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# Child Education and Inter-Generational Problem in Bangladesh (A Case Study of Naogaon District)

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**[Abstract]** The aim of this paper is to explore the situation of children's educational participation and its relation with parent's poverty and illiteracy, which is identified as inter-generational problem. Data from 2003 sample survey have 6-15 years old 314 children and their parents. The sample has been selected from 2 rural and 2 urban places of Naogaon District of Bangladesh. Findings reveal that, inter-generationally children are depriving of education by the same problem of parents, and parents are playing the same role again and again due to their poverty and illiteracy. This paper concludes that, children's deprivation of education is not a new one problem; it is transmitting from one generation to another.

**[Key words]** Child education, Inter-generation, Bangladesh.

## Introduction

Education is a fundamental right of all human beings (**Kaul, 2001**), which open their inward eyes and help them to develop their life. At this stage, childhood is the most important period to gain it. Unfortunately it is true that, all over of the world many children are exists, who are deprive of education and grow up unexpectedly as illiterate people (**Hadi, 2000**). Specially, this scenario is very intense in the developing countries in south Asia (**Nath, et, al. 2002**). It was noticed that, The developed countries have state control child education system, which compel the children to ensure the compulsory education but in the case of developing countries, child education is controlled by family where the state intervention is a conducive initiative and it is controlled by the parents (**Chowdhury et, al. 2002**). Generally, economically solvent families' have no problem of children's education, but in the case of poor families, where the children's education is very worse, because of parents expectation and children's education has a conflict; children are identified as supplement income source or helping hand of parents, and their education is less important (**Blanchet, 1996**). In Bangladesh, 80% parents are poor and illiterate (**BBS, 1998**) and they prefer the children's work rather than education. Side by side the parents, who are not suffered by economic problem; their children's educational situation is positive and they are not rely on children's work. Therefore, it is noticed that, parental poverty is pushing the children to make as illiterate people and these children will foster the poverty (**Ahmed, et, al. 1991**). In the long run, when they will be parents; they will play

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the same role with their children due to own poverty and illiteracy. Actually poverty and illiteracy are the inter-related social problems which interfere each other and transmitting by generation to generation. The main focus of this study is to investigate the inherent cause of children's education is an inter-generational problem in Bangladesh.

### **Children's education and inter-generational problem: The Bangladesh context**

Parent's socio-economic condition and children's education has a significant relationship in Bangladesh (Ahmed et, al. 1991). It is generally found that poor and illiterate parent's child educational participation is difference from rich and literate parents. Because poor and illiterate parents want their children's help from a very early stage of life but rich and literate parents are not rely on their children's help and always they expect their children's education (Blanchet, 1996). Consequently, parent's economic and educational situation are the important factors of children's education in Bangladesh.

Mid Cain (1977) pointed out that, "generally the farmer's sons are involved into their father's occupation from a very early stage and they work with their father until before going to marriage." This study indicates that, farmer fathers are prefer their son's help rather than education. Generally, these farmer's income and education are not so good and they don't know the value of children's education. Another thing is, sons are go to marriage by the arrangement of parents, when they are 12/13 years old (Blanchet, 1996). Actually, this age is suitable for junior high school student, whereas they are performing their family life after marriage. As a result, these sons are compelling to carried out the illiteracy and poorer life. Therefore, it is noticed that illiteracy and poorer condition is bearing the son from their father's situation. Such this way the problem is contaminated by one generation to another and children's education is neglected.

Blanchet (1996) pointed out that, "Children who come from very poor families where everybody's work is required for survival, generally see it as their responsibility to work and earn money. These children willingly go to the factory, even though they may not like the work. They may regret being poor, whom they attribute to bad fate, but they do not criticize parents for sending them to work. In fact they feel they owe it to those who have given them birth and have brought them up to repay their debt. Not only do such children see it as their duty to work, but they also feel proud of the money they earn which gives them importance in the family."

This study indicates that, poor families parents sending their children for earning money and there is no owe of children because they thinking that they debt to their parents due to gave birth and brought up. From this mentality of children, it can be assumed that, traditionally children are compeled to fulfill the parental desire. On the other hand, parents are sending their children to work due to poverty and not understanding the value of education. Actually, the children are grow up as illiterate people and they are always leading the poor life. In the long run, when these children will be parents, they also play

the same role as like as their parents. Consequently, it is noticed that children's education and parental poverty and illiteracy in an inter-related social problem and rolling it again and again.

**Ahmed et, al (1991)** pointed out that, "parental poverty and illiteracy is the main cause of child labor and children's non-schooling in Bangladesh."

This study directly indicates that, parental poverty and illiteracy is the main prevention of children's education in Bangladesh. Actually poverty and illiteracy and the interdependent subject of human beings, because a person can be advanced for education, if he/she has no economic support. On the other hand, a person can be economically solven, if he/she has no light of education into their heart. This study reveals, intergenerational children are deprived of education and leading their as poorer condition, and needless to say, the next generation will suffer the same problem. Therefore, we can say the parental poverty and illiteracy and children's education are inter-generational problem in Bangladesh.

## **Methodology**

This study is based on interview and household data where the main subject was one child and his/her parents. This study was interested to investigate the relation between children's education and intergenerational problem. Actually parent's poverty and illiteracy are the main causes of children's non-schooling and the causes are existing in the same family and preventing the children's education. In order to investigate this situation, physically I appeared to the respondent's houses and observed their environment and talked with them by their native Bangla language. Sometimes I used a small tap recorder for collecting the authentic voics of respondents. Local leaders, local government and general peoples provided overwhelming support during my field operation. Before going to taking interview I selected some variables based on my research focus based and a questionnaire sheet decorated it. Chronologically I intervied the respondents as my cordial relatives and have The spontaneously responded.

## **Research setting**

Research setting was Naogaon District in Bangladesh, which was 300 km far from the capital city of Dhaka and located in the northern part of the country. Data have been collected from four several places of rural and urban areas of Naogaon District, which was 30 km far from Naogaon city. Among the four places, two were village and two thana level urban areas. These were as: Mohadev pur, Manda, Ramcharan pur and Chakshibram pur. All the research areas were situated on the bank of the river ATRY.

## **Respondent profile**

This study selected 314 children and their parents; specially this study give the importance of father's information because Bangladesh is provided in patriarchal family system where the fathers are powerful and their income and education are important to perform the children's education. The age of the selected children were 6-15 years old and parent's were 25-70 years old. The children were divided into two categories as schooling and non-schooling and it indicated their educational status. On the other hand, different categories parents were included under these studies, which were identified as literate and illiterate, upper class, middle class and lower class. These parents are involved into various occupations for leading their life.

## **Result**

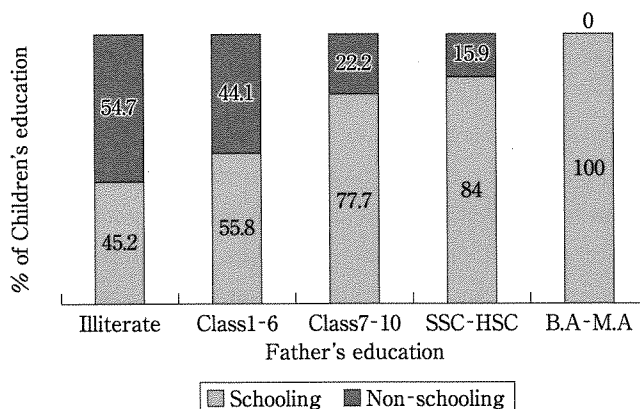
### **Parent's education and children's education**

Both father and mother's role is important for children's education inside the family. At this stage, parental economic situation and educational status also an important factor of children's education. Generally, educated mothers are very serious about their children's education but father's education is not so active, if he has not good economic condition. As a result, it is noticed that, mother's and father's economic situation are an the effective instruments of children's education. In order to investigate this situation, present study mentioned the relationship between father's education and children's education, and mother education and children's education.

***Father's education and children's education:*** Father's education is an important factor of children's education. Generally educated father is very much interested in their children's education because educated fathers are well known the difference of literacy and illiteracy. On the other hand, non-educated fathers were not so alert about the importance of children's education. Well now, the father, who is illiterate but rich, their children's educational status is different from poor illiterate father. In order to investigate this reality, present study has been conducted.

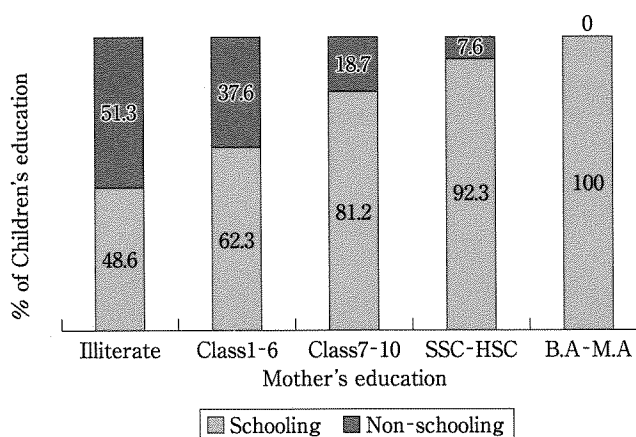
***Mother's education and children's education:*** It is generally found that, inside the family mother's contribution was higher than father about their children's brought up and care. On the other hand the relationship between mother and child is more intense than father and the child. In this circumstance, mother's realization should be highly positive concerning their children's education. But most of the mother's are dependent member of the family, where their role is different inside the family and educational qualification is an additional status. Consequently, the scenario of children's education and mother's role is difference between educated and non-educated mother. In order to investigate this reality, present study have been conducted.

**Figure 1 Father’s education and children’s education**



The above figure mention that, in case of illiterate father’s non-schooling and schooling children were 54.7% and schooling children are 45.2%, here the non-schooling children were higher than schooling children. Class 1-6 educated father’s respectively 55.8% children are schooling and 44.1% children are non-schooling, here the schooling children are higher than the non-schooling children. Class 7-10 educated father’s 77.7% children are going to school and 22.2% children are not going to school, Thus the schooling children are higher than non-schooling. SSC-HSC educated father’s 84% children are going to school and 15.9% children are not going to school, However, in B. A-M. A educated father’s 100% children are going to school where non-schooling children was none. These results indicates that fathers educational background is directly correlated with children’s schooling in Bangladesh. The more educated, The more schooling of the children.

**Figure 2 Mother’s education and children’s education**



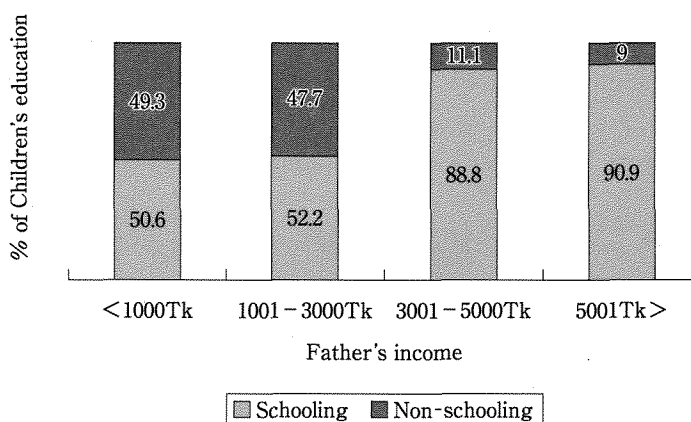
Mother’s educational background is also similarly influenced children’s schooling (Fig.

2) illiterate mother's 48.6% children are go to school and 51.3% children are not going to school. Class 1-6 educated mother's 62.3% children are going to school and 37.6% children are not going to school. Class 7-10 educated mother's 81.2% children are going to school and 18.7% children are not going to school. SSC-HSC educated mother's 92.3% children are going to school and 7.6% children are not going to school. B. A-M. A educated mother's 100% children go to school and there are no non-schooling children. The overall situation reveals, only illiterate mother's non-schooling children are higher than schooling children but in the case of literate mothers, it was seen that all sections schooling children are higher than non-schooling children. Mentionable that, among the literate mother's schooling and non-schooling situation has maintained a chronological ratio, where the low literate mother's schooling children are lower and non-schooling children are higher than high literate mother's schooling and non-schooling.

### Father's income and children's education

According to Bangladeshi tradition, father's income is a very important factor for maintaining the family expense as well as children's educational cost. Generally, economically solvent father's has no problem to spend the money behind their children's education, but in the case of poor father; it is very difficult for them to maintain their children's educational cost.

**Figure 3 Father's income and children's education**



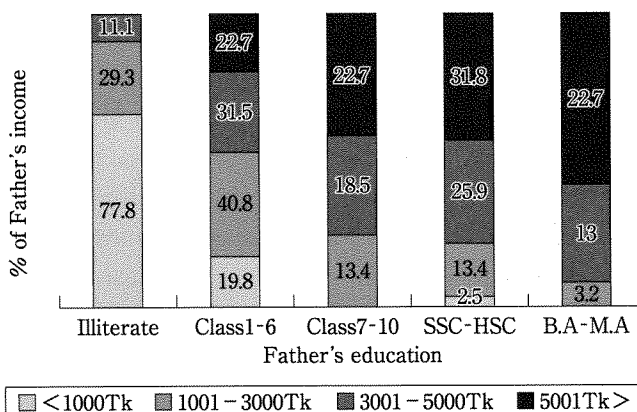
The above figure mention that, <1000Tk incomes father's 50.6% children are going to school and 49.3% children are not going to school. 1001-3000Tk incomes father's 52.2% children are going to school and 47.7% children are not going to school. 3001-5000Tk incomes father's 88.8% children are going to school and 11.1% children are not going to school and 5001Tk > incomes father's 90.9% children are going to school and 9% children are not going to school. The overall situation reveals, high incomes father's non-schooling

children are lower than low incomes father and low incomes father’s schooling children are lower than high incomes fathers.

**Father’s income and education**

Father’s education and income is inter-related to perform the children’s education in Bangladesh. Only educated father can’t feel interest to their children’s education, if they have no economic support. On the other hand, even illiterate father can feel interest in children’s education, if they are economically solvent. In order to investigate the relation of father’s economic and educational situation, the study has been conduct on.

**Figure 4 Father’s income and education**



The above figure mention that, among the illiterate fathers, 77.8% <1000Tk, 29.3% 1001-3000Tk and 11.1% 3001-5000Tk income groups. Among the class 1-6 educated fathers, 19.8% <1000Tk, 40.8% 1001-3000Tk, 31.5% 3001-5000Tk and 22.7% 5001Tk> income groups. Among the class 7-10 educated fathers, 13.4% 1001-3000Tk, 18.5% 3001-5000Tk and 22.7% 5001Tk> income groups. Among the SSC-HSC educated fathers, 2.5% <1000Tk, 13.4% 1001-3000Tk, 25.9% 3001-5000Tk and 31.8% 5001Tk> income groups. Among the B. A-M. A educated fathers, 3.2% 1001-3000Tk, 13% 3001-5000Tk and 22.7% 5001Tk> income groups. The overall situation reveals, out of total fathers, <1000Tk incomes higher group is illiterate fathers, 1001-3000Tk incomes higher group is Class 1-6 educated fathers, 30001-5000Tk incomes higher group is SSC-HSC educated father and 5001Tk > income group father is B. A-M. A educated fathers.

**Discussion and conclusion**

This paper examined the inter-relationship between children’s education and inter-generational problem in Bangladesh. Data generated through particular sample areas,



which have been collected in 2003, January to February. This study concept expounded in the prevention of children's education as a factor of parent's economic situation and educational status.

According to the findings presented in this paper, figure 1 mentioned; children's educational status was directly related to the father's educational qualification has a relationship. It was seen that, out of total illiterate father, 45.2% children are going to school and 54.7% children are not going to school. Here the non-schooling children are higher than schooling children. Figure 4 shows, out of total illiterate father, 77.8% < 1000Tk incomes, 29.3% 1001-3000Tk incomes and 11.1% 3001-5000Tk incomes. This study explored that, 1001-3000Tk income group fathers are consider as lower middle class and most of their children are going to school and 3001-5000Tk income group fathers are middle class and almost all children are going to school among these fathers. On the other hand <1000Tk income group fathers are consider as lower class, where the children's non-schooling rate is higher. Figure 3 shows, in spite of <1000Tk incomes situation, 50.6% children are going to school and 49.3% children are not going to school. Figure 4 shows, all the <1000Tk incomes fathers are not illiterate, some other fathers are literate. At this stage, their attitude is different from illiterate fathers and their children's educational status was also different. Therefore, it can be assumed that, father's economic worse situation and their education, and children's education has a significant relationship, which can be considered the prevention of children's education at the illiteracy and poverty affected communities in Bangladesh.

Figure 1 shows, that out of total class 1-6 educated fathers 55.8% children are going to school and 44.1% children are not going to school. Here the schooling children are higher than non-schooling children. Figure 4 shows, <1000Tk incomes fathers are 19.8%, 1001-3000Tk incomes fathers are 40.8%, 3001-5000Tk incomes fathers are 31.5% and 5001Tk > incomes fathers are 22.7%. The field operation reveals, in spite of father's little literacy, low incomes father's non-schooling children are high and high incomes father's schooling children are high. Especially the fathers, who are class 1-6 educational qualified and economically middle upper class; their schooling children are higher than non-schooling. On the other hand, the non-schooling children are higher than schooling children, where there fathers are economically lower class. As a result, this study mention that, little literate father's economic worse condition is a factor of children's education, which discouraged the children for schooling. Figure 3 also exhibited that, 1001-3000Tk income group father's non-schooling children and <1000Tk income group father's non-schooling children is very nearer. Actually, in these two groups father's economic characteristics are almost same and these fathers are identified as lower and lower middle class and always suffered from poverty. Consequently their children's non-schooling is a common phenomenon. On the other hand, 3001-5000Tk and 5001Tk > incomes father's non-schooling children are very little, where the poverty is not the main cause of children's non-schooling. The field operation reveals, non-schooling children's are suffered from

others causes like non-meritorious problem, high love of parents, security problem, etc.

Figure 2 shows that, illiterate mother's schooling children are lower than non-schooling children. on the other hand all the literate mother's schooling children are higher than non-schooling children. It indicates that, mother's education also an important factor of children's education.

From the above discussion this study indicates that, both poverty and illiteracy of parent is the main factors of children's education, where the economic factor is more important for discouraging the parents for not sending their children to school. Actually, parent's economic situation and educational status is an inter-related subjects, which interfere the children's education. When it is positive, children's education also be positive and when it is negative, children's education also be negative. It is true that, today's children are tomorrow's parents and they will play the same role due to their socio-economic worse situations. Therefore, the reality of situation of children's education and parent's poverty and illiteracy is identified as inter-generational problem in Bangladesh.

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