

The Role of Education in the Development of Underdeveloped World

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Abstract

Issues and problems of development are significantly different in underdeveloped world from those of developed world. One prime difference is that the developed world was never ever underdeveloped. They were merely undeveloped. Underdeveloped world experiences the curse of poverty, child mortality, gender discrimination and inequality. Different theories of development regarding the development of the developed world may not successfully meet the problems of development in the underdeveloped world. The Human Development Index (HDI), Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product (GNP) may not measure development in the underdeveloped world. Rather, personal satisfaction and happiness can be good indicators of development in the countries struggling for development. Given that Bangladesh is an underdeveloped country, the incidence of poverty in Bangladesh holds one of the highest positions in the world. One third of the population live below the poverty line. 50% to 70% of women in the country are abused by their male partners physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. However, Studies indicate that education provides wider choices for occupation. Well educated person can succeed in entrepreneurship, business and jobs services. Since a significant amount of Bangladeshi women is illiterate or lower educated, they cannot contribute to household income. Thus, they become the victims of discrimination and domestic violence. The present study is an attempt to find out the role of education in decreasing poverty, gender inequality and child mortality in the context of underdeveloped countries. The study finds that education enables people for better opportunities to reduce poverty, income disparity, and gender inequality and child mortality.

Key words: Development, Education, underdevelopment, Personal satisfaction.

Introduction:

Giving high concern to rapid growth misses concerns to some long lasting development. Leaving the population unskilled a country cannot achieve

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true development. With single input of skilled population a country can achieve multiple growth. Thus, education remains in the first priority for sustainable development.

Conceptualizing development and underdevelopment

Development is the most used word but the least defined term. There are fashions of using ‘developed’, ‘developing’, ‘un-developed’ and ‘underdeveloped’ but ‘stagnant’ and ‘regressing’ are less popular terms even though these latter ones have more relevance in the context of Africa (Wood, 1986). Generally dictionary definitions of development include betterment, positive change, growth, gradual advancement, evolution and take off. Economists measure development in economic terms such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross National Product (GNP). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) measures development with the Human Development Index (HDI). Another prominent way of measuring development is the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) where development is measured by the capacity of a country for buying a certain amount of internationally standardized goods.

The World Bank (WB) classified all countries of the world into four categories: 1) High 2) Upper Middle 3) Lower Middle and 4) Low income countries. As of 1 July 2016, low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita of \$1,025 or less in 2015; lower middle-income economies are those with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita between \$1,026 and \$4,035; upper middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$4,036 and \$12,475; high-income economies are those with a GNI per capita of \$12,476 or more (World Bank Data Team, 2016).

Underdevelopment is a category of countries that have lagged behind the developed or first world on the road to modernization, a theory given by Walt Whitman Rostow in 1960. The Committee of Development Policy of the United Nations (UN) included these countries in the term Least Developed Countries (LDC) (Islam, 2010). However, Wood argued that one significant indicator of development, health, as a social benefit cannot be measured by economic terms (Wood, 1986). Economic definition of development can be meaningful only when social benefits like health and gender equity remain in satisfactory position. These social benefits become satisfactory when people become aware, conscious and affluent through enlightening themselves by education.

Conceptualizing Education

Education is a process of learning and acquiring knowledge, skills, values and beliefs. The process begins from the childhood through watching, listening and speaking. Education is classified into formal and non-formal learning. Formal education means having a class based institutional learning

in primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Informal education means having learning in an informal or beyond institutional setting through observation, experience and working. Vary basic education is examined by the literacy to read, write and speak formally. However, the desired education is not merely the ability to write and read. Rather, it is the aptness in something and acquisition of skills, efficiency and knowledge about humanity, equality and health. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been working for skillful education and monitoring world's quality education. The Culture of Peace of the UNESCO emphasized the education as the central step to promote peace and sustainable development. Peace Education is the most effective process to build peace in the minds of people. Through formal and informal education children learn the ways of peace, non-violence and human rights promoting multicultural and multi-ethnic values for mutual understanding. It stipulates

“By focusing on our children, we implicitly pledge ourselves to education for all, a concept that combines formal and non-formal education and seeks to promote quality basic education that is grounded upon the universal values – and practice – of a culture of peace and non-violence. Such a task must engage every one of our fellow citizens in all dimensions of life: in schools, workplaces, the home; at the national and at the community levels; in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Above all, children themselves must be empowered to become actors, not mere spectators, in shaping their own visions and futures. . . .” (UNESCO, 2013)

Background

Underdeveloped countries are very far from developed countries. These countries cannot cope with their opponents in a free market economy of contemporary globalized world. They struggle with many structural problems rooted in socio-economic reality. Domestic violence, morbidity and poverty are inherent in the developing countries like Bangladesh. 50% to 70% of women of Bangladesh are abused by their male partners (Yesmin, 2013). 33.5% of population of Bangladesh frequently use tobacco (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Although Bangladesh has a steady growth in its economy a large number of its population does not get benefit from it. About one-third (31.5 percent) of the population of Bangladesh still live under poverty line (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Without building capacity of population the structural problems of underdevelopment cannot be wiped out. As the backbone of the nation education is the only mechanism for effective investment in human capital of a country. Asia's four tigers invested in educating their population for their long run development.

Education plays a significant role in establishing peace and promoting development in the societies. It provides wider choices for occupation. Well

educated person can succeed in entrepreneurship, business and jobs services. By dint of education people achieve some fundamental abilities to understand the world, to lead a responsible life, to exchange feelings with others and to know about the surroundings of our environment. An educated person can be aware of his or her fundamental rights. Education enhances political consciousness of the people for the entitlement of social and political rights. Educated people can raise their voices to enjoy a certain level of protection by the government while uneducated people do not know what types of protection they can have from the state mechanism. Moreover, education plays a crucial role in confronting problems related to public health. The spread of germs and the outbreak of diseases can be shackled when people become conscious of them. After all, education creates the awareness of human rights, political freedom and protection by laws and health which are very essential for ensuring equity and peaceful coexistence.

Objective

Although there has been positive trends in productivity in Bangladesh, this trend misses many pockets of poverty. Most of the people of Bangladesh live in the rural areas where poverty is a common phenomenon. Female illiteracy rate is higher in rural Bangladesh where male illiteracy is 57% and female illiteracy is 85% (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2000). They can neither get enough income from agricultural work nor find secondary employment opportunities. However, within existing framework, rural development programs and poverty alleviation policies in Bangladesh have not been able to benefit significantly to the targeted population (Uddin, 1996). Nonetheless, skilled and educated people wider opportunities to earn money and lead a better life.

Gender discrimination and domestic violence are the most prevalent in the underdeveloped and developing countries particularly in Bangladesh, Peru, Ethiopia, Somalia, Namibia and Brazil etc. Intimate partner violence is the most prevalent form of gender-based violence worldwide. The range of lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner is 59% in Ethiopia province. Thus, sexual violence is more frequent in Bangladesh and Thailand city (World Health Organization, 2005). However, there is no doubt that education breaks the shackles of discrimination regarding gender, race, culture, ethnicity and religion. Enlightening by education man and woman respect each other and cooperate with mutual understanding.

Health condition in underdeveloped countries is very low. Most of the people do not bother about their health and safety. In Bangladesh the prevalence of overall morbidity per 1000 population of all ages during in 2012 is 186, about 33.5% population (15+ year) use tobacco where 44.3% are male and 23% are female (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Bangladesh along with Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Afghanistan

were enlisted by The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in 2007, in the list of 37 countries requiring external assistance for food. Among South Asian countries Bangladesh has been the most severely affected by the continued increase in world food prices (Rahman, 2008). In this circumstances, general people are suffering due to high growth in household expenditure and food inflation. On the other hand, education creates awareness among people. Educated people are conscious about their health and hygiene. They emphasize on the early stage of preventive approach of being healthy.

The prime objective of current study is to find out the contribution of education in the reduction of structural curses of underdeveloped countries particularly in the context of Bangladesh. By analyzing the data collected from multiple sources, this showcases how education reduces poverty, gender discrimination and unhygienic life styles.

Methodology

Data have been collected from multiple sources. Mostly secondary data came from administrative agencies of Bangladesh, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and International organizations. In this study, mainly qualitative techniques have been followed to meet the objective. Qualitative method has been chosen because it is particularly useful when the objective of the study is to find out the engagement of people in target issue. This dissertation is based on literature and several case studies. The other crucial issue is that this research is especially an inductive research or theory-generating research. In this study for qualitative data collection, some case studies with in-depth interviews and participants' observation method has been followed. Moreover, for more theoretical and in depth study, content analysis has been used.

In-depth interview

The interviews taken from the respondents were unstructured. Here the aim was to explore the interviewee's feelings about the issue being explored and the style of questioning was very informal. The target group for the interview was adult females to cover all issues being studied.

Observation

Observation method is very much useful to enrich the content and results of a study. Thereby, participants were observed in different situations. In this study, main observation was on the female respondents; aimed to observe their behavior, listen to their conversations, and based on some relevant questions being asked.

Content Analysis

Documentary sources have been taken into account including published and unpublished materials, books, reports, journals, articles, histories,

documents, official records, travelogues, encyclopedia, memories, newspaper, magazines, etc. Today, the internet is a very dynamic source of data collection. I went through the Google Scholars and JSTOR for relevant and authentic materials.

Discussion

Literature Findings

There is no doubt that much of the economic literature emphasized on the material capital in the process of economic growth. But, what the economists have not stressed is the absolute truth where people invest themselves and this investment is very large and far reaching. Investment in human capital accounts for the maximum of the impressive growth in the real earnings per worker (Waines, 1963). While studying African countries Waines argued that while only 5 per cent of the adult populations had been in the school the lion share of the development budget went to agriculture, irrigation, transportation and communication. The prime concern must have been in the development of minerals, forests and fisheries because department of education and health had much facilities (Waines, 1963). Schultz and others argued that the increase in the quantity of material capital and the number of working population do not account for the whole economic growth in the United States of America. Rather, their study had shown that between 1919 and 1957 in the USA with addition of only 1% in total input of capital the real income increased at the rate of 3% which is the result of substantial skill of human capital what was missing in Latin America (Schultz, 1962).

Studies conducted by Quddus indicate that education provides greater opportunity for occupations which helps to the reduction of income inequality (Quddus, 1996). Education is the gate way of ensuring social and economic progress. The study conducted by Taufiqul Islam shows that people having education are mostly rich and earner of high annual income. He noted that with the help of both formal and informal education people become active partners of development (Islam M. T., 2007).

Education plays a crucial role in confronting problems related to public health. The spread of germs and the outbreak of diseases can be shackled when people become conscious of them. It is obviously not a good sign that the number of affected and death people due to HIV is in increase in Bangladesh while the number is in decrease all over the world. According to the World Health Organization after 2004 till 2015 the amount of death due to HIV has decreased with 42% (Prothom Alo, 2016). But the alarming notice for Bangladesh, as shown in the Figure 1, is the total amount of HIV affected people is 600 in 2016 while it was 370 in 2013. The amount of death people because of HIV is 100 in 2016 while it was 82 in 2013. According to the government calculation the amount of identified HIV patient till 2015 is 3485 (Prothom Alo, 2016).

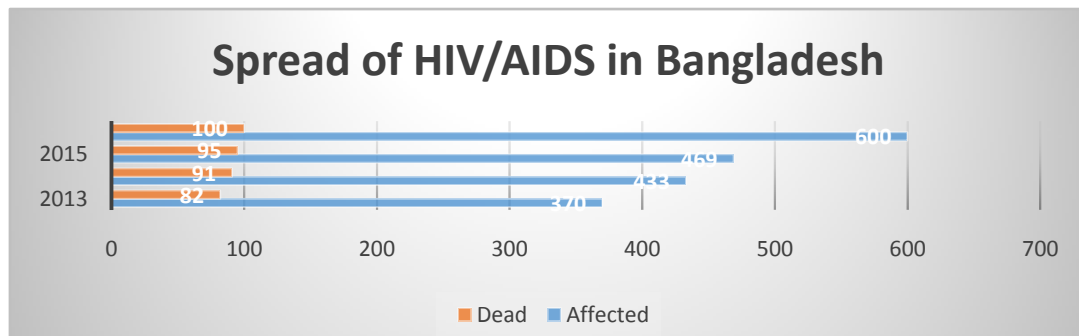


Figure 01: Adopted from Prothom Alo, 01/12/2016

There are three stages of prevention of diseases: 1) Primary Prevention 2) Secondary Prevention and 3) Tertiary Prevention (Wood, 1986). Primary prevention denotes immunization, nutrition, personal hygiene, good health behavior, safe water supply, food hygiene, good living and working condition etc. Secondary prevention denotes early detection of disease by screening etc. Tertiary prevention denotes diagnosis, treatment, management, rehabilitation etc. Wood argued that through education general public become conscious and aware of their health. Long-term health behavior in diet, hygiene, smoking, drinking, driving and other aspects of life style must be constructed through education for primary and secondary prevention of diseases as an effective way of sustainable development (Wood, 1986).

In the context of developing countries educational development is more important than any other development program. Developing countries are in hurry to achieve in twenty-five years what Western countries has achieved in two hundred years. Of course there are some crash programs needed to cope with the world of globalization but too much emphasis has been given to the programs yielding quick results. What actually needed is education, training and research that are strong and relatively cheap sources of economic growth and to be aimed for long-run ambitions for skillful human capita (Waines, 1963). Through installation of vocational and polytechnic training immediately after the primary education and to some extent through merging the both, it is easy to free our country from poverty (Akash, 2016).

Both formal and non- formal education have tremendous effects on students' mind. Mathematics helps students understand extremely small numbers. Social Studies helps students understand ethnocentrism, racism, and gender inequity as well as to recognize how these are expressed in the surrounding community and in nations worldwide. Language Arts, especially media literacy, creates knowledgeable consumers who can separate fact and opinion. Non-formal education is uniquely important in Bangladesh where the BRAC system operates thousands of non-formal schools and has been credited with increasing girls' primary enrolment. The success of non-formal education has influenced government policy to create learning centers inspired by non-formal models to reach out-of-school children (UNESCO, 2015). But, the gap between students and teachers may

hamper in achieving potential results. In Bangladesh, there was a wide gap in 2011 between the number of pupils per teacher (40:1) and per trained teacher (70:1) (UNESCO, 2015).

Table 01: Problematic Development Areas of Bangladesh and Underdeveloped Countries

Country	Education					Health		Poverty	Gender Discrimination
	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Primary school dropout rate (%)	Public expenditure of education (% of GDP)	Kilocalories per person per day	Child malnutrition under 5 (%)	Below poverty line (%)	Violence against women (%)
Bangladesh	114	54	13	33.8	2.2	122	41.4	43.3	53.3
Developing countries of South Asia	111	64	23	22.8	3.5	115	54.9	Not Available	Not Available
Least developed countries	106	42	8	39.6	3.4	167	78.8		Not Available

(Adopted from Human Development Report 2015, UNDP) (United Nations Development Program, 2015)

Problems of underdeveloped countries lie in the structure of the societies. Enrollment in education is the fundamental key to overcome those problems. The table 1 showcases the core problems inherent in the mother problem which is education. Primary education is fine in Bangladesh, developing countries and least developed countries. But the dropout rate is terrible in all countries mentioned in the table. Public expenditure in education is significantly low. In return, Child malnutrition is alarming besides consumed calorie is not sufficient for good health. In Bangladesh, 43.3% people still live below poverty line. According to Human Development Report, 53.3% women are harassed by intimate or non-intimate partners. A study conducted by Michael A. Koenig and others found that increased education, higher socioeconomic status, non-Muslim religion, and extended family residence to be associated with lower risks of violence (MICHAEL A. KOENIG, 2003).

Individual Case Studies

For individual case studies, three women have been selected based on their socio-economic condition. These cases extend the value of current study as empirical reality. One woman has secondary education and life-long non-formal education. From the other two, one has primary education and the other is illiterate.

Case Study 1

Name: x

Occupation of husband: Labor in abroad

Number of Family member: 5 (3 sons)

A was born in an affluent family of Amirabad. She went to secondary school but dropped out because of marriage. Her husband is a worker in Saudia Arabia.

“I was pretty good in my family before getting marriage. My parents compelled me marry a person live in abroad. My health deteriorated since I had given birth my first son. I did not take care of my second son when that was born morbid. Then gradually my relationship with my husband became wore. When he comes home every day makes a quarrel with me. My sons cannot concentrate on their study because of noise. My husband bit me several times. Now he said that he would give me divorce without any reason.”

When I asked the lady about the education of her husband she replied, “What are you saying! He along with his all brothers are illiterate.” “If he went to school he would understand me and think about the future of my sons. He does not care about the education of my son. Infect he does not know the importance of education. Although he is not giving any money for his sons’ education, I am continuing it by the help of my parent.”

Case Study 2

Name: y

Occupation: house worker

Occupation of husband: Day labor

Number of family member: 7 (3 daughter, 2 sons)

“I did not go to school. I helped my mother for her daily work. I was used to going to ponds to bring water and wash dishes of our house. I took after poultry and treat them when they are sick. I got married when I was only 12. We used to live in slums because of low cost of staying there. I work in houses to earn money for my sons and daughters’ education. Being uneducated I know the importance of education. If I had formal education I could earn more money by getting a good job. Now, I and my husband try to learn knowledge from our children. I can now read, recite the holy Quran and write my name.”

When asked about her learning she answered, “I watch television, listen the news and learn cooking from different channels. Many suggestions I got from TV programs especially relating to health. When I work in educated families I become very pleased of their behavior and attitudes.”

Case Study 3:

Name: z

Occupation: housewife

Husband occupation: Teaching

Family members: 4 (2 sons)

“We are very happy by the grace of the Almighty Allah. I was born in a highly educated family. My parents and grandparents were well educated. I went to school in secondary level. When I passed my secondary education I got married. My husband is a good person. For ten years I was with my husband’s extended family doing household activities. Then I went to the town with my husband to educate my children. Now, we are successful that our elder son has completed Master’s degree from the University of Dhaka. The other son is doing M.B.B.S in public college.”

When I asked about her current learning she replied, “I teach some children and many adults who want to learn. They come to my house or I go to their house to teach them basic knowledge. I regularly read newspapers watch television and attend various seminars. My husband cooperate with my in everything. If I become sick he takes care of me. My sons also help me and also help them. I am proud of my family.”

Three individual case studies show that education bring happiness in the families through meaningful personal development. All three respondents want to educate their children. Moreover, in the third case educated parents’ children had got better opportunity to achieve well education. Both formal and informal education help people understand each other and promote cooperation. On the other hand in the first case we notice that how brutal can be the situation in the absence of education.

Conclusion:

Although Bangladesh has improved in women empowerment, literacy, health care, child mortality and gender discrimination in four decades (Amartya Sen, 2015), it has still a long way to go ahead. The developing and underdeveloped counties of the world, especially Bangladesh are struggling for getting released from severe structural violence such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, illiteracy, child mortality, child abuse, population explosion, economic inequality, gender discrimination, human rights violation and so on. Only economic development is not the indicator of peace and development. For instance, the South Asia is the most rapid economic growing region of the world while at the same time it the home of the largest number of the poor people living on the earth (Ghani, 2010). The core problem of underdeveloped and developing countries like Bangladesh is illiteracy and poor literacy. Being uneducated people suffer from gender discrimination, morbidity and poverty

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that have been structured in their societies. A country's peace and development comprise with the development of law and order, human rights, education, culture and freedom. The women who can contribute to household income enjoy honor, equality and mutual respect. Moreover, educated people are conscious about their health and that of their family members to coexist peacefully. The role of education is in the central position as the backbone of a nation. After all, the prime concern should be given to building capacity of human capital through education for sustainable development.

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