneurship development. Apart from women entrepreneurs, the qualitative information

were collected from the representatives of public institutions, local government, female ward commissioners, business community, NGOs, financial institutions.

As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire survey was conducted among 50 women entrepreneurs from Comilla district of Bangladesh. Considering this, the data were collected from three Upazillas namely; Comilla Sadar North Upazilla, Comilla Sadar South Upazilla and Chandina Upazilla.

4. Key concepts of Entrepreneurship Development

4.1 Concept of Self-Help Group

The International Network for Mutual Help Centers has developed this working Definition : Self help of mutual support is a process where in people who share common experience, situations of problems can offer each other a unique perspective that is not available from those who have not shared these experience. Self-help groups are run by and for group's members. A group of people, who meet regularly for discuss common issues and to look at solution for the same. But, as on date the members of the SHGs understood the importance of the savings though participation. In general, self-help groups are based on principles of empowerment, inclusion, nonhierarchical decision making, shared responsibility, and a holistic approach to people's cultural, economics, and social needs.

4.2 Concept of Micro Finance

During the last two decades micro-finance programs have proliferated around the world. The Nobel Peace Prize 2006 awarded to the Grameen Bank and its founder signifies the global recognition of micro-finance programmes as an effective strategy to generate income and employment and poverty alleviation in developing countries. They are considered for an important approach to poverty alleviation and enhancement of living standards, particularly of women. Moreover, microfinance has come to be regarded as a supplementary development paradigm, which widens the financial service delivery system by linking the large rural population with formal institutions through SHGs. The term microfinance refers to providing very poor families with very small loans (micro credit) to help them engage in productive activities and grow their tiny business. Overtime microfinance has come to include a broader range of services like credit, savings and insurance etc. It is believed that in principle and practice microfinance programmes are very easy for achieving financial access and alleviating poverty. Micro finance through Self-Help Groups (SGHs) has proved to be a strategic

measure for organizing women in groups and promoting saving and thrift habits to gain access to institutional credit for their socio-economic development and empowerment.

4.3 Women Empowerment and SHGs

The word empowerment means giving power. According to the International Encyclopedia (1999), power means having the capacity and the means to direct one's life towards desired social, political and economic goals or status. Empowerment does not mean setting women against men. Indeed it means making both men and women realize their changing roles and women realize their changing roles and status and develop a consensus for harmonious living in the context of an egalitarian Society. It means redistribution of work, roles, redistributing their values to the changing world and attitudes and evolving new kinds of adjustment, understanding and trust with each other. Empowerment of women also means equal status to women. SHG occupies the major part of the rural development of the nation. This constituted all the part of the nation. This concept was successfully implemented and achieved in Bangladesh. Bangladesh became a large size SHG constituted country and mobilized crores of money. SHG mainly concerned with the enlistment of the women in the society through, social, economical aspects. It leads to provide and bring the empowerment to the women. SHG not only mobilize micro finance and provide credit to the needed members but also it provides self employment training, awareness programme, promote the leadership qualities and confidential life to its members (A.V. Shivashankar Reddy and Chitrashekhar Chiralli, 2009).

4.4 Women Entrepreneurs

SHG has really helped to increase the skills and awareness of women. The objectives of Entrepreneurship Development programme (EDP) is to promote economic activities among the members of Self-help Group through skill training, Entrepreneurship Development, credit linkage and market support. The year 2001 was announced as the year of women Empowerment. The Bangladeshi women are under the control of the male in family womb to tomb. When she is a child, she is under the control of her father. At her later age after her marriage she is controlled by her husband and at the old age controlled by her son. This reduced her self-confidence and will to make independent initiative. They were not even made aware of the utility of education (Habibullah, M. 2003).

5. Scenario of Women Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh

5.1. Situation of Women Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh

Women in Bangladesh are a significant entrepreneurial force, contributing to the development of local, national and global economies. Women-run businesses –mostly micro and small enterprises– are found in the production and marketing of agricultural and consumer goods, as well as the provision of services for local, national and multinational markets. The enterprises owned by women feature some interesting characteristics regarding ownership, management, sources of capital, technology, market orientation.

5.2 Women's Entrepreneurship's Contribution to Poverty Reduction

It is recognized that women's entrepreneurship can reduce women's income poverty and thus contribute to poverty reduction. As women engage in business activities, they face different constraints and opportunities compared to their male counterparts. In Bangladesh, recent consultations carried out by the Asian Development Bank –in consultation with the *Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry* (BWCCI) the *Women Entrepreneurs Association* (WEA), and *Micro Enterprise Development Assistance and Services* (MIDAS) – identified a set of barriers to women entrepreneurship development. In addition to persistent gender biases and gender-based discriminatory laws and regulations, the consultations identified three critical impediments to women entrepreneurship, which form the rationale for the proposed subproject. These relate to women entrepreneurs' limited access to skills and technology; financial resources and services; and market information and business services particularly backward and forward linkage opportunities. These circumstances are further affected by women organizations' limited ability to advocate for change (Saleh, Abu.1995).

5.3 Limited Access to Skills and Technology

In Bangladesh due to gender biases and stereotypes, girls and women have low educational attainments and –when access to higher education is granted- limited involvement in non-traditional disciplines such as science, technology and business administration. Women's business is still considered from a self-employment rather than from an 'entrepreneurial' perspective. These factors combined with women's limited access to vocational training and technologies result in women entrepreneurs' limited ability to start and manage a business and the perception of being less likely to succeed.

5.4 Limited Access to Financial Resources and Services

SMEs, which contribute 40% of manufacturing output and about 80% of the industrial work force, are hampered by limited access to medium- to long-term credit. Banks and other financial institutions generally prefer large enterprise clients because of the lower transaction costs, and greater availability of collateral. SMEs also fall outside the reach of microfinance schemes, and are thus compelled to depend more on informal sources of funds at much higher interest rates. Access to credit for starting the business is a critical concern for women entrepreneurs and women-owned businesses, due to their limited access to collateral, banks' unwillingness to accept household assets as collaterals and the lack of positive attitude and confidence of loan officers to women entrepreneurs' managerial skills. Sometimes, credit may be available for women through several schemes but there are procedural bottlenecks and gaps, and the multiplicity of available schemes is often inadequately presented to women entrepreneurs. As a result of advocacy initiatives, the Government of Bangladesh (Bangladesh Bank) has recently enacted an amendment to the *Refinance Scheme for Women Entrepreneurs of SME*, raising the minimum target for earmarked resources to women entrepreneurs from 10 to 15%, 40% of which will be dedicated to small women entrepreneurs. The content of this and other gender-sensitive laws and regulations are unknown by most of the commercial banks outside metropolitan Dhaka and Chittagong (Rahman, Mizanoor Md.; Ibrahim Md. Hossain; and Abdus Shahid Miah. 2000).

5.5 Limited Access to Market Information and Business Services

The limited access to market information and business support services constitute a further impediment to women's access to existing opportunities. Some women-led enterprises have already reached export potential. Women-led enterprises export agricultural produce, processed foods, handicrafts, and other items, and some are looking to order more products from self-employed, owner-operated enterprises. These links have the potential to be strengthened to build a critical mass, but they require support. Many of the smaller producers are unaware of how to explore market potential for their products, the potential for value addition and the value chain as often they operate in isolation from markets and information. Programs run by and for women overcome these traditional attitudes more readily. Women who lack confidence often respond more quickly to ideas from women acting as role models (Rahman, Aminur. 1999).

6. Entrepreneurship Development of Rural Women through Self Help Groups

Women comprise half of human resources they have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality is as central to a more holistic approach towards stabilizing new patterns and process of development that are sustainable. (Birendra Kumar, 2009). The contribution of women and their role in the family as well as in the economic development and social transformation are pivotal. Women constitute 90 percent of total marginal workers of the country. Rural women who are engaged in agriculture form 78 percent of all women in regular work (Harendar Kumar, 2009). Experience of NIRD action research project reveal that, the operational aspects, such as the extent of enabling that goes into the community self help processes and sharpening the mind set of women. Men and the project administrators are low of critical components that determine their extent to which empowerment may or may not take place. The role of micro-credit is to, improve the socio and economic development of women and improve the status of women in households and communities. The micro entrepreneurship are strengthening the women empowerment and remove the gender inequalities. Self Help Group's micro credit mechanism makes the members to involve in other community development activities. Micro credit is promoting the small scale business enterprises and its major aim is to alleviate poverty by income generating activities among women and poor. Therefore, they could achieve self- sufficiency. Now-a-days economics development is one of the factors that have changed the entire scenario of social and cultural environment within the country especially for the women. The rural women are engaged in small-scale entrepreneurship programme with the help of Self Help Groups. Through that they were economically empowered and attaining status in family and community. Rural women play a vital role in farm and home system. She contributes substantially in the physical aspect of farming, livestock management, post harvest and allied activities. Her direct and indirect contribution at the farm and home level along with livestock management operation has not only help to save their assets but also led to increase the family income. She performs various farm, livestock, post harvest and allied activities and possesses skills and indigenous knowledge in these areas (Rahman, Aminur 1999). The women were empowering themselves technically to cope with the changing times and productively using their free time and existing skills for setting and sustaining enterprises. They were engaged in starting individual or collective income generation programme with the help of self-help group. This will not only generate income for them but also improve the decision-making capabilities that ensure the overall empowerment.

7. Findings and Analysis

7.1 Differences of Age limit

Percentage distribution of the respondent by age:

| Age | | | | | Total |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 15-20 | 21-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 50+ years | |
| 21.7 | 36.6 | 26.7 | 9.0 | 6.0 | 100% |

Total No. of Respondents is 50.

Among women entrepreneurs interviewed, 58.3% respondents belong to the age group of 15-30 years and another 26.7% belong to the age group 31-40 years. Women entrepreneurs belong to middle (41-50 years) and older gage group (50+years) constitutes only 15% of the total sample. The percentage distribution of women entrepreneurs by age indicates that most of the women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh are young. It is also evident from the values of mean and median age, which were found to be 30.60 and 27 years respectively. Median value indicates that 50% of women entrepreneurs in the sample belong to age bracket of 15-27 years.

7.2 Differences from level of Education

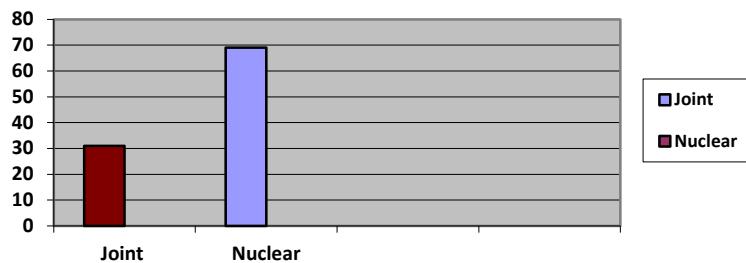
Percentage distribution of women entrepreneurs by the level of education

| Level of Education | % |
|----------------------|------|
| Post Graduation | 10.9 |
| Graduation | 16.8 |
| HSC | 26.7 |
| SSC | 34.7 |
| Class Eight | 5.9 |
| Primary (Class five) | 1.0 |
| No formal Education | 4.0 |
| Total | 100 |

In terms of educational level of women entrepreneurs, 10.9% have post graduation degree, 16.8% are graduates, 26.7% have higher secondary education, 34.7% have secondary school level education and 6.9% have minimum primary education. Only 4% of women entrepreneurs interviewed have no formal education but some of them mentioned that they could read and write.

7.3 Types of Family and Number of Children

Percentage distribution of women entrepreneurs by the types of family



In terms of the types of family, most of the women entrepreneurs (69%) interviewed live in either a nuclear or a conjugal family while only 31% live in extended or joint family. Among married women entrepreneurs, 30% had no child. The arithmetic mean for the number of children for the rest of 70% married women entrepreneurs was calculated as 1.3 and the median value was found to be 1, which means average number of children for women entrepreneurs are less than 2 and at least 50% of them has only one child. This statistic indicates that women's economic involvement is not only contributing towards economic development but also to country's social development activities like ongoing family planning program. It is evident that

Involvement of women in formal economy inspires them to keep family size smaller.

7.4 Motivating Factors to Enter into Business

The respondents were asked to describe factors that encourage them to enter into business and entrepreneurial activities. The opinions they expressed in response to this question are compiled and given in the following table with relative frequency and ranking.

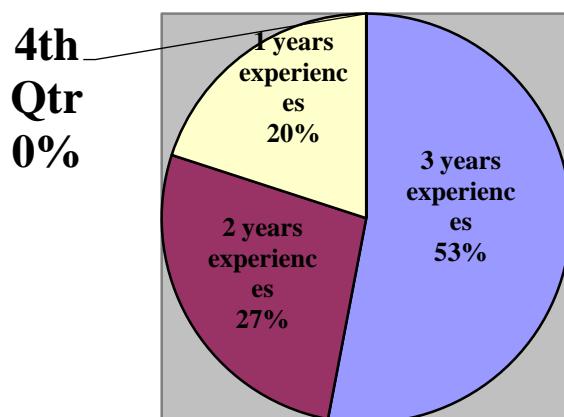
| Factors that encourage women to enter into business | % | Ranking |
|---|----|---------|
| Inspiration from family | 26 | 1 |
| To create self-dependency | 20 | 4 |
| Self inspiration | 16 | 8 |
| For economic freedom | 14 | 9 |
| Inspiration from friend | 7 | 9 |
| Inspiration from organization | 5 | 9 |
| No alternative to have a job | 4 | 10 |
| Inspiration from training | 3 | 10 |
| Eradicate gender discrimination | 2 | 10 |
| To established women's right | 1 | 10 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----|
| Creating opportunity for others | 1 | 10 |
| Economic development | 1 | 10 |

The picture that we found in our study area is outstanding because maximum women were inspired from their family members (26%). Family members encourage them to involve any kind of income generating activities. The positive attitudes inspired the women to involve any income generating activities (20%) by self dependency. 16% women were encouraged by self- inspiration. We found that the women were involve in various activities only for ensure the economic stability (14%). We also found that women were inspired from their friends (7%), various development organizations (5%) and 12% were inspired from various institutions and persons.

7.5 Duration of Experience in Business

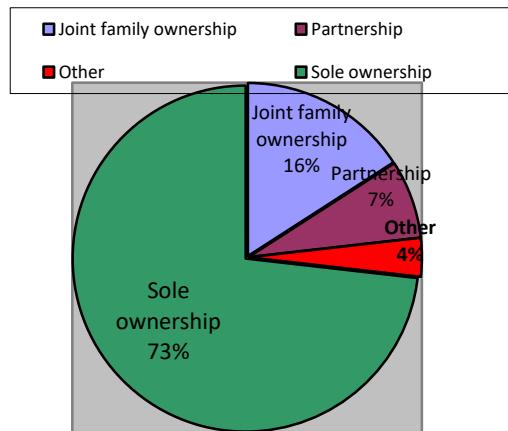
It is observed that involvement in formal business by women is not very old phenomena as about 53% of women entrepreneurs in the sample have only three years or less than three years experiences in business.



Among the 50 women entrepreneurs, 27% have only one year of experiences and 20% has 2 years of experiences in business.

7.6 Nature of Ownership

Percentage distribution of enterprises by the nature of ownership



Picture shows that individual ownership is dominant type. Among 50 enterprises, 73% is owned by individual, 16% is jointly owned by family members and only 7% business is run in partnership with other members. Beside these only 4% ownership were found which were not well connected from them or their family members.

7.7 Types of Business

As the research work we found women were involve in various sectors.

| Name of the sectors | % |
|---------------------|------|
| Garments | 16.1 |
| Printing | 1.6 |
| Handicraft | 69.4 |
| Agro based | 3.2 |
| Parlor | 4.8 |
| Food | 3.2 |
| Others | 1.6 |
| Total | 100% |

Among the respondents, majority of women entrepreneur (69.4%) were found to be involved in handicraft sector followed by garments/ home-textile (16. 1%). The table also shows that women are becoming in non-traditional sectors like printing and media, food business, etc. It is observed that 60% of women entrepreneurs did not know how to conduct feasibility study before selecting a specific product, 26.7% of them were completely found unaware of feasibility study and 6.7% of them did not feel necessity to conduct a feasibility study. Only few women entrepreneurs told that they conducted feasibility through market observation and participation in trade fair.

8. Advantages of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women

Empowering women particularly rural women is a challenge. Micro enterprise in rural area can help to meet these challenges. Micro-enterprises not only enhance national productivity, generate employment but also help to develop economic independence, personal and social capabilities among rural women (Aktaruddin, M. 2000). Following are some of the personal and social capabilities, which were developed as result of taking up enterprise among rural women.

- ✓ Economic empowerment
- ✓ Improved standard of living
- ✓ Self confidence
- ✓ Enhance awareness
- ✓ Engaged in political activities
- ✓ Improvement in leadership qualities
- ✓ Involvement in solving problems related to women and community
- ✓ Decision making capacity in family and community

Economic empowerment of women by micro entrepreneurship to the empowerment of women in many things such as socio – economic opportunity, property rights, political representation, social equality, personal right, family development, market development, community development and at last the nation development.

9. Conclusion

Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in recent times. The economic empowerment of women is of paramount importance to political thinkers, social scientists and reformers. Women entrepreneurs faced many obstacles with respect to holding property and entering contracts, etc. But they having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. They are in need of building capacity in marketing, business promotion, accounting and bookkeeping, product and design development, ICT, e-commerce and regulatory process, etc. The opportunity of training was found to be very limited. The roles of public training providing agencies were not satisfactory. NGOs are providing some training with limited scales. Our Government has adopted some policies regarding women entrepreneurship development in rural Bangladesh. But the complication arises at the time of implementation. Sometimes the services of Government are available in urban areas, whereas rural entrepreneurs continue to be victims of deprivation. In

spite of having access to various micro credits, rural women receive almost no training from development organizations, which adversely affects their efficiency and performance. Under this juncture self help groups (SHGs) as a tool for economic independence of rural women. The members of SHGs are involved in Micro – Entrepreneurships. Through that, they are becoming economically independent and providing employment opportunities to others. In total SHG not only mobilize micro finance and provide micro credit to the needed members but also it provides self employment training, awareness programme, promote the leadership qualities and confidential life to its members.

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CULTURE AND RELIGION ON WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE IN RURAL BANGLADESH

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Abstract:

Health and healthcare of a community is largely determined by the culture, religion and behavior the people of the community hold. People's culture including religion, values, beliefs and behavior during health and illness are important variables in studying health and healthcare. The present study has dealt with how and to what extent the culture, religion and practices of rural Bangladesh affect its women's reproductive health and healthcare. Finally, the study tends to conclude that the rural culture and religion exerts significant negative impact on women's reproductive healthcare.

Key Words:

Culture, Religion, Women's Reproductive Healthcare, Rural Bangladesh

1. Introduction

Reproductive health implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide it when and how often to do so. Women's reproductive health is a holistic concept which is dealt with from many dimensions and cultural approach is one of those. Cultural approach to dealing with reproductive health seeks to understand the diverse meanings peoples give to rights, reproduction and health, and the different ways in which social groups make claims on the reproductive body, sex and childbearing, culture significantly influences how people manage their daily affairs including reproduction and healthcare.¹ This is why, health researchers aim to understand people's perception, behaviors and experiences in the face to health and illness. In other words, health and healthcare of a community is largely determined by the culture, religion and behavior the people of the community hold. People's culture including religion, values, beliefs and behavior during health and illness are important variables in studying health and healthcare. The present study will deal with how and to what extent the culture, religion and practices of rural Bangladesh affect its women's reproductive healthcare.

2. Methodology

Primary sources are the main foundation of the present study. Data for this study have been collected mainly from the research field. For this purpose, a typical village of Bangladesh named Rathura (official name of the village is Rautara but popularly known as Rathura) of Pakutia Union under Nagorpur Thana in Tangail District has been selected as the research area. This is a typical village from the considerations of location, population, infrastructure, economy, and socio-demographic characteristics of the villagers. In the present study, a diverse group of persons consist of the study population. Apart from pregnant and delivered women, the population includes head of family, *matabbar*, imam of mosque, midwives, teachers, educated persons, UP chairman and members, local doctors, family planning workers, etc. All of them are directly or indirectly related to or knowledgeable about women's reproductive healthcare in rural Bangladesh. But all the delivered and pregnant women of Rathura consist of the vital part of the population. Out of the total 167 pregnant and delivered women in Rathura only 146 are available for response. As the size of the population is small, no sampling method has been followed rather attempts have been made to include all of them in the research. Data and information have personally been collected from the respondents with a semi-structured interview schedule during July-October 2009. At the same time,

observation and in-depth discussion methods have also partially been followed to collect data and information.

3. Menstruation and Village Girls

From the age of 11 years, most of the girls experience menstruation (the blood comes from the womb). This is the symbol of woman. It is said that except that experience no girl becomes a woman and this is the symbol of becoming a mother. That means without menstruation no woman can be a mother. From mothers, female relatives, friends, media both print and electronics, urban girls easily know about menstruation before its starting but this scope is less for the poor village girls.

First menstruation is an auspicious event which is most discretely handled by the women of household. There is no big display, no great expense, no pollution removing expert comes from outside. The girl is believed about the danger of her *napak* (polluted) condition by married woman of household or neighborhood, preferably not her mother in front of whom she feels shy.² During that time, the girl should spend most of her time inside a room. She is especially vulnerable to *bhut* (ghost) those spirit who attack as well as woman who have just given birth. *Bhut* are very fond of fresh, bloody life-matter.

During this period, her diet excludes all types of fish so that her menstrual blood never emits a fishy smell. An effort is made to give her strengthening, better-than-usual food such as eggs, milk, chicken, meat though again usually no great expense is incurred. She should keep a careful balance between hot and cold foods, indulging in neither extreme. On the first day, she takes bath with some ones help because she is so weak; but afterwards she requires no more assistance even for the final bath. Some girls do not comb or oil their hair until the final purification on the seventh day. Oiled hair is generally associated with a state of purity and like cow-dung, is dangerous in a state of severe pollution it may cause an abnormal increase of blood.³

3.1 *Badhok*: the Pain of Menstruation

The pain of menstruation is a very common problem to women, mainly teenage and young age girls face this problem much which is popularly known as *æbadhok*" to the villagers. To the poor villagers, *badhok* is very bad symptom.⁴ The woman who feels this pain severely, it is very tough for her to be a motherÍ this is the belief of the villagers. So, many young women remain silent about their pain and uneasiness during menstruation. The pain of menstruation

or *badhok* starts usually before two/three days of menstruation and stays during all the time of menstruation.

In Rathura, I have talked with some women who have been married before their first menstruation that means at their 10-12 years age. These women were not concerned about menstruation, did not know what to do. After some months of their married lives, they first experienced menstruation. There are also some women in Rathura who became mothers just after their first menstruation. After experiencing menstruation in one month they find themselves as pregnant in the next month.

The experience of menstruation to the girls of Rathura is very dangerous, uneasy, disturbing, shameful and also very much private matter. They do not want to share the experience of menstruation with anybody. They think that this is very much shameful and should not be shared.⁵ Fazila states her first menstruation in the following way:

I did not know anything, nobody told me before that once I would face it. When I first experienced I saw blood and thought that certainly I have done any bad work for which it has come. I have tried to hide it from all my family members but one of my aunts saw blood in my back side. She called me in her room and silently asked me about it. I have started to cry but she told that this is a very normal happening for women and to be a woman it is essential. She showed how to use some small parts of cloth (*napkin*) during menstruation and told me not to show those *napkins* to anybody. She advised me, after washing the cloths it should be spreaded in the sun shine but very silently so that nobody can see it. From that time on I spread the cloths in the sun shine and the place of spreading is the backside wall of our home. Now, I am not afraid of menstruation because I know without that no woman can be a mother.

4. Pregnancy

Pregnancy is very much risky period for women. But most of the women of Rathura report that they cannot feel the reproductive phase or pregnancy period as very much difficult stage; because during this period they have to perform all the routine household works, like cooking, cleaning, washing, rearing children and during harvesting period all works related to harvesting. They cannot get any extra rest, nutritious food and special cure during pregnancy. Like other members of the family pregnant women have to do everything. Particularly, during the harvesting period, pregnant women have to take very much weightful load and sometimes they can feel that the baby in the womb do not move and they feel pain. At that time, they usually take rest and when they feel that the baby start to move and their wombs becomes soft from hard condition, they go for works again.

4.1 Food during Pregnancy

The women of Rathura mostly do not take any special food during pregnancy. They eat whatever they get. Most of the women replied that even in pregnancy they could eat everything like rice, fish, meat, egg, milk, vegetables whatever they got. Women and their family members usually do not treat pregnancy period as important and something special. So, they do not give any special attention towards pregnant women. Pregnant women have to do usual works and take whatever food they get. But most of the women of Rathura tell that during pregnancy women usually take small amount of food so that the baby in the womb becomes small in size which will be easier to perform a delivery. They think that more food makes the baby bigger in size and the baby cannot come out from its mother vagina easily. So, performing delivery becomes hard for the midwives and the mother. From this consideration, many families in Rathura provide pregnant women with small amount of food.

4.2 Physical Condition of Women during Pregnancy

It has been mentioned that pregnant women have to perform all the household works whatever their physical condition is. Sometimes they take saline when they feel sick seriously but cannot take more nutritious food. Some tablets, injections are also taken by them but not by all women and always. Most of the women report that during winter they usually do not face any problem but summer makes many physical problems for pregnant women. Heat of summer makes unstable situation for pregnant women. Most of the pregnant women particularly the poor could not consult any doctor or nurse during their pregnancy and even their delivery also took place at home. Of course, consulting doctors and delivering in the hospital and clinic is gradually increasing in the rich families.

4.3 Sath Dea: Seven Month of Pregnancy

Seven month of pregnancy for women is a special occasion. People of Ruthura arrange a programme, cook many foods and distribute those foods among the people. Handmade cake (*semai*) is the main of that food. In this programme, they check the luck of the pregnant woman. For example, there are two things arranged by the family members. One is a pestle and the other is a cockle. With her closed eyes if the pregnant woman touches the pestle the people understand that a male baby is coming and if she touches the cockle everyone understands that the woman is becoming a mother of a girl child. The seven month occasion is called *sath dea* in Rathura and all the people irrespective of their socio-economic

background arrange the occasion according to their abilities. The *sath dea* programme is arranged for the well-being of mother and child.

It is a custom to observe a fast day by the seven month pregnant woman. So, the girl observes a fast on that day. Guests come with gifts and money. Among the gifts, *sari* (one kind of Bengali female dress) is most remarkable. Mainly female relatives like mother, grand-mother, mother-in-law, aunts give *sari* to the pregnant woman. The girl as well as would be mother takes her bath with the help of some female relatives and wears *sari* given by her mother. It is another custom to wear the *sari* given by mother. After taking some make-up, the pregnant comes on the courtyard and sits down on a piece of board. A woman comes with some components in her hands. On a *kula* (winnowing fan made of bamboo slips for separating dusts, etc from grains), she keeps a banana, a glass of milk, some grasses etc. The woman blesses by the grasses and money. She touches the pregnant's head with the grasses and gives her a ten taka note. After finishing her blessing all other women also complete their blessing in that way. Another important custom is that no man can enter the circle of women and cannot bless the becoming mother. After the blessing part, the pregnant takes a glass of milk with the banana. The milk is not bowled which is another custom.

Sweet made food like *semai* (kind of vermicelli which is cooked with milk and sugar) and *paesh* (sort of food made of rice milk and sugar; frumenty) are cooked and arranged in some dishes.⁶ Children and females eat together with the pregnant woman. Sometimes the participants made various kinds of fun and laugh.

After the eating part, everybody joins another interesting part whose name is *vaggo porikkha* (luck testing). Female participants arrange two things: one is a stone slab locally known as *sile* other is stone slab for guindine spices locally known as *pata*. Both are covered by lids (*dhakna*). In that program all female participants wait for observing which *dhakna* Minu would uncover; because if she uncovers the lid of *sile* that means she has going to be a mother of a male child and if she uncovers the lid of *pata* then it should be understood that she would be the mother of a female child.

5. House of Birth

It is an obvious matter that before some days of delivery, most of the women of Rathura go to their father's homes. They usually feel comfort to deliver their children in father's homes. After some days of delivery they come back to their husband's homes. Like other villages of Bangladesh there is a custom in Ruthura. When the people of father-in-law's home go to the home of the newborn baby's grandfather to bring back the delivered mother and child, it is the

duty of the family of the women to arrange some improved diet and invite the people for this purpose.

For all deliveries, there is a labour room where a pregnant woman delivers her child. Locally the labour room is called *æatur ghor*" and *æchati ghor*". The labour room is a dark room where there is no wind and light. Arrangement of steaming is very important here. With the starting of labour pain, family members shift the pregnant woman to the labour room which is a separate room located in the same homestead. After seven days or 20 days or 1 month, the delivered woman with her newborn can come out from the labour room. But from the labour room the delivered woman should not come out with her open hair and she has to hold a piece of iron, a piece of bone of a cow or such thing so that any ghost cannot possess her. Steaming in the labour room is essential to save the mother and child from the bad eyes of ghost. In Rathura, the people believe that many children die in the labour room after some days of delivery due to bad eyes of ghost. They believe that this is the work of ghost that the newborn become red, blue and various colour one after another. The people go to *pir* and *fakir*, *kabiraj* for treatment. They cannot understand that the name of the disease is tetanus.⁷

Women of Rathura usually give birth at home and usually it is their parent's home. Hindus and Muslims use the same word to describe the hut in which a woman gives birth as *atur ghor*, but its set up is quite different. Muslims families usually partition their living hut with a *choki* (large wooden bed) side up or, if a poor family without furniture, a corner of the hut is reserved for the purpose. The cooking hat, if any, may be used when there are too many people in the living room.⁸ Cooking is not done there during the period of confinement. These customs are quite unacceptable to Hindus. For this reason a number of Hindu *dai* say they do not work in Muslim compounds. As for Hindus, they build a small hut in their backyard especially for the event which will be dismantled and then burnt, or occasionally given to a poor Muslim *dai* afterwards. The hut itself is often surrounded by a small fence so that no one even touches it. This is to keep the rest of the household from pollution.⁹

5.1 Dai in Rathura

Midwife is locally called as *dai* in Rathura. During delivery their role is the most important. In Rathura, there are 4 *dai* women who perform most of the deliveries of Rathura. This is a significant feature that most of the villagers do not go to doctors, clinics, hospitals for delivering the pregnant women. In case of any emergency, they take the pregnant women to hospital; otherwise home is a common place to deliver and *dai* is the deliverer. The story of

becoming a *dai* is interesting. During my fieldwork in Rathura one of key informants was Renu Begum (40), mother of two boys, is a *dai*. She told her own story how she became a *dai*: My *fupu* (aunt) was a *dai* but she is now very old. Most of the villagers of Rathura relied on her for delivering pregnant women. Though she was not trained but could perform delivery very well. During any delivery I was also usually present with her; because I intended to be a *dai* in future. I observed all the stages of delivering with very much attention. Within a few years I could learn all these things easily and very soon. Now my aunt is very old and cannot move easily. So I am playing her role of *dai*. Instead of her, the people call me and I can perform any sort of delivery well.

Some years ago, a painful death of a pregnant woman happened in Rathura during delivery. The name of the woman was Minara Begum, age 35, who had two children. She faced very much complications though the family members did not take her to doctor. Local *dai* was present there for performing delivery. After two days` of labor pain the *dai* could not take the child out of the womb. After many hours efforts the two hands and one leg of the child torned apart of its body. As a result, both the newborn and mother died. It happened because of illiteracy, ignorance, lack of consciousness of the family members. In this respect, financial capability of the patient's family is an important consideration. Minara's husband was a poor day laborer and he had no financial ability to go to a hospital or clinic.

During my fieldwork in Rathura, I have talked with some women. They know that during pregnancy and after delivery it is important to go to doctor and to take regular check up and treatment. But these women cannot do these because of financial constraints, geographical distance of health centers, and social negligence towards women. Another very important reason is that old, illiterate father and mother in-laws do not know about the necessity of healthcare for pregnant women and safe delivery. They usually make a cutting remark to the daughter-in-law. Mainly mother-in-law does it much. They think that at their past time they became pregnant and gave birth of many children but they did not face any complexity. Now they hear that pregnant women should get special attention, more and nutritious food, treatment, rest etc. during pregnancy and after delivery. Even they also hear that newborn baby also need special care. All these were absent during their times. These old women took small amount of food, did not take any rest, worked hard during pregnancy and after delivery but they did not face any problem. So, why the women who are becoming pregnant now should get that special care? this is not understandable to them.¹⁰

During my fieldwork most of the women report that during pregnancy and after delivery they do all the household activities, if they feel pain or any physical problem, they take some rest

and after taking rest they again start to do their works. When I asked them how they can work if their children are very little, they replied that they keep their babies lying at their workplace and take care of them during working. They usually do not take the baby on lap until they cry loudly. They also replied that their babies do not need special care, special attention and food. Babies grow up alone and without special care; and according to their mothers, they do not need these. The experience of one of my respondents rewardingly her delivery was really dangerous. Rahima Begum, age 60, has 6 children. She described her experience in the following ways:

During my fourth pregnancy, my delivery date was very close. In that evening I was cooking and feel pain. I could understand that after sometimes my delivery would happen, but I was cooking and fed all the members of my family and then went to the bed. After a few moments I delivered a baby.

6. Religion on Reproductive Healthcare

Bangladesh is a developing country. The medicare facilities are not enough for the mass people of Bangladesh. Though the health policies always try to ensure “health for all” the people of all localities, all classes, all ethnic groups but they do not get their basic medicare facilities. Conventional healthcare system has many lacking because it does not give much value to the society, culture, religion, psychology of human beings and does not relate healthcare system with those components. But belief, values, norms, livelihood strategies all affect human beings in their particular society. So, all those should be considered significantly with healthcare system.

Most of the people of Rathura are Muslim. Their religion affects their daily lifestyles, values, norms, healthcare system etc. The graveyard of Bogdadi (R.) is situated in this village who came here before 350 years ago. People of this village are very much devoted to the graveyard. They believe that this graveyard has a strong supernatural power and can solve many problems. Mainly people go there who have no child, they want child and make a *manot* (vow) from here. *Manot* is a promise to offer a particular sacrifice to a deity on fulfillment of a prayer. From here they take *pani pora* (holy water), *tabiz* (an amulet containing holy words or a charm against evils) usually worn on the arm. They believe Bogdadi can solve their problems and very soon they can be parents. During my field work one of my respondents Alea Begum, age 40, has 4 children shared her experience in the following way:

After 6 years of my marriage I had no child. My husband, mother-in-law, neighbors all blamed me for this reason. Many people called me *bajha* (barren/sterile) in front of me. I couldn't say anything but only cried. One day I went to the graveyard and took *pani pora*, *tabiz* and prayed in front of it and wished to be a mother. I ate the *pani pora* regularly and wore the *tabiz* in my right arm. After only one year I got my first son. So, why shouldn't we go to the graveyard?"

Not only for this reason, have people gone to this graveyard for many other reasons also. Many parents go to it with their newborn babies inflicted by diseases. For this babies also they collect *pani pora*, *tabiz* etc. These rural people of Rathura claimed that newborn babies become well after this; because Bogdadi (R.) has a power and can help them during their bad times.

6.1 Akika: Naming of Child

Akika is a ceremony of naming a newborn Muslim child. It is believed that if parents do not perform *akika* the name of newborn child does not go to Allah. So, it's very much necessary to perform this holy duty. Villagers of Rathura usually sacrifice cow in that ceremony if the newborn is male and goat if the newborn is female.

Naming of child is important ceremony in Rathura. Generally, seventh day is the perfect date from the delivery to give a name of the newborn baby. Seventh night of the newborn is selected to give a name and that name should be a Muslim name like Mohammad Abdul Malek, Mohammad Abdul Karim etc. The baby's hair is cut and it is bathed by the family members, worn new dress and the baby gets new book, papers, pen etc. It is thought that in the blank new papers Allah writes the baby's fate. Usually, grandfather and grandmother decide the name of the newborn.

7. Food after Delivery

Until seven days of delivery, a woman has to stay in the house of birth or *choti ghor*. During this period, she is forbidden to eat fish, meat, greens vegetable etc. Only rice with black cumin locally known as *kalizira* is the only food which the newborn mother usually takes. She cannot come out from the *choti ghor*; other women serve her food in that room. In Rathura, very poor delivered mothers usually take rice with bowled potato or potato smash. Special food as the doctor suggest for delivered women has hardly been found in the study area.

7.1 Food of Newborn Baby

After having birth the first food of a child should be the milk of its mother locally known as *shal dudh*. But the people of Rathura usually give honey immediate after the birth of a baby. Breast feeding till six month for newborn baby is essential and during this period any kind of food is forbidden for the baby. The people of Rathura give the baby the milk of cow, goat, barli, rice with salt etc. Processed milk in small container prepared for newborn babies are found elsewhere in the market of Bangladesh. This type of baby food is very popular even in the rural areas. Advertisement of that baby food over radio and television attract the people. The people also think that this type of food is more conducive to health than breast feeding.

8. Family Planning Worker of Rathura

During my fieldwork, I have talked with two family planning workers who helped me much to know the real healthcare conditions and practices in Rathura. The main duty of both of them is to make the people concern about reproductive healthcare that they try to help the rural poor and illiterate people by various ways.

Razia Akhter, age 50, is a family planning worker in Rathura. She has two children. Very interestingly she gave marriage to her only daughter at her very early age, at the age of 15. Razia's logic was that at that time she got a good bridegroom from another village and he had the necessary qualifications. She did not make any delay to do this. 20 years ago, Razia's husband was the chairman of Pakutia Union Parishad. This widow woman, Razia, is now living with her son, daughter-in-law and her grand-son. Surprisingly, in spite of her knowledge and many years of experience of reproductive health, she gave her son's marriage with a girl at her very early age. At 13 years age, the girl came to Razia's home as her daughter-in-law and at her 15 years age the ill health girl delivered a male child. Razia Akhter, this family planning worker is doing her job since 32 years. She has some duties to perform for the people of Rathura. She gives vaccine to the pregnant women and little children. Razia gives tetanus vaccine to the women of above 15 years age. Five dose tetanus vaccines are essential for women to save themselves and their newborn babies from tetanus. As a family planning worker, she regularly goes to almost all the households of Rathura and gives some cautious advices to the women. Of course, all the advices for pregnant women remain in printed forms but hardly carried out. Our intensive investigation reveals that the women of Rathura do not listen to these advices because of harsh reality in their family lives. Rezia has been performing delivery in Rathura since 32 years. Many women come to her for collecting contraception. *Sukhi* tablet, injection, emko, coperti, tubektomi etc. are the

contraceptives for women. The women who do not want to give birth more babies, they come to Razia for collecting all these things. On the other hand, condom, vasektomi, injection etc. are the contraceptives for men. Men also come to Razia for collecting all these but their number is very small. Because, it is thought that it is the duty of women to give birth of children, and to stop this birthing process is also their duty. So, many men in Rathura pressurize their wives to make and use the contraceptives. Even in the thana health complex, hospital, clinic the number of women is higher than men for collecting these contraceptive materials. It indicates that patriarchic family relation in rural Bangladesh, and women become the victims of contraceptive method. Many girls up to 12 years come to Razia with the problem of menstruation, irregular menstruation and pain, and Rezia gives them her own prescriptions in order to solve the problems.

9. Health Worker of Rathura

Mr. Rafiq (40) of Rathura has one child. He has been working in Rathura as a health worker for 20 years. He claims that the villagers know him as Dr. Rafiq.¹¹ He gives advices to the villagers and all of the advices are health and family planning related. Though he is a male health worker, female patients also come to him to get advices. He also goes to the homes of the villagers and gives advices and health services to the villagers. But it is only once in a month he goes to his monthly visit. He advises the pregnant women for monthly check-up. He also supplies iron tablet to them and advises to eat the tablet regularly. He also suggests to drink a lot of water and to take more vegetables. For the newborn babies also he has some advices.

During my fieldwork, we have come to know about reproductive health care conditions in Rathura from Dr. Rafiq. He said that from various local clinic representatives come to Rathura and find out the homes of pregnant women. The representatives try to convince the members of the families to take those pregnant women to their respective clinics for delivery. If the patients go to those private clinics they find the health care services very costly there. The doctors usually tell them that the patient's condition is serious and operation is essential for delivery. From each operation, those representatives get particular amount of money as their commission. Doctors and clinics make such a big profit from the poor villagers. Such bitter experiences seriously discouraged the villagers to have modern medicare from hospital or clinic.

Dr. Rafiq told me that he gives folic acid to the pregnant women during their pregnancy period. He also tries to convince the family members of pregnant women for normal delivery

in government hospital; because the representatives of private clinics pursued the poor, illiterate people for operation during delivery. Among those poor people mainly rickshaw puller, van driver, small businessmen etc. become the victim of such deception. Dr. Rafiq also performs delivery sometimes. He said that in every Union Parishad there is a family planning hospital where poor people may get medicare facilities.

About food for newborn babies Dr. Rafiq said that immediate after delivery, mother should give their breast milk locally known as *shal dudh* to their newborns; because it helps to protect the newborn from many diseases and complexities. But in Rathura after delivery honey is given to the newborn babies as the first food. Instead of *shal dudh* honey or other food are harmful for the newborn because those foods destroy the food taste and the newborn does not want to take milk. So, those foods should not be given to the newborn. Many mothers cover their children's body with colloq during cold but it should not be because colloq can increase cold. Dr. Rafiq said that during any problem of newborn babies parents should consult with doctors. He also advises to eat the leaves of a basil plant, lemon having a paper like thin skin (*kagoji lebu*), blue lotus/water lily during cold. After the birth of a newborn, many untrained midwives cut the umbilical cord with bled, bamboo etc. As a result, the baby suffers from infection. So, he said that midwives should cut the umbilical cord with clean bled and clean hands. Before delivery midwives should cut their nails because big nails can create infection during delivery. He also said that all pregnant women, midwives, nurses should know about three things before delivery. There are: (1) clean hands of the midwives; (2) clean equipment to perform delivery; (3) clean place of delivery. He also said that mothers or family members should not cut the hair of the newborn baby after some days of its birth because during cutting its hair the tissue cell can be damaged. So, it is wise to cut the hair after two weeks or 20 days. Sometimes the whole body of the newborn babies becomes black. At that time, villagers make gas from fire and give it to the newborn but it also harmful for the baby.

Delivery period is very much complex. Dr. Rafiq said that delivery should be performed by trained midwives, nurse, and doctor. Because of untrained midwife the death of mother and child can occur. So, everybody should be careful during delivery. Dr. Rafiq said that he always tries to influence the people of Rathura for normal delivery. When the baby in the mother womb usually does not remain in the right position which is called as *Brightc Presentation*, he advises people to consult with a doctor and send the patient to hospital. During the false pain of the patient, the position of the baby in the womb can be understood easily. During delivery when the mouth of the uterus becomes large it is understood that the

baby is coming and it is the high time to perform normal delivery. He also said that after delivery the newborn baby should not be taken bath and it is wise to wipe the body of the newborn by old and soft cloth, because old cloth becomes more soft and comfortable for the baby.

10. Traditional Medicare: *Pir, Fakir and Kabiraj*

The women of Rathura are very much dependent on *pir, fakir* and *kabiraj* for the treatment of their diseases. Many women think that going to doctors is simply a hobby and nothing else. Women of the village believe in ghost very much. According to them, there are many rules and practices which are necessary to know for the protection from the attack of ghost and if someone disobeys those rules he/she is punished by ghosts. Pregnant women die— many women believe that it was because they caught fish during their pregnancy which was totally forbidden.

Monoara Begum (35) has 1 daughter and 1 son. She could not give birth any child since her 7 years of married life. Relatives and family members inspired her husband to remarry. At that time, she went to a *fakir* in Rathura and got a pot of holly water and a *tabiz* from the *fakir*. After that she became pregnant and one after another she got three daughters. After the birth of her three daughters she and her husband wanted to have a son and went again to the *fakir*. She became pregnant again by drinking the holly water from the *fakir*. Before the birth of her first child (girl child) she made a vow (promise to offer milk as sacrifice to Allah on fulfillment of her prayer). Before the birth of her male child she also made a vow (promise to offer a goat). But surprisingly, she did not make the vow come true after the birth of her daughter. On the other hand, her vow made come true which she wished for her male child.

In Rathura, female *pir* Rubia Begum (55) is one of the important respondents of my research. She is the wife of Mannan *pir*. Their home is locally known to the villagers as *pir bari* (the homestead of *pir*). Rubia Begum heals of many diseases, like sterile woman, pregnant woman, children etc. Her way of healing the sterile women is interesting. She gives medicine and the sterile woman is to take the medicine first seven days of menstruation standing up in water.

Rubia even gives medicine to pregnant women in threatened abortion. Threatened abortion is like menstruation during pregnancy but little amount of blood comes through vagina which looks like menstruation. She claims that she can give medicine in that case but when any baby in the womb becomes detached from the fruit, it cannot be repaired by her. In case of child dysentery she also gives treatment. According to her, little children face it because of their

mother. When evil wing touches the breasts of the mothers; children become ill who are dependent on breast feeding. In that case, Rubia selects a branch of egg-plant to cure the mother and child. But that branch should be empty. That empty branch can cure the mother and baby because Rubia utters charme and incantations and blawing (as a remedy). Exorcise evil or cure an illness by uttering charms and incantations is the main aim of her treatment. In the case of dysentery, Rubia has her own healing system. If dysentery attacks anybody, Rubia smashes the leaf of mermordica cherantia and feeds it to the patients. With it the mixing of the juice of sugarcane is better. Massage of mustard oil is necessary for the patient of fever according to Rubia. If the patient is little baby, treatment is different. Mixing up of *dondo kolosh* flower and milk of mother is necessary and that mixture is kept up on the head of the baby and the baby becomes cure. Black cumin, averrhoa carambola (kind of sour fruit) and onion all these should be mixed up with milk of mother and it is kept on the head of the baby who has been caught by cold and it becomes cure. Rubia even claims that she can cure the patients who come back from the doctor with few days in the hands of death and those patients also become cure by her treatment. If anybody becomes afraid of anything like observing any incidence, ghosts, fairy or anything, for that person also Rubia has her own treatment. She makes a *tabiz* (an amulet containing holy words or a charm against evils, usually wore on the arm) with the *aiat* (a verse of holy Quran) of the holy Quran. When this *tabiz* is kept with the person, Rubia believes that this person becomes always safe from any evil thing. But detachment from the *tabiz* is harmful for the person.

11. Conclusion

People's norms, attitudes, behaviors, values, thoughts, food, habits, dress, art, film, festivals, religion, novel, drama all these are included in "culture". So, culture as a concept holds very diverse meanings. People's culture is very much significant to understand the society, the people of the society and their healthcare system. Women's healthcare in Bangladesh particularly rural women's healthcare system is very much affected by the culture of the rural areas. Rural women are very much dependent on their traditional knowledge to solve any physical and even spiritual problems. Here religions also play significant roles because the rural people always try to be religious through their daily activities. Their menstrual period, pregnancy, maternal and child health, old aged all those periods are very much affected by their culture and religion. And absence of scientific knowledge, consciousness and modern Medicare system, the rural women are mostly influenced by traditional culture and practices in their productive healthcare and behavior. Of course, some changes in this respect have

already taken place but the velocity of these changes is low particularly in the remote areas of Bangladesh.

12. Notes & References

1. UNFPA, *State of World Population 2008: Reaching Common Ground: Culture, Gender and Human Rights*, UNFPA, 2008, p. 12.
2. Therese Blanchet, *Meanings and Rituals of Birth in Rural Bangladesh*, UPL, 1992, p. 39.
3. *Ibid.* p. 39.
4. *Ibid.* p. 39.
5. In Rathura I have talked with Shefali (16) who is still feels very much shy about her menstruation even after 5 years of her menstrual experience. She didn't want to talk with me, her *mami* (aunt) described about her first experience of menstruation.
6. *Semai* and *paesh* are two traditional homemade foods in rural Bangladesh.
7. Rural villagers have strong belief in ghost though they can't observe it.
8. It has been observed in the research field.
9. It has been found in the research field.
10. Older women of Rathura are less conscious than younger. Education, media (both print and electronic), healthcare facilities all were absent during their time.
11. Mr. Rafiq is a family planning worker in Rathura though the villagers called him as Dr. because of his 20 years of healthcare service.

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FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTIONS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND NGOS IN BANGLADESH: CASES FROM SOME DISADVANTAGED AREAS

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Abstract:

This paper makes the case for why interventions by Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations are important tools for managing the risk of food security. The use of intervention is advocated to prevent and mitigate the impact of food insecurity related hazards and to cope with the impacts of its implications. Firstly, the paper explores the implications of food insecurity. Learning from the responses of a number of recent cases we plan to map the intervention mechanisms by Local Government Institutions and non-government organization. Secondly, the paper considers what Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations are doing to overcome food insecurity. Finally, recommendations are offered for more effective intervention mechanism.

Key Words:

Food Security, Social Safety Net, Hardcore Poor, Local Government Institutions-NGO Intervention.

1. Introduction

Bangladesh sits one of the largest deltas of the world, covering 147,570 square-kilometers with a population of 148,692 thousand (IFPRI 2011) with a labor force of 76038745 in 2012 (World Bank Report 2012) and in it around 52% of the civilian labor force is engaged in agriculture (Disaster Management Bureau 2010) and 75% of whom live at rural areas (GoB 2007). It has GDP 111,879,121,731\$ in 2011 (IFPRI 2011) and it maintains an economic growth rate of average 6.5%. Bangladesh emerged as an independent country in 1971, even though it is still one of the poorest countries of the world. It has a poverty rate of 31.51% in 2011 (IFPRI 2011). In spite of having a great wealth of natural resources, about half of the population subsists below the “food-based” poverty line (or 2122 kcal/cap/day), and approximately 25% is considered to be Ultra Poor (<1600kcal/cap/day) (ICCO 2008). The government declares that the government has enough cereal as in 2009 there was 2481 calorie supply per capita (IFPRI 2011).

More than 17 percent of the population (160 million) is still extremely poor and high levels of inequality have persisted over the same period. More than 40 million Bangladeshis are undernourished by FAO’s definition – not having access to adequate amount of safe, nutritious food to sustain a healthy and productive life (FAO 2012). Bangladesh is ranked 129th out of 169 countries in the 2010 Human development Index (HDI), and 68th in a list of 79 countries in the 2012 Global Hunger Index (GHI) (IFPRI 2011).

When individuals or groups of people suffer from food insecurity all the time, then they can be said to suffer from chronic food insecurity. In other words, chronic food insecurity is a continuous inadequacy of diet caused by the inability to acquire food. It affects households that persistently lack the ability either to buy or produce enough food. Hence poverty is considered the root cause of chronic food insecurity (Khan 2012).

Food security in Bangladesh is characterized by considerable regional variations. Factors such as vulnerability to natural disasters, distribution and quality of agricultural land, access to education and health facilities, level of infrastructure development, employment opportunities, and dietary and caring practices provide possible explanations for this (WFP 2005).

In recent years (2009-2012) Bangladesh has made significant progress in the areas of economic, social and cultural rights (UPR 2013). There are a number of major factors keeping people trapped in the vicious circle of poverty and thus food insecurity, such as access to

government services, gender, people with disabilities (PWD), and people are affected by leprosy and natural disasters (ICCO 2008).

Furthermore, a 2004 RDRS a national NGO survey in the whole district of Gaibandha revealed that approximately 35% of the total households should be considered Ultra Poor (ICCO 2008). Hence it is near about 180,000 households.

Government is trying to assist the poor through its Local Government Institutions. But in many cases, government's social safety net programs, they hardly succeed. In addition, the poor remain out of the reach of social safety net programs of the government. Therefore, helping the poor and ultra-poor is a critical issue (Smillie 2009). In 2010, the percentage of Bangladeshis living below the poverty line dropped to 31.5 percent, down from 40 percent in 2005 (World Food Program 2012). However, more than 17 percent of the population (160 million) is still extremely poor and high levels of inequality have persisted (International Food Policy Research Institute 2012).

Eradicating extreme poverty is no longer a pipe dream. However, first government organizations must agree on their approach (The Economist 2013). The article from the Economist has given some example, from the Third World developing countries like Nepal. Furthermore, “An alternative vision is possible, of inclusive and sustainable growth that provides livelihoods for all, preserves the environment and is sustainable over time” (EU 2012).

2. Methodology of the Study

We have used a qualitative research to see the causal relationship between dependent and independent variables. Both quantitative and qualitative methods have been employed to assemble primary data from the field. The study has followed a cross sectional-survey approach where both primary and secondary data have been collected. Different government policy documents and relevant data have been used as secondary source. The analysis has given a general overview on the issues required for the study as much depth as possible.

2.1 Data Collection Tools

The issues the quantitative data collection tool has covered the development through activities of the project. To tap quantitative issues, it has covered 30 interviewees (20 beneficiaries and 10 officials) at household level has been selected from project area of a NGO with a semi-

structured data collection tool. The respondents have been selected randomly from among the members of the team of told project.

2.2 Qualitative Data Collection

Besides quantitative issues, qualitative issues have been covered using separate data collection tools, namely, case study and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods. To document qualitative issues a FGD checklist was developed incorporating select indicators from the given data collection tool.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

It was estimated that investigator would be able to collect seven (7) semi-structured interviews in one day. In addition there has been one day to facilitate a FGD. To facilitate analysis extensive notes have been taken by the investigator during each of the interview, discussion, document verification and conversation. Keeping the need of the survey a most suitable program has been used and analysis was undertaken using data analytical computer software.

With the objective to answer the ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions-analysis takes a qualitative (narrative-based) turn with the support of quantitative means. This qualitative quantitative intersection helped to analyze relationships amongst dependent and independent variables such as effectiveness and efficiency of told project beneficiaries and officials. To identify issues related to objectives notes were taken during field sessions.

2.4 Study Area

Food security for rural poor is a very complex issue and there are lacks of initiatives to mitigate the condition of the poor and ensure food security. In the district of Gaibandha a certain number of people remain unemployed for a certain period of the year. The Gaibandha district is located in the North-Western part of Bangladesh. Still it is one of the poorest and most food insecure regions in Bangladesh. On 2,179 sqkm, there is an estimated population of 2.3 million in Gaibandha district (GoB 2007) (ICCO 2008). Lack of advocacy and social mobilization of people in this region are the causes to why people remain poor and lack food security. The district of Gaibandha has different social safety net programs run by the Local Government Institutions and NGOs.

3. Causes of Food Insecurity

Food security for Bangladesh has got the global attention just after the crisis created by the November 15th, 2007 cyclone (Hulme 2007). This cyclone caused horrific suffering, but the country also faced a more dangerous and slowly unfolding crisis during the last caretaker government backed by army. That time there was global food price increase and has pushed the poor people into an enormous pressure however Bangladesh has faced a ‘near famine’ (Hulme 2007).

Food prices in Bangladesh are galloping by the day, and essential commodities, such as rice, wheat flour, cooking oil, onion and lentil are now well beyond the reach of the people. There was no control over the essential products. These have been continuously creating all time high records during the last one year. It was in the perception of the people that international development partners, took over in Bangladesh.

The Table 1 shows the causes of unemployment and sector-wise distribution of the labor force in Bangladesh. If we see the table, there are two sectors in the employment distribution.

Table-1: Employment by Sector (Million)

| | Year | Total | Male | Female |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|------|--------|
| Formal Sector | 2002-2003 | 9.2 | 7.3 | 2 |
| | 2005-2006 | 10.2 | 8.6 | 1.6 |
| | 2010 | 6.8 | 5.5 | 1.3 |
| Informal Sector | 2002-2003 | 35.1 | 27.2 | 7.9 |
| | 2005-2006 | 37.2 | 27.5 | 9.7 |
| | 2010 | 47.3 | 32.4 | 14.9 |

Source: Labor Force Survey, 2010

As we can see from the table, major share of the labor force is depending on the informal sector and which has no grantee of jobs. Those jobs are mostly unsecured and unstable. Sometimes people do suffer for jobs in the informal sector due to the political instability. Due to the political instability the informal sector collapses. From the above table we can see that there is female labor, which are increasingly depending and coming to the informal sector then the male force (Labor Fource Survey 2010).

Indeed, with various reforms, including a crackdown on corruption, it was widely expected that economic development would further pick up, and there would be an accelerated reduction of poverty in Bangladesh. Unfortunately, the records show an unmistakable downturn in the economy with dwindling investments, both internal and external (Hulme 2007).

The poor economic mismanagement under the caretaker government started with indiscriminate raids on the warehouses of large food dealers and importers on the pretext of cracking down on food adulteration. Adulteration of food is certainly a problem in Bangladesh, and action against it was progressing quite impressively during the rule of the last elected government. Many food importers and food merchants stopped importing and distributing food (The New Age 2012).

The slow and complicated policy making and implementation mechanism might hamper the food import from the other countries. When there is indeed a food crisis, the reserve comes in handy in the form of open market operations, modified rationing, test relief, vulnerable group development, etc. all designed to stabilize food prices, on the one hand, and address the lack of access to food by the poorest sections in the society, on the other (Hulme 2007). At the recent time we can see the onion crisis is caused by complicated policy making and implementation mechanism (The Daily Prothom Alo 2013).

Sometimes international food price goes high and sources of food supply are unable to supply food in Bangladesh. India, our biggest supplier of food grains, is unable to supply food. Generally, food from India, obtained mostly through informal channels, has a cushioning effect on food scarcity in Bangladesh (Hulme 2007).

Corruption around the Bangladesh borders and in most cases our subsidized foods are smuggled through our borders and it creates a price hike in the local market. In addition, sometimes there is only one channel to distribute subsidized food and that is not adequate, but there is no public confidence in such distribution system.

Despite the fact that many politicians are generally corrupt, they stand by the people at crisis times with party-organized relief. However, during crisis time in the last cyclone in 2007 there was no politician to help the pro-poor and that also widen the food insecurity in Bangladesh (Hulme 2007).

The natural calamities like flood, cyclone, and any other, high level of subsidy and smuggling of those foods and fertilizer, and low visional decisions of the interim governments has sometimes made our food crises bigger. Likewise, to say these are the main causes of food insecurity in Bangladesh.

4. Government Intervention for Food Security

Since from the very beginning of Bangladesh's history this country has been struggling to stay food secured. Moreover, in different times Bangladesh government has initiated different

social safety net programs to mitigate food insecurity. The focused food insecurity intervention programs are-

Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) VGF program is the vulnerable group feeding program. It provides food to selected households in the months following a disaster when agricultural production has been severely disrupted. It began in the mid-1990s and has been rapidly expanded through supply monetary food aid from the WFP (WFP 2010).

Table-2: Allocation of Money to different program (amount in crore)

| Name of Program | Coverage | | Budget | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|--------|
| | 2011-12 (Revised) | 2012-13 | 2011-12 (Revised) | 2012-13 | Growth |
| OMS | 220.63 | 220.26 | 1758.00 | 1755.00 | -0.17 |
| VGD | 88.33 | 90.00 | 781.02 | 806.84 | 3.31 |
| VGF | 88.00 | 85.00 | 1355.50 | 1355.50 | 0.00 |
| TR | 39.00 | 39.00 | 1074.44 | 1162.70 | 8.21 |
| GR | 80.00 | 80.00 | 271.10 | 274.88 | 1.39 |
| Food Assistance to CHT | 7.14 | 7.14 | 234.33 | 237.09 | 1.18 |
| FFW | 40.00 | 50.00 | 1283.70 | 1439.04 | 12.10 |
| Total | | | 6758.09 | 7027.76 | 3.99 |

Source: Compiled by the Author from the National Budget 2011-12 & 2012-13

Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) VGD is the Vulnerable Group Development programmed. It assists about 480000 households by providing food for the poor since its inauguration.

Food for Works (FFW) FFW is the food for work programmed. It operates in the rural areas and provided about 75,000,000 house of work in 2003-04. FFW programs are run by a number of ministries. Formally, coordination of the program is with the ministry of women's and children's affairs.

They are the main food based social safety net programs taken by the government. Local Government Institutions are the main implementers of these programs taken by the government. There are some other programs such as- Community Nutrition Program;

Maternity Allowance for poor mother; Stipend for primary/ secondary education; subsidy; Old Age allowance scheme and many more. Throughout our study we have seen that these are the mainly cash based and most of the times people used to spend their money on food (Food Security Intervention 2012).

Open Market Sale: Government has opened different outlets to sell the daily necessary to the pro poor people through Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB). However, if we can go back to the last caretaker government we can see that there was Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) to sell those products to the mass people. The name of the outlets was “Najjo Muller Dokan” (Shop of Perfect Price). Though there were some criticisms of those shops after the end of the caretaker government.

The PRSP II ‘Steps towards Change’: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction’ emphasized on strategies to tackle food security in the context of recent rise of prices of food grains in the world markets due to, inter alia, diversion of food grains to bio-fuel production and adverse impact of climate change (PRSP II 2010). Food security strategies embrace both physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet dietary needs of the vulnerable groups.

According to the PRSP II document, to ensure food security for the nation and particularly for the hardcore poor, the government would like to maintain an optimum level of food stock; ensure access to food at an affordable price for the hardcore poor, the disadvantaged groups and persons with disabilities (GoB 2006).

In line with the National Food Policy (2006), the Plan of Action (PoA) of the NFP (2006) was prepared based on the aspects like, food availability; physical and social access to food; economic access to food; nutrition/utilization of food (GoB 2006). The NFP Plan of Action (PoA), 2008 translated the provisions of the National Food Policy, 2006 towards achieving its three core objectives into 26 strategic areas of intervention, priority actions to be undertaken in the short-term, medium-term and long-term over the period 2008-2015. It identified responsible actors (Local Government Institutions and non-government) and suggested a set of policy targets and indicators for monitoring progress. Thus, the PoA is the culmination of a set of iterative consultations and analytical work conducted jointly by the four Thematic Research Team (TRTs), (which involve representatives of 12 ministries/ divisions/ departments) and social access of food, economic access to food and utilization of food for nutrition (GoB 2006) (Gill 2003).

5. NGO Intervention

The Gaibandha district data shows the relevant parts of NGOs doing in the field of food security. In our field visit we observed that different non-governmental organizations were involved as beneficiary's selection to ensure food security. The most interesting part of NGO's intervention is that they were doing it in different forms through community members (Peoples Forum on MDG (PFM) 2005).

Microcredit: It is one of the most significant tools for developing the food security situation in Bangladesh through NGOs. Now most of the NGOs in Bangladesh are providing microcredit to the poor. According to Grammen Bank (GB) in Bangladesh, it has millions of microcredit lender (Younus 2013). By much efforts GB is trying to change the poor people's lives so that they can have three times meal every day.

Cash Transfer: In many cases some NGOs are providing cash to the disadvantaged groups to turn their wheel of luck. A NGO named Unnyan Shojogi Team (UST-Development Partner Team) is doing so in the district Gaibandha. In most cases it tries to find out through this cash how recipients to manage some resources and will be able to secure food for their family (UST 2011).

Resource Transfer: Some NGOs like UST also provide resources like- goat, cow and many more to the people. Hence that they can manage nursing it and can sell it into the market with high prices (UST 2011).

Skill Development: Through skill development people can be self reliant. This is why BRAC and UCEP the two big NGO in Bangladesh are trying to providing skill training to the disadvantaged group Bangladesh. They have different vocational training institutions in different regions in Bangladesh (BRAC 2010).

Scholarships for Disadvantaged: Some NGOs and some corporate banks are trying to provide scholarships to the poor but meritorious students in Bangladesh. While we were doing study in or survey area we have found that most of the cases the students spend their money on the food matter of their family. Recently Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited has spent 10.02 million taka on this purpose (DBBL 2012).

Social Business: A new form of business has been formed by Dr. Mohammad Yunus. It is called social business. Yunus Center has inaugurated has different projects on social business and they are based on food security programs. I have found one project which is based on Shirajgang was about Duck rearing taken by the Yunus Center (Younus 2013).

There are some other forms of food security interventions through NGO. They are- education, logistics support, disaster management, and sustainable development through environment protection, subsidy and many more.

6. Local Government Institutions-NGO Collaboration

The relation between Local Government Institutions and Non-Local Government Institutions vernmental organizations, throughout most part of the history of Bangladesh, has been oppositional and competitive; particularly, with reference to their role in managing development at the grassroots, thus NGOs and Local Government Institutions are considered in a binary relation framework (Islam 2012). In our study we have found, in order to understand the complex web of interlinked relation between Local Government Institutions and NGOs one needs to look at different levels of policy process with different frameworks.

There we have seen both the parties want to take control over the selection of beneficiary of the different intervention programs (Islam 2012). Shalish (petty disputes) is another interest part of the both two organizations in the rural areas. Most of the times, the local government representatives misuse the power of the power (Somewherein 2010). In the case of selection of beneficiaries (for both project and various safety net programs) the Local Government Institutions authorities and the NGO representatives pressurizes the both parties.

The Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations are well concerned about their works and most of the times they works for eradicating poverty and ensure food security (Shamakal 2011). In other cases the Local Government Institutions authorities work together to select projects and working areas (Islam 2012). Last but not the least the Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations work together to raise their funds for the development works and to ensure food security.

In our study we have found that to form Ward Sava the open budget is being managed and conducted by the UST. A national officials and members as if they are part of the Union Parishad and it is their mandate. Sometimes NGOs are helping to disseminate various information e.g. National Immunization Day, VGD/VGF Card and other safety net beneficiary selection meetings. Likewise, to disseminate disaster early warning NGOs are working with Local Government Institutions officials side by side. Furthermore, NGOs are providing training to Local Government Institutions officials and local leaders on various legal and project management issues.

NGOs also receive help from the government organizations to implement their projects. Furthermore, the Local Government Institutions representatives participate in the NGO meetings. In addition, the Local Government Institutions also provides logistics and human resources support to manage the project activities of the NGOs. Finally the local government authority and government institutions give the legitimacy to the non-government institutions. Government authorities and non-government organizations sometimes work together. They are preparing annual plan together to develop their community. Sometimes, NGO members have been co-opted in local government institution's standing committees. Likewise, NGO and government representatives are representing Bangladesh in the world forums. Negotiated reciprocal relation developed through exchange of resources and legitimacy throughout their activities.

BARC projected that in 2015 there will be a surplus of 1.213 m MT of food grains but an overall deficit of all others food items. While the accurate determination of food gap is a challenge, lack of access is largely responsible for over 60 million people going hungry every day. There are approximately 27 food security and social safety net programs in the country but the coverage is inadequate. Most of these programs are also inflexible, unable to absorb (Khan 2012).

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. To discuss food security, three important aspects must be considered e.g. availability of adequate food, stability in food supplies, access to food, and nutrition security (Khan 2012). Bangladesh has made a steady progress in the expansion of food production. But because of the increasing population pressure there has been an extensive use of land to meet the growing demand for food. Despite the growth in food production and its availability, food insecurity is still a major problem mainly because of the lack of purchasing power and thus of access to food, especially for the ultra poor community. A major portion of the rural population is landless, and laborers depend on casual earning for their livelihood. Due to the seasonal variation in agricultural employment and limited employment opportunities in nonfarm sector, millions of people still suffer from chronic and transitory food insecurity.

7. Recommendations

From the above discussion we can see that throughout our study we have found what Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations are doing to eradicate poverty and ensure food security. Most of the project objective and project's vision leads to ensure food security of the pro-poor. In addition, if within the territory like Bangladesh the Local Government Institutions and Non-government organizations do not work together it would be near to impossible to make it happen. There are some disputes and to mitigate these disputes we are recommending some measures. They are-

Government has to bold policies to make it happen. There must-be some Local Government Institutions representatives in the projects of NGOs while they are working in the field of food security. Likewise, government authorities must welcome some NGO representatives in their working areas of food security interventions.

While we were in the field we have seen in the distribution process there is some nepotism. For example- the government organizations are providing benefits to the ruling party members. Most Open Market Sale (OMS) outlets are controlled by the ruling party members. In this case government organizations can take help from the NGOs in selecting beneficiary of the food security programs. There has to be some policy in place.

There is corruption in every sector in distributing resources to the hardcore poor. Government organizations should be more transparent in disbursing the wealth to the poor people. Non-government organization can be a part of ensuring transparency of the government organizations.

Most of the times, the governmental organizations are not accountable to the stakeholders of its activities. It is very tough to make the governmental organizations accountable to the rural stake holders. However, we can develop a mechanism through NGO. We can make the NGO accountable to the rural people (Field Study 2013).

Most of the policies of governmental organizations are not participatory. Through Local Government Institutions and NGO collaboration we can make the policy making process more participatory so that the policy can work for the mass people. Moreover, we need consensus oriented policy to ensure food security for the pro-poor. Otherwise, there is no meaning of all those food security intervention programs.

We have seen some repetition of programs of food security intervention. Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations should share their views and opinions on those

programs. By this method Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations can escape repetition of programs for food security interventions.

There can be “Ombudsmen” for hardcore poor people. He or she will be selected from among the community. This idea can change the thinking area of food security. In addition, we can arrange “Shadow Food Security Tribunal” (OXFAM Bangladesh 2010).

There can be a committee to ensure food security with the help of Local Government Institutions and non-governmental organizations. We can recommend 15 members for each committee. In that committee there will be representatives from Local Government Institutions organizations, non-governmental organizations, politicians, civil society members, representatives from labor group, representatives of poor people, and representative from women workers, representatives from physically disadvantaged people and as required.

8. Conclusion

Bangladesh is a land of rivers with a 70% working class in the agriculture sector. We are suppose be secured in the field of food security through the year. However, there are different causes which are making us insecure in food. In addition, this insecurity is making them vulnerable to the society and environment. Moreover, women are the worst victim of this insecurity.

Local Government Institutions and non-government organizations are working rigorously to ensure food security for the pro-poor. In our study we have found that, in many cases while they are working together they are facing trouble. However, in most of the cases they are very happy to work together.

The level of government – i.e. central and local is very important for the successful output of the project on food security. In many cases the local government is very co-operative with the NGOs. In addition the central government is not that much co-operative with the non-government organizations. We have also found in our study is that local people mostly really on NGO activities.

Resource base of the NGOs – i. e. the (financial and political capital) is also important part of the ensuring food security project. We have seen that which NGOs are financially solvent and have more political capital is getting projects. One can assume that degree of dependence on external funding is the factor on which it depends on the sustainability of the projects. Ideological alignment between NGO and Local Government Institutions is also another factor for ensuring food security in this agro based economy.

Through political process of democratic developmental state can help to ensure smooth and effective relation between Local Government Institutions and NGO and thus contribute fruitfully towards enhanced well being of people.

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Original Article

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AN ANALYSIS ON INDIA-BANGLADESH BORDER KILLING

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Abstract:

Bangladesh and India, geographically two neighboring friendly countries located in the South Asia. The total length of border is about 5138 kilometers with 4427-kilometer land border and 711-kilometer water border. Bangladesh has 4,096-kilometer common border with India. Bangladesh has 32 border districts whilst India has five border provinces. Bangladesh and India both the countries have bilateral issues from the emergence of them. The economic relations between two countries is growing rapidly since the early 1990s. Amongst various issues between these two countries, border issue has come in the front line, because of the smuggling, human trafficking and border killing by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF). In 2013, US based news agency “Global Post” opines that the border line between Bangladesh and India is the worst border line in the world. They are showing uncontrolled behavior in the border line by killing, abducting Bangladeshi people, violating human rights and offence relating to push-in etc. This is an interesting issue for research for finding out the reasons for mass killing of civilian even though the two countries claim to be in friendly relationship at least after creation of Bangladesh.

Key Words:

India, Bangladesh, Border, Killing.

1. Background

Bangladesh and India share a border of 2,429 miles. The Bangladeshi geographical Divisions of Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Sylhet and Chittagong, along with Indian states of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are situated along the border. India has constructed the Indo-Bangladeshi barrier, a 3,406-kilometre (2,116 miles) fence of barbed wire and concrete just under 3 metres high, to prevent trespass and the smuggling of weapons and narcotics. Human rights violations by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) have been going on for a long time along these borders between Bangladesh and India. Instances of BSF shooting, killing, torturing and abducting unarmed Bangladeshi civilians in the border areas violate international norms and treaties. Members of the BSF also illegally enter Bangladesh territory and attack people residing along the border, shoot and kidnap Bangladeshis. India-Bangladesh border is probably the most vulnerable and bloodiest border in the world.

According to the Memorandum of Understanding and related treaties signed between India and Bangladesh, if citizens of the two countries illegally cross the border, it would be considered trespass and as per law those persons should be handed over to the civilian authority. However, we have repeatedly noticed that India has been violating treaties, shooting at anyone seen near the border or anyone trying to cross the border, which is a clear violation of international law and human rights.

Two Bangladeshis were killed along the border in 1972, the very next year after the independence while the first Indian civilian was killed by BGB in 1990 and still it's on going by BSF. In the meanwhile, a battle took place between Bangladesh-India borders at Syhlet district in 2001.

2. Objective of Research

Objective of this research is to find out the reasons for border killing despite being two friendly neighboring countries. This research paper also examines the effect of border killing between two friendly countries relations. Understanding of this may facilitate resolution of these issues without further delay for broader interests of the two countries.

3. Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative data to be used for this research paper and will be collected from secondary sources. The study collects secondary information from books, journal articles, reports and newspapers and primary data of the interview the victim's family and interview of academician. The study will rely heavily on online media to examine the issues

concerned. This paper also used the documents and survey reports published by various Bangladeshi NGOs, who work on the issue. Odhikar and Ain O Shalish Kendra are most prominent of them.

3.1 Primary Data

The primary data of this research paper was collected from 26 respondents. This data was collected over phone and also direct interview. Among those respondents, 16 respondents crossed border illegally & others 9 respondents went legally. 23 respondents are male and 3 are female. The main motive of those respondents are -3 students, 2 farmers, 5 as a tourist, 2 for business, 7 respondents as a migrant worker i.e. construction worker, illegal trade and maid servant, 4 for treatment and 2 are the local people of border area.

3.2 Secondary data

Books, newspaper articles and journal were the source of secondary data in this research. For the theory part, various books and journal articles were used. This paper also used the documents and survey reports published by various Bangladeshi NGOs, who work on the issue. Odhikar and Ain O Shalish Kendra are most prominent of them. These articles have focused on various sides of the issue, many of them showed this issue as a part of the major India-Bangladesh nexus. A major weakness of secondary articles is that there is serious lack of scholarly article on the issue. The articles by Bangladeshi NGOs takes an advocacy perspective, and more focused on the victims experience and the brutality of BSF. While the articles Written by most Indian writers seem to justify the BSF's action.

3.3 Literature Review

Bangladesh-India are the friendly neighboring country in south Asia. India helped Bangladesh to get independence in 1971. Bangladesh was part of British-India up to 1947. Bangladesh got its border which was divided by Sir Cyril Radcliffe in 1947. Bangladesh share its 4,096 km international border with India. Despite being friendly country Indian BSF is killing Bangladeshi civilians brutally along border.

The Guardian news published a report on ***India's shot to kill policy on the Bangladesh border by Brad Adams***. In this report he argues that millions of people live in India illegally. This article also claims that mass people are shoot by BSF, but international media cannot focus their attention. This article also ensure that India always try to impose their right in

border control but they cannot use the right to protect life of people. It is also claims that BSF has used violence unnecessary. But this article are not discuss about the solutions of the problem. An article title responding to border killing written by Md. Ariful Islam. In this article the author claims that India and Bangladesh should cooperate with each other and showing respect for it. This article also focuses on the historical matters and to its complexity and increase border dispute. This reports also clear that people move Bangladesh to India without valid passport, it is one of the most important reasons of boarder killing. But in this report he does not include the role of other states and international community for solving the problem.

Another article titled *stop border killings for better relations* by the Dhaka Tribune published May 20, 2014. It reports that although the Bangladeshi government express their effective role but border killing has continued in Bangladesh-India border. It plays a negative impact on Bangladesh-India relations. The newspaper called to stop these killing, Indian government should take initiative for confidence building for both countries. But this article shows the solution of border killing narrowly. This solution should be considered broadly.

4. Creation of India-Bangladesh Border

At first this border was created when the united Bengal was divided in 1905 then again during the partition of India in 1947 as per the Indian independence act-1947. The international border line between India and Bangladesh were determined by Cyril Radcliffe Boundary Commission. But some disputes arose & it was necessary to solve. To resolve these disputes Indo-Pakistan Boundary Disputes Tribunal was constituted by Lord Mountbatten then governor general. The decision of the tribunal was announced in February 1950. After liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, the Radcliffe line was inherited as border between India and Bangladesh.

5. Theoretical Understanding

The concept of enormous border killing is a very rare incident in the modern time. There are very few of scholarly articles that explains border killing from theoretical perspective. For this reason, we look forward to articles about border militarization. Collecting knowledge from different news reports an analyzing journal articles we concluded that border killing could be described from constructivist perspective. For Wendt, Constructivism is a structural theory of the international system that makes the following core claims: (1) states are the principal units of analysis for international political theory; (2) The key structures in the states system are

inter-subjective rather than material; and (3) state identities and interests are in important part constructed by these social structures. In the light of Constructivism, Bangladesh-India relations are analyzed as conflict between two identities. Strong India in one hand and the state sovereignty on the other. Strong India identity has been forged historically by numerous bilateral contacts between Bangladesh and India. In most of the treaty, India dictates because Bangladesh is decidedly inferior to India in most categories of power.

6. Border Violence

Border violence is one kind of violence that refers to any type of violence occurred especially on the international border between the two countries. There is no universally accepted definition of border violence. It refers to exchange of fire between the two border guarding forces, the detention and torture of civilian from one country by the other country's border guards. On the extreme case, this can refer to shooting and killing by the border guards. The India-Bangladesh border are the best example of border violence in the world. The main causes behind border violence are identified as illegal migration, drug trafficking, smuggling etc.

6.1 Friendly state with violent borders

BSF is continuously shooting, killing, torturing and abducting unarmed Bangladeshi civilians in the border areas violent international norms and treaties. Member of the BSF also illegally enter Bangladesh territory and attack people residing along the border, shoot and kidnap Bangladeshis. India-Bangladesh border is probably the most vulnerable and bloodiest border in the world. According to Article 3, 4and 5 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights-1948, all these are treated as inhuman treatment. According to the memorandum of Understanding and related treaties signed between India and Bangladesh, if citizens of the two countries illegally cross the border, it would be considered Trespass and as per law those persons should be handed over to the civilian authority. Over the last few years, the two countries have signed a series of agreements to ease tension on the border. In March 2011, both parties agreed on the use of non-lethal weapons by the border guards and in Sept. 2011, the neighbors inked a protocol agreement clarifying the demarcation of the land boundary However India has been violating treaties, shooting at anyone seen near the border or anyone to cross the border, which is a clear violation of internationals law and human rights. According to statistics available from different government sources including BGB, since 1971, total 1,206 Bangladeshi civilians and 22 BGB personnel were injured by BSF and

Indian nationals. The year of 1973 was the only year when no Bangladeshi was killed by BSF while the year 2006 was the year of highest border killing, in that year 106 Bangladeshi civilians were killed by BSF. During the period covering 4 decades and a half, BGB also killed over 36 Indian nationals and BSF personnel of which 16 BSF men were killed in 1999. Less than 50 Indian civilians and BSF men were injured by Bangladeshis during this period. Two Bangladeshis were killed along the border in 1972, the very next year after the independence while the first Indian civilian was killed by BGB in 1990. Decade-wise, 103 Bangladesh nationals were killed from 1972 to 1981 by the Indian side. From 1982 to 1991, 179 Bangladeshi civilians and 4 BGB personnel were killed. From 1992 to 2001, 264 Bangladeshi civilians along with 10 BGB men met their death along the border. From 2002 till 2011, the Indians killed 666 civilians and 2 BGB personnel. In the half decade from 2012 to 2016, the border has witnessed killing of 178 Bangladeshis. India's force has killed almost 1,000 Bangladeshis over the past ten years. That implies a shooting every four days. The death toll between two democracies dwarfs the number killed attempting to cross the inner German border during the cold war. The statistics shows that a significant number of Bangladeshis were killed and injured by the Indian civilians along the border. Joint India-Bangladesh Guidelines for Border Authorities 1975 states that illegal border trespass should be dealt with preferably without resorting to fire. BSF was requested to exercise maximum restraint and in the event of compulsive situation to open blank fire or fire at the lower portion of the body. In various meetings, both sides agreed that Killing of unarmed persons is unacceptable and inhuman and emphasized that the legal system prevalent in both the countries does not permit these killings either. Since 1971, 1,391 Bangladeshi civilians and personnel of BGB was killed along the border. According to Odhikar from 2000 to 2016, 1108 Bangladeshi civilian were killed, 1027 civilians were injured, 1323 civilians were abducted from Bangladeshi territory and even 15 girls were also raped by BSF & Indian civilians. Below Table shows details about last 17 years persecution of BSF & Indian civilians.

| Years | Killed | Injured | Abducted | missing | Rape | Looting | Push In | Other | Total |
|-------------|--------|---------|----------|---------|------|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| 2000 | 31 | 17 | 106 | 0 | 2 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 169 |
| 2001 | 84 | 29 | 55 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 179 |
| 2002 | 94 | 42 | 118 | 30 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 296 |
| 2003 | 27 | 41 | 120 | 7 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 205 |
| 2004 | 72 | 30 | 73 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 180 |
| 2005 | 88 | 53 | 78 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 240 |
| 2006 | 155 | 121 | 160 | 32 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 479 |
| 2007 | 118 | 82 | 92 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 198 | 0 | 507 |
| 2008 | 61 | 46 | 81 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 20 | 0 | 211 |
| 2009 | 98 | 77 | 25 | 13 | 11 | 90 | 3 | 0 | 308 |
| 2010 | 74 | 72 | 43 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 197 |
| 2011 | 31 | 62 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 125 |
| 2012 | 38 | 100 | 74 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 16 | 238 |
| 2013 | 29 | 79 | 127 | 0 | 1 | 77 | 41 | 0 | 354 |
| 2014 | 35 | 68 | 99 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 209 |
| 2015 | 44 | 60 | 27 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 132 |
| 2016 | 29 | 36 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| 2017 | 4 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Grant Total | 1108 | 1015 | 1323 | 111 | 15 | 157 | 354 | 33 | 4116 |

7. Findings

7.1 Ineffectiveness role of Border Guard Bangladesh

In some case the Bangladeshi border guard's irresponsibleness are responsible for border violence. Most news reports are available that they simply overlook the crime. While many Bangladeshi people whose are living near border line accused that border guards actually took bribe and help in the smuggling. Sadly, Bangladeshi border officials have also suggested that such killings are acceptable if the victim was engaged in smuggling. Our respondent told us over cell phone that now-a-days they started to took some actions, but in most cases, these were when any Bangladeshi citizen shot dead, and the action was simply to hold a flag meeting with the BSF, other than that they failed to help Bangladeshi citizens. There is indeed corruption inside the force and has reflected the inability on Bangladeshi part to take ineffective actions. This is also part of search for answer about what caused the continuous border killing. The Bangladeshi border guards are supposed to protect its people and stop illegal affairs. However, in reality it has failed to do both. Rather, it has become corrupted and a facilitator of illegal trade, which is causing serious image crisis for Bangladesh. 4.2 Cattle

trade: Cattle trade or smuggling is one of the most important factors in border killing at India-Bangladesh border line. Being a Hindu majority state, India ban cattle especially cow trading & trading cattle is illegal in India. On the other side Bangladesh is a Muslim majority country. During the holy occasion of Eid-ul-Azha the demand of cattle increases in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has \$500 million market for cattle, which cannot be served by the domestic supply alone. Moreover during. Due to that a large number of cattle are slaughtered on the occasion. This demand is fulfilled by the Indian cattle supplies by illegally. Nazrul Islam, a Bangladeshi, was luckier. "At around 3am we decided to cross the Indian border," he said. He was headed to India to smuggle cows back to Bangladesh. "As soon as the BSF saw us, they started firing without warning." Islam was shot in his arm, but survived13-year-old named Abdur Rakib, who broke no law and was killed simply because he was near the fence. Sadly, Bangladeshi border officials have also suggested that such killings are acceptable if the victim was engaged in smuggling. Alauddin Biswas, a border resident, described the killing of his nephew who was suspected of cattle rustling by border guards in March 2010: I went to see the body. It was lying 5 or 6 kilometers away from our house. There were police and politicians. We all saw that the BSF had shot him while he was lying on his back. They had shot him in the forehead and the bullet had pierced through and was lying a few inches inside the ground this makes the cattle trading a profitable job for Indians cattle farmers and Bangladeshi cattle traders. An estimated 1.8 million to 2 million animals are moved across the border each year [9]. Bangladesh is one of India's most important trading partners, with trade totaling\$5.09 billion in 2010-2011[10]. In value terms, the trade has shrunk from approximately ₹9,000 core (\$1.5 billion) to ₹1,600 core (\$250 million) [11]. Many people killed by BSF when farmer went to bring their cows at home. BSF personnel killed people even who don not attempt to cross border. But maximum incident related with cattle trading's Professor Imtiaz of Dhaka University believes that illegal trade like cattle smuggling in the border is the main reason why the killing continues. He thinks India should remove ban on the cattle trade with Bangladesh. He also thinks that not only Bangladeshi citizens are killed but also Indian citizens who are being killed but Indian media do not publish it

7.2 Illegal Arms Trade

Bangladesh for some time has also been a key 'transit route' for trafficking and smuggling of weapons in South Asia. All the points of entry i.e., air, land, and sea routes are used for trafficking and smuggling and the Bangladesh-India land routes are used extensively for the business. According to newspaper reports, 10 rifles, one light machine gun, six magazines, 13

grenades and 1200 rounds of bullets in total are recovered by the security agencies in the year 2012 alone, all of which have been found in the border areas of the country.

7.3 Illegal Immigration

Illegal immigration from Bangladesh to India, which includes both refugees and economic migrants, continues unabated. There is no reliable figure on the exact number of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in India. An analysis of population growth and demographic statistics for Bangladesh and India in the last four censuses of 2011, 2001, 1991, and 1981, however, suggests with reasonable certainty that their number exceeds 15 million. Most of them have settled in states along the border with Bangladesh, and some subsequently moved to other parts of India, including its remote corners. The influx of such a large number of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, particularly in the Border States, has proved to be a huge challenge for India with serious implications for its resources and national security. A large number are engaged in menial jobs in metropolitan cities in different parts of India. It has substantially contributed to changing the demographic pattern in the northeastern states of India, where the locals feel overwhelmed by the Different type of arms are pouring into the country from across the border through different points. Outsiders. This has adversely affected their way of life and led to simmering tension between the two sides. Referring to killings by the Indian Border Security Force in the international border, Gowher said, “Border causalities have gone down. We want a border with zero death. But we have to be mindful about drug and human trafficking.”

7.4 Drug trafficking and terrorism

Indo-Bangla border also safe passage for drug trafficking and terrorism. Some militants group of eastern part of India operate their attack using Bangladeshi territory even sometimes they store their weapons in Bangladesh territory.

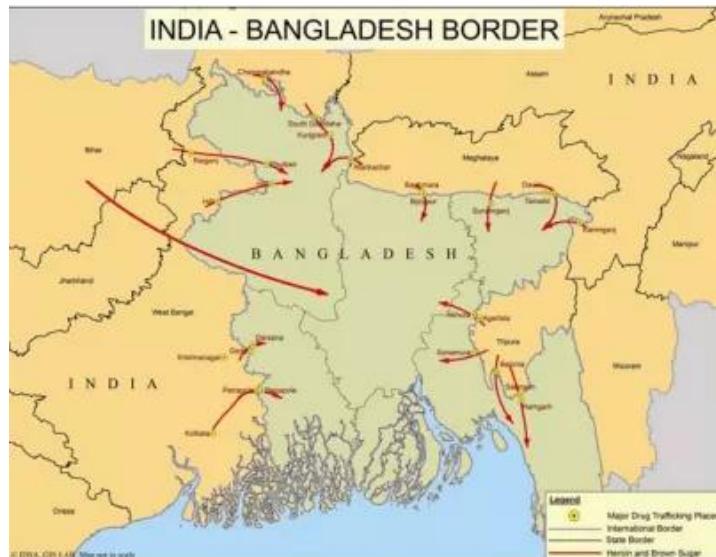


Figure: Indo-Bangla Drug Trafficking Routes In 2014 Bangladesh's elite force, RAB has recovered huge quantity of arms and ammunition hidden under concrete chambers and unused well at various spots in the Satchharhi forest area of Habiganj district, once the headquarters of the almost disseminated banned. The India-Bangladesh border has been susceptible to smuggling of various kinds of drugs ranging from heroin, ganja, brown sugar, cough syrups, etc. Ninety-five per cent of the killings are related to cattle smuggling, said Major General Aziz Ahmed, director general of Border Guard Bangladesh at a press briefing on Friday High demand for cough syrups in Bangladesh, a highly porous border, dense settlement along the border, and strong trans-border ethnic ties contribute towards drug trafficking along the India-Bangladesh border

8. Case Study

Felani Khatun's died on an Indian barbed wire fence In January 7, 2011, the fencing in Kurigram along the India-Bangladesh border acted upon the flesh of 15 years old Felani Khatun Felani, born in India whose parents were undocumented migrants there, was returning to Bangladesh to get married had arranged for her to be married to her Bangladeshi cousin. She was dressed up in traditional bridal wear and wedding jewelry on the morning of her wedding, Nurul paid a pair Rs 3000 (\$70) of cattle smugglers to help him and Felani scale the fence into Bangladesh so they could walk to the village where the groom was waiting. Felani climbed the fence with a bamboo ladder the smugglers provided, but when the barbed wire snagged her blue skirt she panicked and started to scream. The noise alerted Indian border soldiers, who fired their rifles in the direction of the fence's shot her without any warning. A single bullet pierced Felani's chest and she sagged, mortally wounded, on the wire. Nurul

Islam made it over successfully. Nurul Islam, has been relocated with the rest of his family to the Bangladeshi village of Ramkhana, “I wish they would say ‘stop.’ If they would just say ‘stop’ she would have been saved. “She begged for water for a half-hour before finally bleeding to death. Felani’s lifeless body hung on the fence for five hours, it was held in full view of Bangladeshi and Indian farmers living nearby. Eventually, the BSF slung her hands and feet onto a bamboo pole and took her away like a butchered animal. It was over 30 hours before her body was handed over to Bangladeshi authorities and returned to her father and they took her jewelry. A photo, first published in Indian newspaper Anandabazaar, of Felani’s corpse hanging from the fence sparked a huge uproar in Bangladeshi media. At last a special court formed by India’s BSF on 09 September 2013 acquitted BSF constable Amiya Ghosh of the charge of killing 15-year-old Bangladeshi girl Felani at the Cooch Behar frontier. A five-man BSF General Security Forces court headed by DIG (Communication) SP Trivedi, conducted the hearings from August 13 at Sonari BSF camp, near the North Bengal town of Cooch Behar BSF’s 181 Battalion constable Amiya Ghosh, the prime accused in the case, could not be found guilty due to ‘inconclusive and insufficient’ evidence against him, the court viewed. The judgment has made a mockery of justice. It has not only cheated the family of Felani but also the whole nation”-Said most of the international Human Rights Organization & Activities.

9. Impact on Bangladesh-India Bilateral Relations

As India is a surrounding country of Bangladesh from three sides there are many disputes between Bangladesh-India. Bangladesh is locked by India by its western, eastern & northern side. Water is one of the prominent causes & illegal migration is also a cause of dispute between two. The issue of border killing was not a man problem historically, people crossing border since 1947. And also contrary to popular belief, cattle trading is not the only reason people cross border. So, why has border killing increased in past few years? The question can be answered if we look in to Bangladesh-India relations on a whole. The border killing has increased as the bilateral relation between the two countries hut heard roles. On the other hand, border killing has definitely made the deficiency of India Bangladesh relations. Times of India reported quoting PTI In 2016 that a bi-annual direct general-level-talks between BSF and BGB agreed to erect a new fence to secure over 250 villages ahead of the present barbed-wire fence along the International Border (IB) to curb cross-border crime and instil a sense of security among the people living in the area. Killings of unarmed Bangladeshi civilians remain unresolved despite Bangladesh government efforts to improve bilateral issues between

India and Bangladesh. Despite the resolutions related to the border issues being carried out, recurrent killing of unarmed Bangladeshi civilians hinder the bilateral relation between the countries. The two countries share a bilateral trade of US \$6 billion, more than 90 per cent of which is Indian exports to Bangladesh.

10. Analysis

Analyzing both primary & secondary data, this paper able to indicate too many factors that were not previously noted in the conventional research. The results have also shown that BGB do not patrol border regularly and sometime they take bribe from illegal cattle traders, smugglers, and illegal migrants and also from lackey. One the other side the illegal cattle trade on the India-Bangladesh border has been reduced by 75% due to strict security measures taken by law-enforcement officials. The cross-border trafficking of cows has been decreased from 2.2 million a year to 5,00,000 this year (2015). The trade dropped to \$250 million from \$1.5 billion, which means an approximate fall of \$1.2 billion, reports The Hindu. With the sustained campaigns conducted by the Border Security Force (BSF), Indian local police and Bangladesh government's active participation in better border management have ensured the cattle trade restriction. The Bangladeshi animal husbandry lobby is now working as a pressure group against illegal trade from India. Dhaka has also used this opportunity to encourage local farming of cattle for the past two (2015-2016) years. Indian cattle traders from Haryana, Uttar Pradesh (UP), and Rajasthan supplied majority of the cattle across the 4,096km land boundary with Bangladesh. Approximately 100km from Kolkata, Angrail in North 24-Parganas district which was a hotspot for illegal cattle trade had an average traffic of 5,000 cattle a day which has been brought down to 500 now. Hindu cattle traders would drive the cattle across the Ichhamati River, which divides the two countries at Angrail. For these traders their religious identity is an advantage for the trade due to the prohibition of cow slaughter in Hinduism. BSF Inspector General (IG) of South Bengal PSR Anjaneyulu said increased highway surveillance has made their job easy. BSF has strengthened the surveillance and with the emergence of confidence-building measures with the local community, the IG added.

Besides, smugglers being killed in BSF firing initiated a rage among human rights bodies on both sides of the border making the cattle trade a major concern in the border districts. Both the claims of the Bangladeshi official and BSF's statement are partially correct. There are aspects of the issue that simply cannot be explained by the newspaper reports; rather there are realities that are far more vivid than imaginable from outside. The reason that compels Bangladeshi people to visit to India is not one-dimensional as it looks from the newspaper

articles. The main reasons of visiting India, is for cow trade, smuggle i.e. arms, saris, cosmetics, gold, drug and also for settling there permanently. This result has also confirmed that there are indeed incidents of illegal trade and smuggling going in the border areas and the people from bordering villages are who are involved in them.

11. Recommendations

The ‘guilty will be punished’ and that New Delhi would pursue a ‘zero tolerance’ policy in respect of killing of any unarmed civilians on the border. What’s worse, there have been attempts by the BSF top brass to justify such killings on one tenuous ground or the other. For example, at the end of the director general-level meeting of the border guards of the two countries in Dhaka in September 2010, the BSF chief claimed that ‘most of them [people killed by the BSF] are Indian criminals and the rest are Bangladeshi criminals.’ Such a claim not only amounted to calling the Bangladesh government, which has persistently called for New Delhi’s effective interventions to prevent killings of ‘civilians’, a liar but tended to presuppose that the BSF had the right to play the role prosecutors, jurors and executioners all rolled into one.

Meanwhile, the Indian government is expected to make sure that no more killings of Bangladeshis by its border guards take place on the border. This promise should be in practice. Investigate all allegations reported by different human rights organizations and publish on newspaper through an independent boy. Bangladesh can seek support of UN to mitigate border killing by BSF along Bangladesh border line. Those who fail to cooperate with UN should face appropriate sanctions such as suspension or dismissal. Indian Police must register complaints against the BSF in cases of abuses against Bangladeshi nationals. It is the responsibility of the BSF internal courts to deal with abuses by the BSF that the Indian police should not refuse on the grounds. BSF must adhere to guidelines that are down by the National Human Rights Commission to investigate all cases of deaths during security operations. Finally establishing an independent and impartial commission of inquiry into serious violations of international human rights law is a must need.

12. Conclusion

Bangladesh and India are the countries of South Asia and both of them play crucial role in the economic and cultural aspects of the region. India is one of the world largest economic and democratic powers. Bangladesh is India’s one of the friendly alliances in south Asia. But all in aspect India don not maintain friendly behavior such in the questions of border killing

along with Bangladesh border. India is routinely shooting poor and unarmed villagers is not desired in the modern era of democracy and human rights. The Government of Bangladesh should strongly establish neighbor's rights with India under the patronization of international community. It is important to keep in mind for all that bilateral and regional multilateral cooperation can stop such inhuman killing by BSF. In fact, no law could have solution unless the people of both countries are morally and ethically found upright.

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POPULIST RESURGENCE IN SOUTH ASIA: AN EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

Envisioning of populism as the charismatic mobilization of mass people in pursuit of political power, this Element examines that populists burgeon where ties between voters and either bureaucratic or clientelistic parties do not exist or have decayed. This is because populists' ability to mobilize electoral support directly is made much more likely by voters not being deeply embedded in existing party networks. This model is used to explain the pervasiveness of populism across the major states in South Asia: Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Srilanka. It excerpts lessons from these South Asian cases for the study of populism.

Key Words:

Populism, Clientelism, Political Parties, Democracy

1. Introduction

It has become common prudence that populism is on the mount across the West: from the American Tea Party to the Front National in France, from Umberto Bossi's Lega Nord and Beppe Grillo's Five Star Movement in Italy to new anti-Islamic and anti-immigration parties which actually character liberal-sounding concepts such as 'freedom' and 'progress' in their names. Tony Blair spends his days functioning the Institute for Global Change (IGC), an organisation founded, per its website, "to push back against the destructive approach of populism". In its 2018 world report, Human Rights Watch reprimanded democracies of the world against "capitulation" to the "populist challenge".

No wonder, then, that the Bulgarian political scientist Ivan Krastev or Princeton's professor Jan-Werner Mueller have asserted our time an 'Age of Populism'. Populist leaders are presently in power in several of the world's most populous states and are on the brink of it in many others. South Asia has been no exception to this general trend: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and even Srilanka have all seen populists come to power in recent years. In India, a populist Prime Minister targeted attacks against religious minorities are on the rise and has legitimized India's more militant groups. Paul Richard Brass, a professor emeritus of political science at the University of Washington, has called the Bajrang Dal "a somewhat pathetic but nevertheless dangerous version of the Nazi S.A."—or the Brownshirts, the Nazi Party's first paramilitary organization.

Yet in spite of the pervasiveness of populism in contemporary South Asia's democracies, the region remains forgotten in the comparative study of populism. It can be featured the recurrent prominence of populism through different phases of South Asian political history since the late 19th century, we can see, its role in mobilizing emergent groups, its concurrence with diverse ideologies and different forms of movement and party organization, the varied effect of populist political forces for democracy, and the different policies constructed by populist discourses and mobilization. In India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh local autonomy was built into the very nature of the colonial state. Party institutionalization has been notably weak and vote buying became prevalent across the region, even in its most durable democracy, the India.

Despite the varied contexts of emergence, modes of expression, patterns of mobilization, and the consequences of political forces that are considered populist, Subramanian observes populism to be a useful analytical category to understand the dynamics of many movements and parties. (Subramanian 1999; Subramanian 2007).

My goals in this paper are distinctly comparative: I draw on the insights of populism studies elsewhere in the world to set out a conceptualization of populism that travels to South Asia. The meaning of populism continues to be much disputed (e.g., Moffitt 2016). A central figure of the debate is whether populism should be understood primarily as a political ideology or as a type of political strategy. There is, of course, no true definition of populism any more than there is a true definition of democracy or justice. What we need therefore is a definition of populism that is useful.

The first section of this paper develops what I call the organizational approach (see Section 2). This approach has its origins in the writings of German sociologist, Max Weber (1978), and has historically been the prevalent way of understanding populism outside Western Europe (Di Tella 1965, Germani 1978, Mouzelis 1985, van Niekerk 1974, Weyland 2001). I define populism in this sense as the charismatic mobilization of mass people in pursuit of political power. Section two explains the organizational conceptualization of populism. Section three discusses existing conceptions for the prevalence of populism in the region and adds flesh to the theoretical framework introduced in Section one. Section four outlines the historical political, economic, and institutional basis for the weakness of national parties in the South Asian region and Section five details how populists have taken advantage of this to appeal directly to voters in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. Section six concludes with some thoughts on what we can learn from these cases on the connection between populism and democracy. The idea that populism is a form of charismatic leadership of the masses implies that populist movements have two chief features that set them apart from bureaucratic or clientelistic parties. First, authority within a populist movement or organization is arbitrary and concentrated in the person of the leader. Second, and relatedly, populism is about the mobilization of the masses toward political ends (Mouzelis 1985). But populist mobilization in a way that differentiates populist parties from either bureaucratic or clientelistic ones (Kenny 2017).

The main contribution of this Element is to see why populists in this organizational sense are successful in South Asia. For reasons explained further in Section three, while it draws on evidences, it focuses on explaining the structural factors that make populist support more feasibly at the aggregate rather than individual level. Existing macro-level theories, either developed out of particular South Asian case studies or from the broader Latin American and European experiences, point to a variety of causes of populist success including economic distress, whether due to long-term shifts in the economy (Autor, Dorn et al. 2016, Roberts 2014b) or short-term crises (Weyland 2006), and demographic shocks, especially due to

immigration (Evans and Chzhen 2013, Kaufmann 2017, Mudde 1999, Rydgren 2008). None of these interpretation works particularly well as a general model of populist success that travels across time and space in South Asia.

The main theoretical assertion of this Element is that populist mobilization thrives where nexus between voters and either bureaucratic or clientelistic parties do not survive or have declined. This explains that they employ frequent public appearances, mass rallies, the traditional mass media, and, increasingly, social media in connecting with voters. South Asia thus provides fertile territory for populist mobilization. For this reason, populism has been historically far more victorious in South Asia and Latin America than in Western Europe, at least until recent years.

Political theorists have long claimed that populists paradoxically pose a threat to the very democratic institutions that allow them to come to power. In seeking to develop and maintain a direct relationship to supporters, populists are inherently flown to erode the intermediary institutions that might get in the way (Urbinati 2015); this includes parties, courts, legislatures, the press, the academy, or any other agency that purports to threaten the populist's singular legitimacy. A growing body of empirical research now demonstrates that populists erode democracy across most measurable dimensions (Allred, Hawkins et al. 2015, Houle and Kenny 2018, Huber and Schimpf 2016, Kenny 2017: ch. 2, Kenny 2018, Ruth 2018). Liberal democracy seems to work only when coherent bureaucratic political parties exist to manage it.

2. Operational conception of Populism

Populism is a term used with such frequency in both academic and non-academic arena that its meaning can be hard to fix. By almost any measure, populists are a diverse group with seemingly few shared commitments or characteristics. Populism literally refers to "a practice, system, or doctrine of the people." How exactly this people-centric form of politics be envisioned of and operationalised remains an open question.

Populist movements or parties can be marked from both bureaucratic and clientelistic organizations based on how they are structured internally and how they mobilize support externally (Kenny 2017). In this sense, populism can be inferred as the charismatic mobilization of mass people in pursuit of political power. The exercise of authority within bureaucratic parties is bound by rules and procedures, while externally they are founded on stable institutionalized relationships with supporters (Panebianco 1988, Sartori 1976). Equally, in patrimonial organizations, authority is both traditional and transactional. Leadership is often inherited and privileges are distributed to supporters in return for their

loyalty. Externally, such patronage-based parties engage in a quid pro quo with supporters in which votes are exchanged for particularistic material benefits (Eisenstadt and Roniger 1980, Hicken 2011, Scott 1972, Stokes, Dunning et al. 2013). Charismatic authority is instead characterized by the concentration of arbitrary control in the person of a popularly acclaimed leader.

For Weber (1978), a leader is charismatic only to the extent that his followers treat him as such. As he put it, “It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma” (242). To the extent that charismatic leadership is possible in more conspiratorial form – think of Hitler’s Nazi Party of the early 1920s or Lenin’s Bolshevik faction prior to the First World War – we have to draw a further disparity between mere charismatic leadership and populism. A large mass of the people is critical to populism in a way that is distinct from charismatic leadership per se. Hence populism refers to the charismatic mobilization of a mass movement.

Populists seek to connect directly with the masses who become their supporters. Supporters are mobilized less by clientelistic ties or membership in aligned parties or civil society organizations than they are by a direct affinity for the leader (Weyland 2001: 14, Wiles 1969: 167). Populism is not simply a synonym for presidential mobilization in weak party systems or for independent campaigning more generally. Populists lead mass movements in the sense that followers develop an affinity for a collective project (itself, however, ill-defined) that is identified with a leader (Hoffer 1951).

Charismatic leaders do sometimes depend on material inducements and party and civil society organizations to mobilize voters. While the targets of populist mobilization are likely to be unattached or swing voters, this is not a defining feature of populism, but a tendency that varies from one context to another in its intensity.

3.The Causes of Populism in South Asia

Although individual cases of populist success in South Asia have been discussed in various books and articles, there have been few efforts to develop a more general model of populist success in the South Asian region. Most of the general theories of populist success come from the differing experiences of Western Europe and Latin America. In this section, I first review these various theories before presenting a populist trend in South Asia.

3.1. Analysing Populism under theoretical framework

Until lately, the predominant approach to understanding populism has been to focus on the type(s) of macro-level social and economic conditions in which populists supposedly develop. Indeed, this was the approach of the earliest systematic academic treatment of the subject (Ionescu and Gellner 1969) and is the approach followed in this Element. This general approach has taken two broad forms. The first has been to look toward long-term macro-structural developments such as economic modernization and political status quo.

A number of authors have argued that populists, especially in Western Europe, have gained at the expense of non-populist parties because the latter have moved away from the interests of their supporters. In particular, in response to the structural economic crisis of the 1970s, social democratic parties are alleged to have abandoned their traditional support for full employment and the welfare state, thus losing the backing of their traditional working-class supporters. This in turn has led to a rise of a distinct brand of populism that combines hostility toward immigrants with a return to the post-war welfare state, or a kind of welfare chauvinism (Bornschier 2010, Judis 2016, Mouffe 2005). Analogously, scholars have argued that the embrace of neoliberalism in Latin America broke the long-standing ideological linkages between parties, especially labour parties, and voters (Lupu 2016, Roberts 2014a). Although this model of ideological party-system dealignment makes some sense for Western Europe, where partisan political cleavages along economic policy were relatively clear and stable (Bornschier 2010), this logic is problematic in most South Asian (or Latin American) cases, where mainstream parties typically have been indistinguishable in policy terms. That is, ideological dealignment theory can arguably work where prior ideological alignments are themselves clear. However, even in such circumstances, this approach probably overstates the ideological congruence between parties and voters (Kinder and Kalmoe 2017).

However, in a slightly different formulation, the dealignment theory provides some useful insights. Dealignment in this different sense is more of a social than an ideological process. Some of the original models of populist success in Latin America looked to deep structural changes in society and the economy to explain the decline of establishment parties and the emergence of populist alternatives. These processes of modernization and urbanization disrupted the networks of patronage-based parties and made the success of populist mobilizers such as Juan Perón in Argentina more likely (Collier and Collier 2002). We can see the element of this dynamic playing out across contemporary developing Asia (Berenschot 2010, Swamy 2013).

A number of authors have argued – specifically with reference to South Asia – that it is the structural economic exclusion of the urban proletariat and other groups that has given rise to populist mobilization. The rise of so-called Islamic populist movements and offers some more clarity. Islamic movements have sought to unite a sociologically diverse coalition of “upwardly mobile members of the middle class, excluded members of entrepreneurial groups and downtrodden members of the lumpen proletariat,” in opposition to the ruling secular elite. Yet not all populists operate in this way. Indeed, evidence from the West Bengal of India indicates that Mamata’s support comes not just from the “left behind” or struggling middle classes but also from the well to do.

The diversity of populist's support bases makes any attempt to explain the success of populist movements as a direct result of underlying class cleavages problematic. A possible resolution to this problem turns on the role of identity. Perhaps one of the few consistent characteristics of populists is that they claim – explicitly or implicitly – to represent the people (Canovan 1999, Mudde 2004). The people might be conceived of in nationalist, religious, ethnic, or other terms. Populist mobilization in these cases might be interpreted as a response to challenges to a political community defined in terms of a particular identity. In Europe, this has often manifested itself as the opposition of “native” populations against non-European (especially Muslim) immigrants; in the United States, resurgent white nationalist sentiment opposes both Latino immigrants and African Americans; in South Asia, such identity-based mobilization has typically been drawn along the lines of domestic majority-minority ethno-religious cleavages. In India, for example, the ruling BJP, a Hindu nationalist party that has many populist characteristics, has struggled in recent state elections. The BJP's violent, Hindu nationalist rhetoric has sparked a vigilante campaign largely targeting minorities, while the party has overseen growing attacks on the press and other classic populist tactics. Another approach to this question has been to focus on populism as a set of individual attitudes that cuts across typical economic interests and sociocultural identities. Taking the view that populists offer a distinctive ideological platform that is pro-people, anti-elite, and Manichean, scholars have posited that populist parties are successful because they tap into widely held “populist” sentiments (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser 2018). There is an empirical relationship between populist attitudes and support for populists. One of the best-developed areas of research on populism focuses on the economy. The theory runs that voters abandon established parties for populist alternatives following acute economic crises. Under such conditions, populist opposition to existing institutional arrangements attains widespread appeal.

3.2. Fragmented party system and populist strength

What is missing in these various theories is a consistent model of why non populist parties have only weak and contingent ties to voters and why populism is the specific response to that weakness. The underlying configurations of party–voter linkage make a polity more or less vulnerable to populist mobilization. At sometimes and places these linkages are stable while at others they are not. In South Asia, bureaucratic party–voter linkages have been relatively uncommon, with only Communist and some identity-based parties adopting this type of institutional linkage with their supporters. Thus, models that focus on ideological party system dealignment have limited applicability to the region. The main forms of linkage in South Asia have been clientelistic and authoritarian, with populist linkages emerging as a frequent challenger to them.

There have been many ups and downs, grappled with multiple tensions, and suffered from serious shortcomings in the course of the evolution of parties in South Asia. While parties have operated under democracy in some countries and under authoritarian regimes at other times. The inability of the party leaders to advance norms for democratic competition to contest and win elections and to create a capacity for the party to function as a ruling party as well as an opposition party had a lasting effect on the party system in South Asia. Distrust and intolerance of the opposition parties as well as intimidation and political vendettas have become regular features of party politics in the region. This has been a major source of confrontationist attitudes in the party structure in some countries, especially in the initial decades after independence. India and Bangladesh have undergone this experience in their own ways.

However, the mere fact that non-populist national parties have weak connections with voters creates the opportunity for populist outflanking does not guarantee that it will occur or that it will be successful. To understand why populism is so often a successful strategy in these cases, we need to consider the difficulty faced by alternatives and the particular resources and strategies that populists by definition can employ.

First, the specific configuration of patronage-based party systems makes populist mobilization a much more likely outcome than the emergence of a bureaucratic party rival. Because in patronage democracies political ties take the form of vertically integrated patron-client factions, movements based on broad-based national organizations (e.g., Labor unions) are more difficult (though of course not impossible) to form (Kuo 2018, Ziblatt 2017). Second, populists' use of public appearances, mass rallies, the traditional mass media, and increasingly social media makes for a relatively low cost means of connecting with masses of

voters. Of course, all political parties use such tactics to a degree. Third, contrary to the idea that the supporters of populists are not motivated by policy while the supporters of bureaucratic parties are, this framework posits that policy appeals may be highly relevant to populist voters. Because populists are not institutionally tied to clear interest groups, it is often the case that their messaging is vague on policy specifics, especially on the economy. In sum, populism thrives as an efficient (low cost) form of political mobilization where bureaucratic and centralized clientelistic party building is inhibited. The only credible alternatives in such circumstances are looser and contingent patronage-based networks or coalitions, or, as has frequently happened, authoritarianism. While this model travels well to South Asia, a number of questions arise: What explains the origins of these fragmented patronage-based political structures? If broker autonomy is detrimental to the formation of strong national parties, why have central political elites not prevented it, especially given the long periods of authoritarian rule in each of these cases that might have allowed for such top-down institutional engineering?

These questions force us to look to the deeper political economic roots of party systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Trivially, we can say that political systems in democracies should reflect the balance of social, economic, and political power in a society (Boix 1999, Cusack, Iversen et al. 2007). For example, if landlords and other elites dependent on the primary sector largely control the economy, the justice system, and the prevailing social order, we would expect any political party system to be a reflection of their interests. At the same time, a more industrialized economy should go hand-in-hand with greater opportunities for labor to organize and gain political representation (Rueschemeyer, Huber et al. 1992); The more industrialized an economy, the more likely party voter linkages are to be bureaucratic (Kuo 2018, Stokes, Dunning et al. 2013: ch. 8). The composition of a country's political economy thus has a significant impact on the system of party–voter linkages and the likelihood of populist mobilization being successful.

4.Fragmented Parties and Inter-party competition

This section examines the history of party development in South Asia with a focus on the Pakistan, India, and Srilanka, explaining why, with some exceptions, democratic parties have been so fragmented across the region.

The party systems in the countries of the region have been in a state of flux. Since the countries began their journey towards democracy in the 1950s, several older parties in the region have been eclipsed or have slowly faded out, while others have undergone substantial

changes in their organizational structures, policies and programmes, electoral support bases, geographical spread and functioning. They combine with other parties to forge alliances or adjust to the changing international economic and political environment. Parties everywhere have been involved in intense political competition. There has been a proliferation of parties, more so in India and Nepal. Parties have been splitting, coming together and splitting again in India, Pakistan and Nepal. In the last two decades, the party domain in the region has become very crowded with the presence of numerous parties. Several new parties have emerged based on nationalistic, regional, religious, caste and ethnic identities.

According to the Department of Elections official website, there are 53 parties in Sri Lanka. About 10 (ten) Tamil parties and other 05 (five) parties that claim to represent Muslims. Jatika Hela Urumaya (JHU) is the party of Buddhist monks. Nine registered parties and two hundred one independent groups participated in the parliamentary elections in July 2015. Many think that the introduction of PR in Sri Lanka has led to the growth of small parties—mostly ethnic-based, religious or extremist. Since the major parties are forced to forge alliances with small parties to form governments, this has reinforced the ethnic divisions on party lines and resulting to an exacerbation of social tensions.

In July 2018, Pakistanis voted was the third consecutive transfer of power from one civilian government to another in the country's 71-year history. However, the months leading up to the elections demonstrated the power of the military, and its ability to influence election results and control sections of the media. As Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Imran Khan seemed poised for a win, opposition parties cried foul, stating that the election was stolen from them. Lack of trust among the parties is on the pick in Pakistan. In the case of many Pakistani parties the distinguishing line between a faction and a party is very thin. Even Bangladesh, the least pluralist nation in the region, has witnessed an increase in the number of parties. While the number of political parties in Bangladesh can be estimated at over 100, only 39 are officially registered. The Islamic parties have much influence due to country's one particular religion majority.

India has also witnessed the gradual emergence of new parties in recent years. Several national and regional parties took shape as the Janata Party fell apart in early 1980s. The old Jan Sangh reappeared as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1980. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) grew in strength as the party of the dalits. A number of new regional parties have emerged and captured power in the states. In India, the party splits are too many to reckon. The Janata Party and the later the Janata Dal have split so many times that all those parties that sprang up from the same source are called the Janata Parivar (family). Even the parties

that have grown on regional and caste identities have split several times. For example, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), a state party in Andhra Pradesh, has split four or five times. There are about four groups of the Kerala Congress, which claims to represent the interests of the Christians. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has split several times, giving rise to several other bigger and smaller parties. The Akail Dal in Punjab has split several times, and at any point in time many groups claiming the status of the original Akail Dal can be found (Rizvi 2015).

It appears that parties tend to fragment more easily where political elites and the electorate do not find shifting of loyalties for the sake of power particularly objectionable. Fragmentation of parties could also be due to the possibilities that open up in the times of hung parliaments, alliances and unstable governments. The splits could also be attributed to the inability of the major parties to recognize diversities—social, regional, linguistic, religious, cultural and ethnic—and accommodate representatives of these diverse groups in positions of power. Political incorporation in South Asia has largely taken the form of patron-client mobilization (Scott 1972). Due to their local political influence, brokers inhibited the formation of coherent conservative and social democratic parties.

The pattern of inter-party competition is structured by the political context in which parties function. We have noted in the previous section that parties in Pakistan and Bangladesh had to muddle through the muddy waters of politics and military control for long periods. Parties floated or supported by the military had swept elections in both these countries. The First Past The Post (FPTP) system had contributed to huge majorities in legislatures disproportional to the vote percentages in India and Sri Lanka (prior to the introduction of PR in the latter). In addition to this, the splits in the established parties and the founding of new parties had affected inter-party competition in the countries.

It is now a conventional scenario in Bangladesh is political supper race between Bangladesh's two major political parties, the AL and the BNP; and, secondly, the conflict over the trial of Islamist war criminals and contestations over the question of whether political Islam should be granted a legal space in the country's democratic system. Political deadlock and violent conflict between the AL and the BNP have characterised national elections since the country's return to democratic rule in 1990 resulting democratic institutions are weak and lack independence. machines. Pakistan's political parties have invariably been fiefdoms of the top leaders who run them like oligarchic political machines. Most parties are identified by their leader and, if you exclude that leader, the party becomes a ship without a rudder.

5. Politics of Religion and Establishing (Patronage) Democracy in South Asia

The political and economic legacies of colonialism had a significant impact on party building in South Asia. However, subsequent socioeconomic change, institutional innovation, and external shocks, whether political (e.g., military) or economic, also impacted on party development in the region.

Given India's excessive divisions along caste, class, regional, and religious lines, the stability of the country's democracy is puzzling. Piliavsky's contributors, most of whom are anthropologists, offer fresh insights into the ways in which religious feasts, patronage handouts, and petty bureaucratic favors both support and undermine the state. Their essays, of varying quality, push back against the conventional interpretation of patronage as a merely instrumental form of exchange. But generosity requires resources, as the patron turns votes into power and power into patronage. The public admires such behaviour when it appears to be a form of benevolence and considers patronage democratic when it appears to support accountability- but revile it as corrupt when it's instrumental purposes emerge too starkly.

Another source of solidarity between politicians and their publics is the Indian practice of coming together in common spaces for worshiping. Chhibber examines survey data to show that Indians are deeply religious, with strong majorities reporting that they engage frequently in collective prayers, rituals, and festivals. Although the four major religious communities—Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian—do not mix much, each group's worship practices bring together people from different castes and classes.

As said earlier, South Asian countries are polyethnic and have substantial minority population. Secularism in the region has taken a variety of trajectory. For example, in order to safeguard minorities and integrate them Indian states recognised religious minorities in the Constitution and promises to intervene in religious matters to promote their culture. The principles such as sarva dharma sambhav (equal treatment to all religions) and dharmanirpekshta (non-partisan) are the facets that unfold secularism and religious pluralism in India. Article 44 of the Constitution of India calls for the creation of Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

The pressures from elites, unstable governments and military coups in Pakistan have made the state adopt Islam as state religion. Similar is the case with Bangladesh. In Sri Lanka, like India, the majority groups regularly pressurised the state to announce 'their religion' (read Buddhism) as state religion. Similarly, use of religion for political means was always a state of affair, though it did not surface till the 1980s. Globally, it is related to phenomenon of growing nexus between religion and politics. Internally, it is related to changing political

economy, practices of secularism and various forms of marginalities which contest for greater share in political power and legitimisation of authority.

In the most democratic countries, the authority of the church was challenged and alternatives were developed. Such was not the case in South Asia. South Asian region, unlike the West, neither had a central religious authority nor a unified religious community that binds discrete communities around a single sacred scripture or single religious belief. The religious communities were divided around language and region. A unified Islam or Hindu in Indian subcontinent was absent (Hasan 1997 and Nandy 1998). In India, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) started mobilising Hindus around issues of Hindu rashtra (Nation). The case in Pakistan is more severe. Though created alongside India, the initial leadership did not succeed in creating a secular nation (Ahmed 2011). ‘there are a number of smaller parties which take Islam as their principle political creed’ (Riaz 2011: 15). It is evident from the above discussion that it is highly untenable to keep religion away from politics in South Asia. Nandy (1998) and Madan (1998) opined that secularism has been forced upon in a religious society.

6.Populism and Democracy

Everyone seems to agree that democracy is under attack. We’ve seen this before. Bolsonaro’s rise to power is only the latest chapter in a global resurgence of right-wing, illiberal populism. Far-right populist parties across Europe have seen a surge in public approval, making parliamentary gains in 15 of the 27 EU member countries over the past two election cycles. Far-right parties like in Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Estonia made the most significant gains winning 5 percent more in vote shares.

The antagonism between populism and democracy is no coincidence and it is not unique to South Asia. Rather, in seeking to establish and maintain a direct relationship to supporters, populists are inherently driven to erode the intermediary institutions that might get in the way (Urbinati 2015); this includes parties, courts, legislatures, the press, the academy, or any other agency that purports to challenge the populist’s singular legitimacy. Moreover, the lack of formal or informal internal party constraints on populist leaders further frees them from adhering to democratic rules of the game (Kenny 2018). however, certain populist forces limited redistribution to lower strata and increased conflicts between middle castes and low castes. Indeed, a growing body of empirical research now demonstrates that populists erode democracy across most measurable dimensions (Allred, Hawkins et al. 2015, Houle and Kenny 2018, Huber and Schimpf 2016 , Kenny 2017: ch. 2, Kenny 2018)

Populist rule in South Asian region can certainly tend toward the authoritarian. Although Inder Kumar Gujral and Manmohan Singh have not directly eroded democracy to the same extent as Atal Bihari Vajpayee or Narendra Modi, it would be premature to suggest that there is something fundamentally different about the circumstances that give rise to these more “moderate” cases of populist rule. What the South Asian cases reveal is a persistent three-way tension between patronage-based democracy, populism, and military-authoritarian centralism. Yet neither Modi nor Sirisena made much attempt to move their parties in a more bureaucratic direction. Rather their populist strategies provide a strong signal that political power in India and as well in Sri Lanka does not depend on party building.

7. Ray of Future Hope

Several South Asian countries, however, suffer from the opposite problem: rather than elected politicians interfering with independent institutions, autonomous militaries can interfere in civilian politics. Many problems play a vital role in South Asian politics such as ethnic and religious majoritarianism, attacks on independent institutions, ethnicity, nationalism, regionalism, class, and patriarchy—do not outweigh the many advantages of liberal democracy. But South Asia’s experience shows that progress and backsliding can be difficult to distinguish.

The beginning of the 21st century would provide some ray of hope for democracy in South Asia (Sen, 1999: 3-17). However, similar to the global trend, there is no “third reverse wave” of democracy (Fukuyama, 1992: 42-43) here. Again, distrust in authority is immense in this region, but at the same time, democracy has become an automatic choice among the masses. Like other parts of the world, democracy “has become like a ‘default’ setting in a computer program” (Diamond, 2015: 141-155). This enormous support is the main hope for South Asian democracy.

An altogether different direction of state affairs is being seen in India under the umbrella of BJP with the components of RSS, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, it may be expected that India would overcome its difficulty of establishing democracy at least in the formal sense of the term. The elections in Bangladesh, both 2014s and 2018s election, frustrated the nation and earned negative reputation for the country in international arena. But a careful look at the political sphere shows that they accept parliamentary democracy as a form of government and market economy as the basis of development and also started to realize the importance of fulfilling the prerequisites for a meaningful liberal democracy. In case of Pakistani politics which attained one more mentionable success in March 2013 when the National Assembly,

the lower house of the Parliament, completed a full term for the first time and now Imran Khan is trying to overcome democratic lacking. The October crisis in Srilanka, when the country's president, Maithripala Sirisena, tried to oust the prime minister and replace him with a former president, Mahinda Rajapaksa violating constitution, proved willingness to defend democracy.

8.Conclusion

Among the more fascinating themes in contemporary South Asia has been the long journey of democracy riding on populist horse. Not surprising, populism is now a worldwide phenomenon. From American Trump to Turkish Erdogan or Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro are using populist tool as for mobilizing mass people for political goal. South Asian countries are also walking in that way but also showing a ray of hope for bright future. Regardless of all the discouraging incidents that are taking place quite frequently, there are encouraging events taking place in South Asia in the new century in the political sphere.

Populist leaders endeavour to fabricate direct or unmediated affinity with their followers, whether through mass rallies, mass media, or social media tools such as Twitter. This antipathy toward intermediation translates into the erosion of checks and balances on executive power when populists gain office. While populists often mobilize parts of the population previously ignored by established parties, they also often look to demobilize their opponents. Populism in South Asia, as elsewhere, has thus had not had a positive effect on democracy. Given the persistent absence of bureaucratic parties in the region, the prospect of further democratic erosion remains high.

Democrats in South Asia thus have to contend not only with the socioeconomic and technological changes that have weakened bureaucratic parties everywhere, but also with their particular disadvantageous historical legacies. This does not mean we need to accept the Huntingtonian view that developing countries are “not ready” for democracy (Huntington 2006); rather it means that to the extent that liberal democracy remains a worthy goal – as Churchill put it, “the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried” – it means at the same time as building bureaucratic parties, Democrats need to find ways of fostering robust, open, and non-sectarian civil societies, developing effective state institutions, and addressing socioeconomic inequalities.

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