

The Socio-Economic Condition of Female Slum Dwellers: a study on Slums in Dhaka

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Abstract: Bangladesh is a land of grueling poverty in terms of economic sense. The country lacks significant amount of natural resources except 150 million populations. Dhaka is the fastest growing mega-city in the world. Annually, the city draws an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 mostly poor migrants who provide critical employment for the city's industries and services. Most migrants come from rural areas in search of opportunities, which can provide new livelihood options for them. As one walks through Dhaka, the pervasive poverty is evident, as is the inequality between rich and poor. In 2010, the population of the city of Dhaka has projected at 17.6 million people, with up to 60% in the slums. The poor mainly live in slums scattered throughout the city, with close to 80 percent of slums located on privately owned land creating considerable institutional challenges in terms of basic service provision. The article explores the socio-economic condition of females in slum area of Dhaka City. The finding of the study is social economic condition of female in slum area of Dhaka City in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Dhaka, Female, hygiene, Slum, Sanitation.

I. Introduction

Dhaka is an over-populated city, covering near about 350 square kilometers. Dhaka is a home of over 15 million peoples. Population boom couples with unplanned industrialization and urbanization spoiled the vegetation of Dhaka, triggering urban problems such as pollution, congestion and inadequate public services.

Slum is a word, a name that reflects the miseries of deprived people who have to struggle with poverty to survive. Slum is a densely populated temporary residential house build lawfully and unlawfully having no water supply, sanitation facilities or electricity supply. Most of these are one-roomed dwelling and extremely over-crowded.

There are approximately more than 5000 slum in Dhaka city. Most of the people who live in a slum are of Dhaka city is lead a so miserable life. The sufferings of female are more than man in that area. Another inhuman thing is female who lives in slum area of Dhaka city are considered as a lower class people and they haven't any social esteem in society.

II. Conceptual Interpretation

2.1 Slum: Slum means a heavily populated area in city. Slum is that parts of the cities which are most inhabitants are in or near poverty. In the early age of industrial revaluation first slums is created in the cities not so far of the center of the cities, close o factories gate. In the early stage of industrialization usually lowest paid worker of industrial cities of England and the united State live in slum. The latter are impoverished shanty settlements created and inhabited by squatters, many of whom are relatively recent migrants.

2.2 The Socio-economic condition of female of slum area of Dhaka City:

The social-economic condition of female slum area of Dhaka city is not so pleasant. The overall socioeconomic conditions of slum dwellers are not good at all. Socioeconomic characteristics such as age, education level, male-female ratio, family size, occupational status, annual income etc were considered. Education is considered as an important factor of the socioeconomic characteristics of the household. In slum areas there are no available formal education facilities for slum dwellers. Maximum slum dwellers have no education but some NGOs and organization

Try to provide them informal education. Some respondents got educational facilities when he stayed in villages. Female were less educated than the male in the study area.

Females work for long hours. They are doing outside jobs and also have to do all the household works. The female are still facing the problem of psychical torturing by their husband. It is very common phenomena in slum area of Dhaka city. They don't have any idea of human rights and women rights. It is very common in every family of slum area. Woman is contributing to their family economically and socially a lot but still they are suffering from this problem. Some of the family is run by their woman income but still woman has the same

condition. Girls still think as a burden to family. They are deprived in food, education and medical facilities. They are facing the problem of early marriage and early motherhood.

Most of the girls' doesn't get proper psychical treatment. They don't get any maternity facilities. Still babies are born in home without any medical facilities. At the time of marriage the families have to give dowry to the groom family. For this purpose most of the girls' families have to go for loan. The slum area family still believes that the girls will not look after their parents in future. So when a girl is born in a slum area family they are not happy at all. Early marriage is a very common issue. Girls are married at the age between 15 to 17 years. One surprising thing is that they become a mother of kids at the age of 15-17 years. At the very early stage of their life they become married and have lots of responsibilities to do. So girls are deprived in every phase of their life.

III. Objectives of the study

The present study is attempt to

- a) Identifying the social status living in Dhaka city;
- b) Explore the standard of living;
- c) Explore their economic situation; and
- d) Identifying their basic requirements

IV. Methodology

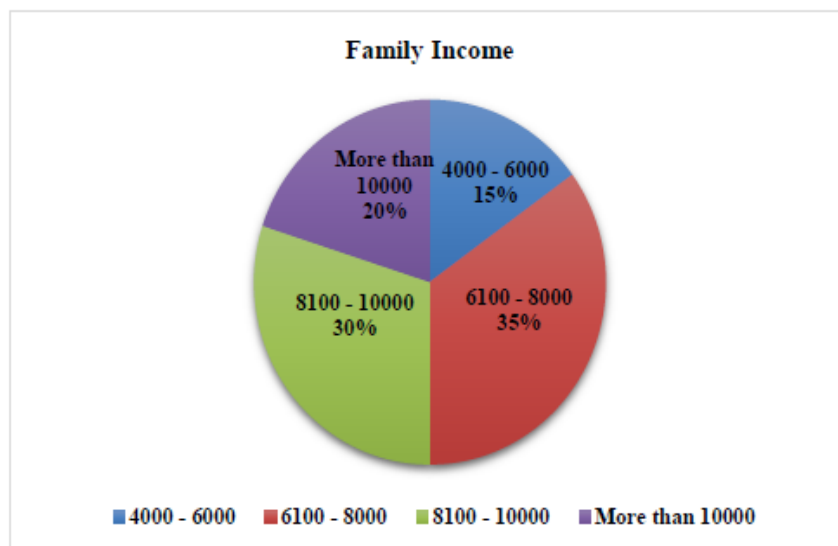
The research has been conducted through social survey was conducted among 100 families from Rayer Bazar, Mohammadpur BeriBadh, Washpur, Boliarpur and Mohakhali Rail Gate slums Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Interviewees and research area were selected using non-probability sampling techniques.

This study used semi structured interview schedule for women in slum area for primary data collection. Interview is conducted to collect primary data. Observation has been made data reliable and realistic. Data is collected from primary sources, has been compiled from Quantitative analysis. Researcher's use Microsoft Office Excel for analysis the Quantitative data and presented analysis results in different charts.

V. Findings and Discussion

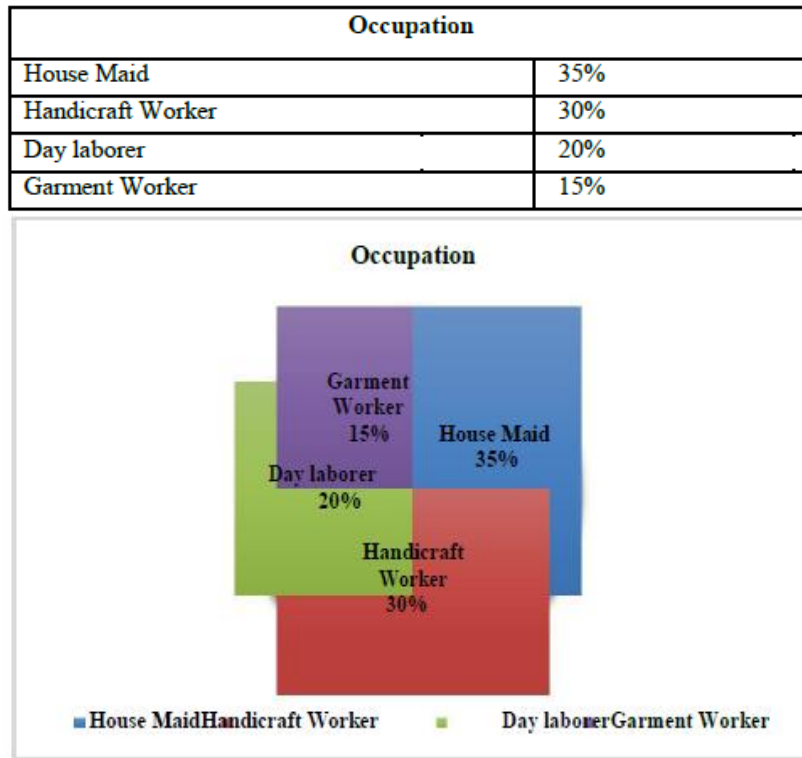
This section describes the finding of the study. The findings of the study are presented below:

| Family Income | |
|-----------------|-----|
| 4000 - 6000 | 15% |
| 6100 - 8000 | 35% |
| 8100 - 10000 | 30% |
| More than 10000 | 20% |



Family income depends on so many aspects. If it varies by huge number then it indicates that peoples are not getting their respective wage or maybe they are having more unemployed members in the family or else

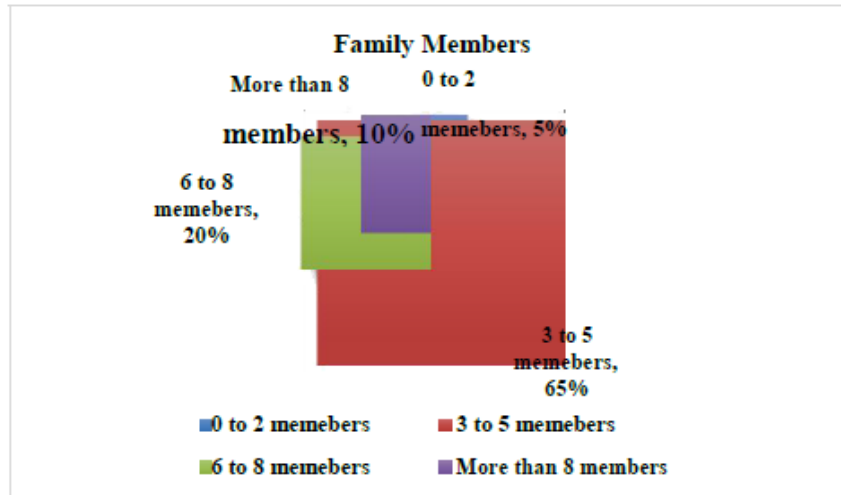
they are living in a place where living in a below standard areas where wage rate of workers are pretty low. From the chart we can see that only 20% of our surveyed people has more than 10000 taka family income and 15% has less than 6000 taka family income. We can see the income of slum people is more than 6000 but not more than 10000. The income is lying between 6000 to 10000 taka. In our study we saw that the earning of the family depends on two or more person. In some cases children are also working who are under 18 years.



According to the World Bank Labor participation rate; female (% of female population ages 15+) in Bangladesh was last measured at 57.30 in 2012. In the study we saw that most of the women are working as a housemaid. Whereas

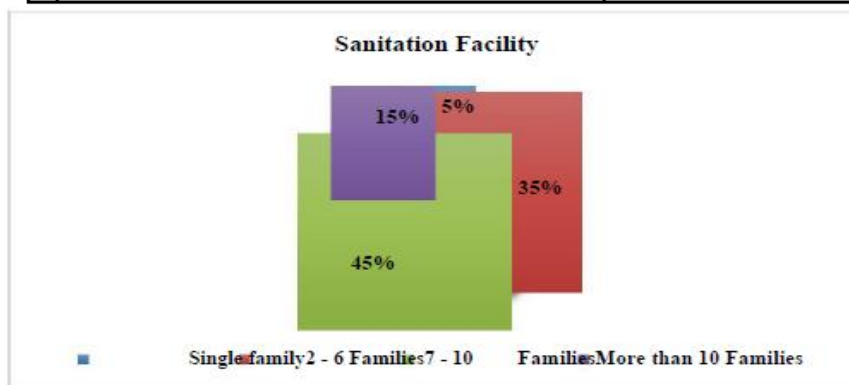
Before women were liked to do job in RMG sector. But some recent disaster in RMG sector has changed their mind. In our study we have found only 15% female are working in garments sector. One more thing we like to add here is now a days both husband and wife are working in outside. Hence, women are working so they are depending on maids. That's why they are paying more to maids. So, females of slum area prefer to do jobs in households. After housemaid we have handicraft workers who are 30% in our study. Bangladesh handicrafts are always appreciated to the Global Market having some limitation of marketing and communication gap Bangladeshi handicrafts are not still remarkable above the possibility to increase domestic & global reach. Women prefer handicraft work because sometimes they do not have to go out for their work they can do their household task, take care their children and earn their livelihood by making handicraft products. 20% women in our study is day laborer. According to Labor Force Survey 2000 of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the total estimated civilian labor forces of the country is 60.3 million and among them 37.81% are female. But the reality is, there is no national minimum wage in Bangladesh yet. The enforcement machinery has little capacity to enforce and ensure the appropriate payment of minimum wages to various industries in private sectors. Also, there is no wage standard in informal sector.

| Family members | |
|----------------|-----|
| 0 - 2 | 5% |
| 3 - 5 | 65% |
| 6 - 8 | 20% |
| More than 8 | 10% |



The population of **Bangladesh** is estimated at **158,512,570** as of July 1 2014. Bangladesh's population is equivalent to **2.19%** of the total world population. Bangladesh ranks number **8** in the list of countries by population. The **population density** in Bangladesh is **1,101 people per Km²**. **30%** of the population is **urban** (47,334,620 people in 2014). In 1970 the rate of population growth was 3%, in 1980 the rate was 2.68%, in 1990 the rate was 2.64%, in 2000 the rate was 2.01%, in 2010 the rate was 1.09% and now it is 1.20%. From our study we have found that 65% of our surveyed people have 3 to 5 family members. Whereas only 10% families have more than 8 members. So people are becoming more conscious about family planning. The NGO and Government age agencies play a very vital role here and they get a huge success.

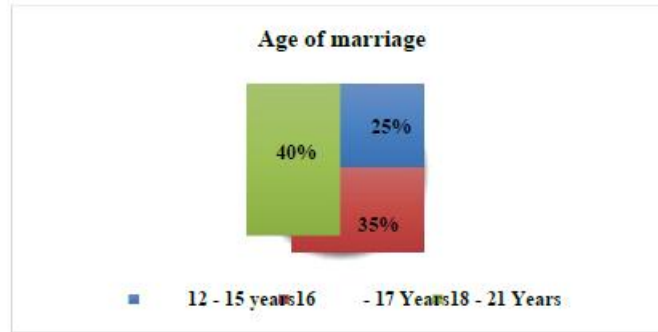
| Sanitation Facility | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Single family | 5% |
| 2 - 6 Families | 35% |
| 7 - 10 Families | 45% |
| More than 10 Families | 15% |



According to WHO Sanitation generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. Inadequate sanitation is a major cause of disease world-wide and improving sanitation is known to have a significant beneficial impact on health both in households and across communities. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal. Access to improved water and sanitation facilities lead to improved health. There is now very clear evidence showing the importance of hygienic behavior, in particular hand-washing with soap at critical times: after defecating and before eating or preparing food. Hand-washing with soap can significantly reduce the incidence of diarrhea, which is the second leading cause of death amongst children under five years old. In fact, recent studies suggest that regular hand-washing with soap at critical times can reduce the number of diarrhea bouts by almost 50 per cent. In our country the slum management system is brutally affected by several groups of peoples which eventually leads into poor managing of sanitation facility.

When we conducted our survey we found out that women are rarely getting proper sanitation facility. Study showing us that 65% slum women are sharing one toilet with more than 7 families. Whereas only 5% families use their separate toilet but in some case it is open toilet.

| Age of Marriage | |
|-----------------|-----|
| 12 - 15 years | 25% |
| 16 - 17 Years | 35% |
| 18 - 21 Years | 40% |

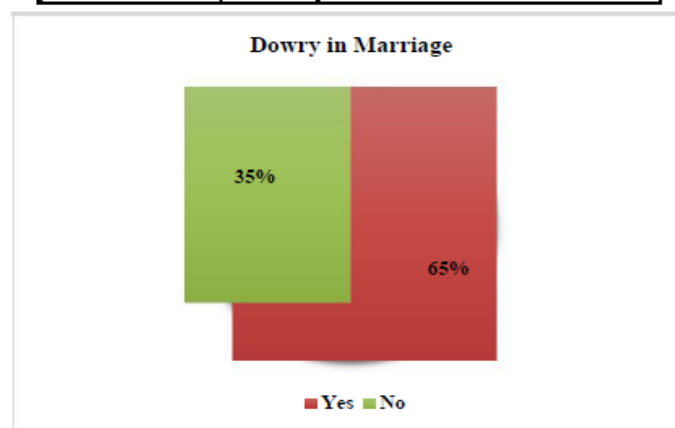


Child marriage is a violation of human rights. It adversely affects education, health and well being of girls and perpetuates cycles of poverty. Child brides experience the detrimental physical, psychological and social consequences of child marriage. This is a global phenomenon and a grave cause for concern.

Bangladesh had one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world. A survey of icddr,b 2013 shows that in Bangladesh, 64% of women currently aged 20–24 were married before the age of 18. This is despite the fact that the minimum legal age of marriage for females in Bangladesh is 18 years and 21 for males. But now in 2015 the scenario has been changed we can from our survey that only 25% of our surveyed people have got married at the age of 12 to 15. The Bangladeshi government should set 18 as the minimum age for marriage to comply with international prohibitions against child marriage, Human Rights Watch said. Recent media reports indicate the prime minister’s cabinet is considering a revision to the law to make 16 the minimum age of marriage for girls. The minimum age for men would be 18. “Setting the age of marriage for girls in Bangladesh at 16 would be a terrible step in the wrong direction,” said Liesl Gerntholtz, women’s rights director at Human Rights Watch.

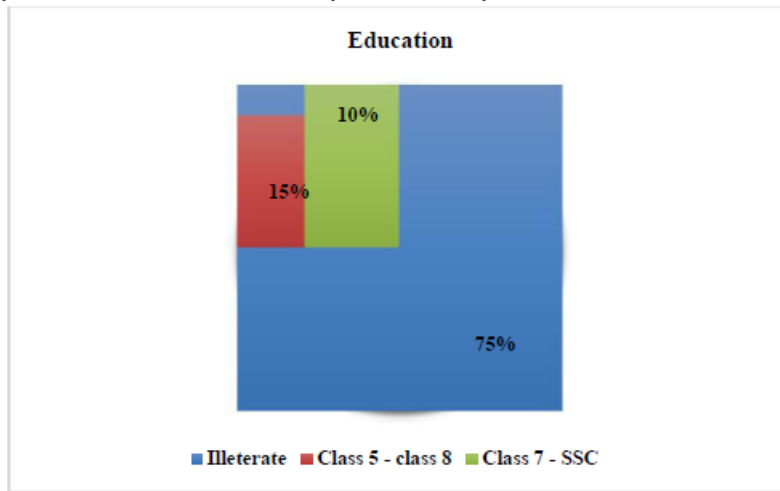
Marriage under the age of 18 deprives girls of their right to education. Many girls drop out of school after entering wedlock. Another adverse effect of child marriage is early pregnancy and childbirth. These can have detrimental and long-term health effects on girls whose bodies are not developed enough to give birth, and also increase health risks to the newborn.

| Dowry in Marriage | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Yes | 65% |
| No | 35% |



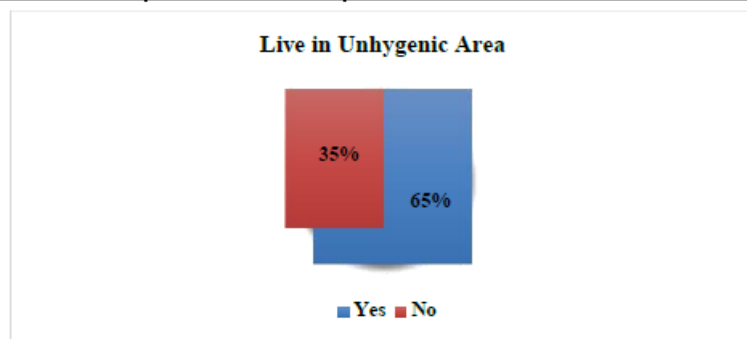
It is very common scenario in Bangladesh that most of the families have to give dowry at the time girl's marriage. In the slum area it is also common, it's about 65% families give dowry to their girl's marriage. Only 35% did not give any dowry. The worse thing is that for this purpose they have to make loan and which they have to repayment a very long period of time. For this reason when a girl born in this family they are not happy at all.

| Education | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Illiterate | 75% |
| Class 5 - class 8 | 15% |
| Class 7 - SSC | 10% |



Literacy means ability to read and write at a specific age. According to CIA world fact literacy rate in Bangladesh is total 59.82% where man literacy is 62% and women literacy rate is 53.4%. From the above pie chart we can observe that 75% of total surveyed people are not getting any education. Most of them engaged in outdoor activities to run their families. Only 10% are getting secondary education whereas 15% are getting Primary education. So the level of education is mostly getting decreased at the time starting their secondary education.

| Live in Unhygienic Area | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Yes | 65% |
| No | 35% |



Hygiene is a set of practices performed for the preservation of health. While in modern medical sciences there is a set of standards of hygiene recommended for different situations, what is considered hygienic or not can vary between different cultures, genders. Some regular hygienic practices may be considered good habits by a society while the neglect of hygiene can be considered disgusting, disrespectful or even threatening. In the observation we see that 35 % of slum people in Dhaka city think that they are live in Hygienic area. 65% people think that they are not. They are suffering for unhealthy living condition in every phase of their life.

VI. Suggestive Recommendations

Social economic condition of Female in the slum area of Dhaka City is not quite pleasant. They do very hard work for their family but don't get that much respect as man does. Still they are neglected any many area of their life. They are not participate in decision making process still they financially contribute to their family. Physical harassment in female of slum area of Dhaka City is very common phenomena which affect her self-respect and dignity.

All the civil society and women group should be more pro-active to stop this crime and try to ensure pleasant life for them. In addition, Particularly the man attitude towards woman have to change and woman should be more conscious about their condition. And try all the possible way to protect themselves in this scenario. Because self help is the best help. They have to keep it mind they have achieve a tremendous success in their economic condition

.Their little bit effort can help them to achieve their Social gain. The condition of sanitation for female of slum is very low. More than 7 families are using only one washroom. Government and NGOs may fund to build more washrooms for slum areas.

Also here government can play a vital role here. Government should pass favorable law and legislation to stop these domestic crimes and also has to ensure that the law is implemented properly. In Bangladesh there some law for protect the right of women but these laws are not familiar to women. Women have the lack of knowledge of these laws. In case of slum women it is miserable; they have no idea of it. Here government duty is make the law familiar to women through different TV and Radio advertisement or giving advertisement to newspaper. Government can also use their social community clinic of every area of Bangladesh for making the law familiar to women.

VII. Concluding Remarks

In this report we have seen that Dhaka is over populated city and the density of population is very high. In case of slum area the density of population is in intolerable situation and living in a very unhealthy and unhygienic condition, basic human rights missing. The people who live in the slum in Dhaka city work very hard but can't achieve minimum living standards. The sufferings of women are more than man; they are working as hard as a man do but can't get the same status. They don't get any respect from their family and society.

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