

Gender Disparity in Bangladesh: The Study of Women's Vulnerable Situations in Patriarchal Society and The Rise of Gender Equality According to SDGs

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Submission:  January 15, 2019

Published:  April 04, 2019

Volume 1 - Issue 2

How to cite this article: Farhana H, Stephen C D. Energy of Corpuscular-Wave Mechanism. Int J Conf Proc.1(2). ICP.000509.2019.

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Abstract

In Bangladesh the situation of women is vulnerable. The patriarchal society is not giving them their actual value and proper rights. But now the government of Bangladesh did set some fruitful goals to create equality between men and women. SDGs which is now desired goal to set up for minimize the inequality between men and women in Bangladesh from different areas such as education, employment, health and nutrition etc. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global goals which is supposed to bring protection, peace and prosperity for the entire human race regardless men and women. However, as we know the society of Bangladesh is centered on the leadership of males. Here in this country patrilineal and patriarchal kinship which do enforces the economic and social system of women. Women are mostly dependent on men; therefore, the status of women is comparatively lower than men. To reduce the problem of gender disparity, the government of Bangladesh is working in different sectors such as education, health, employment etc. But still there is the presence of extreme inequality in those sectors. When the male inhabitants of Bangladesh are getting higher facility in the areas of education, health and employment, but on the other hand's women are lagging behind to participate in various activities and rights from society. Gender disparity has emerged as the prime impediment in acquiring the development goals. But the rays of hope are still peeping from the dark side of gender inequality in Bangladesh through the emergence of SDGs.

Keywords: Gender disparity; Gender equality; Bangladesh; Vulnerable situation; Men; Women; Education; Health; Employment; SDGs; MDGs

Introduction

Gender disparity in Bangladesh is the outcome of constant and continuous discrimination between men and women in different sectors, therefore it has it evidence in various ways such as race, class, culture, politics, and economic condition. The further feature of gender disparity upon women has another harmful branch such as violence against women. As we know that generally gender inequality happens on both the male and female inhabitants of a country in individual situations. And the discrimination against women remains established global epidemic. As we know that globalization is the worldwide movement in all spheres of life but in this era of globalization gender inequality is the most terrific matter and our utmost concern. To join in any public activities women's involvement got changed in recent decades. In Bangladesh some major progress we have noticed in school enrolment at both primary and secondary levels, where the number of female students has increased. Besides the sector of education, there we saw another progress to close the gender gap which is garment industry. A large number of official sectors jobs have approved for women specially. Though we know the society of Bangladesh is male-cantered, which we call patriarchal society. Hence gender discrimination is very common in every levels of community. Women are dependent on men throughout their whole life time. The dominant members of patriarchal society start from home, such as father, husband, brother sons. In Bangladesh we have our own constitutional oaths regarding gender equality, but the law-enactment of this country always ignore the proper rights of women. From child to the adult level, all types of female children, young girls and adult women are deprived to access the realm of education, employment, health care etc than men in society. Women are only entitled for reproductive purpose and bound to do

their household works, and they are not allowed to work outside of home. Gender equality which is considered as an influencing factor of violence against women results from the persistent discrimination of one group of people based on gender. It also manifests itself differently based on race, culture, politics, country and economic situation. Although men and women are subjected to gender discrimination in the individual level, discrimination against women has become a global contagion. Thus, the attainment of sustainable development depends to a large extent on ensuring equality in women's empowerment and promoting gender equality.

Realizing the significance of gender equality and women empowerment, UNDP along with other UN partners and the rest of the global community has been working hard since 2000. As a result of their persistent hard work, they have achieved remarkable successes in different aspects of women's empowerment. For instance, the number of schools going girls has exploded as compared to 15 years ago, and thus gender parity in primary education has been reached in most regions of the world. Even the contribution of women outside agriculture has been strengthened as they now make up to 41 per cent of paid workers as compared to 35 per cent in 1990. This write-up provides a brief overview about the state of gender equality and its challenges in the context of Bangladesh as one of the main goals of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDGs goals in Bangladesh

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the outline to achieve a better and more trustworthy future for all. SDGs got some prominent aims to reduce the global challenges people are facing including the areas of poverty, inequality in the sectors of education, employment, health and nutrition, climate, the issues of environmental degradation, peace and justice. The goals of SDGs are interconnected and they are supposed to acquire their goal and target by 2030. Among all other goals, gender equality is one of the 17 goals in the agenda for sustainable development. Among all other established achievements in different sectors, SDGs make sure that there will be no gender disparity against women in any parts of the world. So, the recognized barriers that creates obstacles to the process of establish gender equality are basically the sexual violence and exploitation, also there are the issue of unequal dividing of unpaid care and domestic task. Apart from the sexual and domestic violence there is also the presence of discrimination against women regarding public decision making. To perceive the goals of SDGs it is salient to accomplish the targets of certify universal access to the issues of sexual and reproductive health for acquiring women's equal rights to economic sectors including land and property.

In spite of the completion of enormous development to ensure gender equality and also women's empowerment under the MDGs, women and girls are still not in stable condition thus suffering various types of discrimination and violence. Therefore, several targets have been set under goal-5 of SDGs. These targets are given below. First goal is to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls. Secondly, the target regarding the elimination of

all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation, thirdly the elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, fourthly, the issue of recognition and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate. In fifthly the target is ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, sixthly it's about ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed under the Programmed of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, seventhly, undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, and access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, under national laws, eighthly, enhancing the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women and finally the target is adopting and strengthening of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

Gender disparity in the sector of education

For creating encouraging opportunities for women, Bangladesh government started affirmative action programs. And this affirmative program basically increases the rate of female literacy. Since the female literacy rate is enhancing but still there, we can see the sure gap in their enrolment. In the program of gender equality female students are treated as outsider from the structure of female literacy. Regarding the gender disparity in Bangladesh for women spread very widely according to the research of some notable scholars. Asadullah MN and Chaudhury N 2006, asserted that, in education of Bangladesh there has some various types of dimension along with career opportunities for females which to some extent connected with social, religious and economic values. While Raynor 2005 mentioned, about the attitudes of Bangladeshi people regarding female education and blamed to those confined minded people who actually are responsible for the gender disparity in education. But some positive issues have been identified by Chowdhury 2002 who found that, gender differences departed from enrolment at primary level. Maitra 2003 also asserted "there is no gender differential in the probability of current school enrolment of children aged 6-12, girls have a significantly higher probability of continuing in school relative to boys".

Another observer and scholar of school efficiency, Khandker 1996 investigate various types of achievements, failure and dropout's ratio for males and females but not with high disparity. He also discovered the lower dropout rate for girls that creates contradiction with the household-level analysis. However, for the secondary level of education the internal efficiency rate got examined by evaluating three components such as completion

rate, dropout rate and survival rate of students according to sex. When the value of completion rate and survival rate are high that means the level of efficiency is higher while on the other hands, if the dropout rate is high which suggests lower level of efficiency and social cost of literacy. For female students the completion rate is comparatively lower than the male students and also presents the decreasing tendency between 1999 and 2003. On the other sides, the dropout rate for females is exorbitant than males. The tendency to decreasing tendency in the issues of survival rate and efficiency rate are noticeable. Here it is to be noted that, despite of launching the female stipend program in secondary education, the completion and survival rate are not satisfying. After investigating the completion rate, dropout rate and survival rate, the education statistics of 2003 presented only 14% of a group of female students who enrolled in grade 6 and the group of female students who did complete secondary education reached grade 10 is lower compared to 20% male students. However, opposite scenario is observed in case of dropout rate where dropout rate is higher for female than the male students. So, we can say that there is a vast discrimination between male and female in the areas of completion rate, dropout rate and survival rate. According to statistics for female in rural area the survival rate was much higher whereas in all areas apart from rural area, the survival rate for male was higher than that of female. So, after rural area the statistics goes to the metropolitan area where the highest 100% survival rate was perceived there, and it was the lowest in 64% rural area.

In the years of 1998 and 2002 the statistics of survival rate showed the gradually diminishing survival of students from grade 6 to grade 10 and it has happened during the 4 years of time. In government high school of Bangladesh, the survival rate for male students is 100 percent. Therefore, it indicates no extermination due to continuous restatement and dropout. But for female in those government high school this rate was about 87 percent, 100 percent in Cadet College and explicitly the endowed schools. For both male and female students, comparatively the aid were different in government and private schools. In government schools male and female, they both got aided but in private schools they were not aided. However, the efficiency in economic sector and the sector of resource became the prime thing in government high school, Cadet College and also in endowed schools.

After doing the survey it is to be noted that in sample schools the survival rate is much higher than national rate evaluated by the BANBEIS. Particularly it is also higher for female in private school in rural areas and this higher survival rate is the result of the implementation of female stipend program from grade 6 to grade 12. After the survival rate, the dropout rate is another thing to notice for the policy makers through location and different kinds of schools. And also, this dropout rate is high in secondary schools. From socio-economic point of view, the students who tend to leave school at their earlier stages take only partial education and most of them are without any doubt became ill-adapted to its social and economic surroundings.

To judge the discrimination in the sector of education between males and females is one of the compound and modernistic

issue. From the past to till now discrimination regarding female education compared to male became changed in various forms. This issue of female education becoming positive recently because female enrolment has been increased in all phases of education in Bangladesh. According to the statistics of student's enrolment data in secondary schools all over Bangladesh from 1981-2002, we did able to see that the rate of female enrolment in secondary schools has presented an enormous increase over these years, as a result it outstretched 52.8% in 2002 from 27.02% in 1981. The values of GPI (Gender Parity Index) detect the expanding trend of female enrolment as well. To investigate female students' enrolment in schools, it is to be noted that there remain wide variations in the issue of location per school and the proportion of female students in total enrolment. Around the years of 2001 to 2003 the highest enrolment rate for female student was in metropolitan area and lowest in rural area. In metropolitan area we did see the extending trend in enrolment per school, while in semi-urban and rural areas this trend indexed as a declining trend. But in municipality area there was the presence of assorted trend in enrolment per school.

In metropolitan areas except rural areas survival rate for male students was higher than female students. This means internal efficiency and holding power of male students in rural school is not satisfactory whereas it is under the grade. For female, the highest survival rate was in metropolitan area and the lowest holding power was detected in semi-urban area. However, from every sides the survival rate in metropolitan school is significant than any other locations and this rate then goes to the municipality area in a greater way.

The main indicators of internal efficiency present survival rates for the govt. high school, Cadet College, private but govt. aided, private but not govt. aided and specially endowed schools. For male the highest survival rate was perceived in govt. high school and the lowest rate was observed in private but not govt. aided school. While on the other hands, for female the highest survival rate was observed in Cadet Colleges and the lowest rate in private but govt. aided schools. In this way we can say that economic proficiency and distinction were outstanding in government high school, Cadet College and especially the endowed schools.

In rural areas the dropout rate was the highest for female students and lowest in the metropolitan area such as lowest means less than one percent. For male students the scenario was almost same, but the changes happened in percentages. Except metropolitan area specially endowed schools the dropout rate was higher than male students. From socio-economic viewpoint, the students who leave school at the earlier stages receive only partial education and the majority of them are obviously ill adapted to its social and economic environment.

As a whole it can be said that, the enrolment in metropolitan and municipality areas are increasing continuously but decreasing is happening in semi-urban and rural areas. In order to judge the actual success in the development of female education, we have noticed female success in SSC examination is upturn in front of their enrolment status. According to the past years female

education statistics such as from 1990-2003 it showed is almost the decreasing rate while the statistics showed increasing rate for male students for getting success in SSC examination. In the metropolitan, municipality areas are the places where the rate of acquiring good results is higher than rural areas. In this same way, we can see in Cadet College students get maximum number of 'A+' and those students are especially male students. Besides Cadet College we observed that Govt. high schools and endowed schools are also good in creating higher success rate and exclusively male students have dominated in achieving higher grades ("A+" and "A"). While on the other hands, female students have been known as popular in getting relatively lower grades such as "A-", "B", "C" and "D".

In spite of acquiring lower grades than male students, we can observe that female students are enrolling in a higher rate, which is increasing our hope about seeing higher rate to get good grades like male students in future. But according to some critics, the negative sides of female students higher enrolling state is, with the help of contaminated clerks, female students take the advantage of female stipend Program and also, they are breaking the proper rules of fulfilling the form to get stipend under the stipend program. So here it can be assuming by them that for adapting this type of negative activity female students results are getting worse day by the, and here they need to be more ethical and honest. As we see those critics against the female stipend program, yet it became an encouraging thing for the female students of Bangladesh. After seeing this dynamic step of providing female stipend program, it could help many male students to forget about the traditional rules imposed upon female students. As a result, finally the stereotype behaviors and ideologies about female students could be eliminated and from that point gender balance or gender equality can be established [1-14].

Gender disparity in the sector of health and nutrition

In Bangladesh, women are deprived of not getting proper treatment regarding health and nutrition, as a result the high maternal mortality rate, high fertility rate, malnutrition and ill health occurred in their life very seriously. According to the statistics of 2010, maternal mortality rate was 2.16 per 1000 live births and also the fertility rate was 2.12. This fertility happened per woman in the time of their reproductive age which is from 15 to 49. And if we investigate other countries fertility rate for women then this is the highest rate in the world. Since Bangladesh is a country where women are dominated by men in a patriarchal society and that is why they women's status are always lower than men. Furthermore, after discovering the rules of patriarchal society it is to be known that, women do wait for men as they are bound to take their meal after all the male members finish eating. And they have no permission to eat before the male members in their house. This is called traditional Bengali roles of women. But basically, women need to take more nutritious during the time of their menstruation and pregnancy. Especially for reproductive health, they rarely get it. Eventually they suffer from anaemia, malnutrition, and another physical complicacy. In Bangladeshi social system, especially in village women are suffering from diarrhoea and communicable disease only because of unhealthy and non-improved sanitation.

Gender disparity also happens in the sector of health and in this issue, Bangladesh has acquired some major progress and also got success to enhance the average life saving task of its population. Nonetheless, the condition of female health is still very bad. Therefore, health care for women is still confined to their reproductive health and that is the reason of their poor health which is neglected by male members in their home. As we know poverty, illiteracy and narrow access to health services incorporated with early marriage, unavailability of premarital counseling, force for early child bearing and defective nutritional status are the more dominant elements for mostly lower health condition of women. In Bangladesh the social structure of a patriarchal society divests women and girls from getting proper nutrition, therefore they become weak and sick compared to the male members in a home and then society. Compared to male members at a family, girls usually get less nutrition and therefore suffering from malnourishment. According to Titumir and Rahman, "The prevalent institutions such as norms, existing values and traditions have been prevailing from generation to generation, resulting in malnourished mothers giving birth to malnourished children" [15]. To establish the health programmes for poor and needy people where women's health services are limited and not so friendly. In Bangladesh most of the women do prefer female doctors for their health checking but in this issue, there are shortage of female doctors and also the cost of treatment from doctors are costly which is another reason of women's sufferings poor health. Thus, the male members at home discourage women to avail proper health services. According to health statistics in Bangladesh there is absolutely a big challenge to sustain the health services for women. The issue of child mortality happened based on sex, where female child mortality is absolutely higher than male child mortality.

The statistics of child mortality shows that in 1993-94 male child mortality was 46.7 per thousand nativities which has reduced to 16 per thousand nativities in 2007 with an annual average reducing rate of 2.19 per thousand nativities. On the other sides the female child mortality was 62.3 per thousand nativities in 1993-94 and it has reduced to 20 per thousand nativities in 2007 with a reducing rate of 3.02 per thousand nativities per year. Therefore, the headway at diminishing child mortality has transpired at a speedy rate for female that their male equivalents. But here we can say the general occurrence of child mortality is higher for female than male. However, the progress at reducing child mortality has occurred at a faster rate for female than their male counterparts but, the overall incidence of child mortality is higher for female than that of male. Additionally, the progress is happening at the same step as in the previous years for both male and female. This denotes that the strategies and programmes may not be implemented strongly in diminishing child mortality. Between 2004 and 2007 the rate of reducing the child mortality was higher for both the male and female.

Now let's come to the point of underweight children where the ratio is high towards female children than male children. In 1996-1997 the percentage of underweight children has reduced up to 58.8 percent and in 2007 that percentage became more decreased up to 42.1 percent with an annual rate of 1.45 percent depletion

per year for female children. On the other hands for male children the percentage has reduced from 54.6 percent to 39.3 peec3nt with a median age of 1.34 percent of depletion. Moreover, we can also notice that the depletion rate in the percentage of underweight children did occur within the slower rate than the previous years for both the male and female children. In fact, advancement in the depletion of underweight children is happening like an underneath rate for female than that of male.

The Initiatives of SDGs program regarding gender disparity in the sector of employment

SDGs showed its utmost success in relation to global conjunction towards the local, national, regional and global levels in the year 2015. To bring success for developing the agenda of SDGs, global leaders did the prominent agreements in 2015, they have several agendas, among them Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was the first agenda. This agreement is necessarily significant in the factors of post 2015 development agenda. In July then came the Addis Ababa action agenda to provide financial development. In September, the world leaders who were involved in the SDGs development agenda did adopt the 2030 agenda seriously for sustainable development along with 17 goals of SDGs which we call as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. The signing of Paris agreement was one of the most historic developments which was based on climate change in December that year 2015. Everyone will not take this agreement positively because there may have some shortage in each relation that needs to be conquered, but those documentation yield a strong base to move forward.

The 2030 agenda of SDGs basically amalgamate the prime objectives of the three agreements along with other pertinent issues and focused to the addition of everyone towards the happening of the development process but especially gave emphasis on gender equality which is goal number 5 among 17 goals. So this goal actually try to present that men and women must be equally treated with same facilities and opportunities as men are getting. This is a core Goal that works to engrave the appropriate and dynamic movement of society for diminishing or keep the balance about gender discrimination and other hurdles.

In spite of knowing that women's empowerment became the central point of SDGs, though they face different kinds of discrimination in different levels of their lives. In the area of "disparity in employment ". Wage discrimination is one of the noticeable discriminations for women. Even in the United States we investigate the statistics of 2015 about women's waging system. There it was vivid that women used to work full time but typically were paid just 80 percent of what men were paid and there lies a certain gap of 20 percent. The same scenario can be noticed in Bangladesh, where women get 21.1% wages which is less than men according to the recent study by ILO (International Labour Organisation).

To close the gap of gender discrimination, Bangladesh worked hard and came long way in empowering women. Women are now

very progressive in Bangladesh after joining and creating their footsteps in all branches of the development and society such as education, health services, administration, business, bank sectors, military and law enforcement forces and even in politics. In the sector of political empowerment, Bangladesh is in leading position among other regions as well as did beat many developed countries in the world. It is great honour for Bangladesh to achieve significant progress of women according to the Global Gap Report 2016 published by World Economic Forum.

As stated by the report that engulfed 144 countries, Bangladesh got ranked 72nd with an overall score of 0.698. Here it needs to clarify that point 1 means parity and the score of Bangladesh is well above the average global score. Bangladesh also leads the South Asian region in all four indicators including, economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and finally the political empowerment. The close competitor of Bangladesh in the region is India but 15 points behind than Bangladesh. The noticeable progress made by Bangladesh is to reduce gender gap over the past one century and achieved 91st position among 114 countries. Here we can see that Bangladesh leaped 19 positions ahead within just 10 years, even though 30 more countries were added in this movement this time.

This remarkable progress that Bangladesh has achieved regarding gender discrimination along with other salient socio-economic advancement in recent years only because of the country's encouraging policy environment provided by the dynamic government of Bangladesh and the unbeatable spirits of the people of this country to move forward against all kinds of obstacles and achieved for the better tomorrow. Also, this success came after getting easier support at the local areas provided by many civil society and non-government organizations. In the constitution of Bangladesh there it has been written clearly that "the State Shall endeavor to ensure equality of opportunity and participation of women in all spheres of national life" and "women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life". Bangladesh also got National Women Development Policy 2011 which is a kind of law that enable women to live without violence and discrimination and they also bound to ensure women empowerment and their equal rights and facilities in different areas of life.

In similarity with the constitutional domineer and also the policy, legal commitment and the political will for ensuring women's legitimate progress. The honorable Prime minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and her government introduced the Gender Budget in the 2009-10 revenue year. After seven revenue years the Gender Budget now has leaped almost 3.5 times. This rate is indicated directly to gimmick women's progress in various issues observed by them. But, the issue of development of women's condition also takes directly or indirectly in various other programmers and agendas. As we can see that Bangladeshi women have made different types of advancements but still, they are paid less than men for equal work. And also, they are facing violence both at home and outside their homes. In 2015, the Bangladesh Bureau of statistics depicted

that 80.2% women in Bangladesh have tolerated violence and ill treatment in their lives from inside and outside of home.

The statistics of Bangladeshi female students' statistics regarding education shows that among both male and female students, female students are in 50% in their primary and secondary levels, but their tertiary level is recently reached to the rate which is around 40%. But the positive thing is to notice in the area of their job, women now are joining the mainstream workforces both in the government and corporate sectors, though to acquire the top positions in those job sectors for women is still not impressive. Bangladesh is now having great challenge to manage the secured conditions for women in the fields of workplace, educational organizations, also in the sectors of child marriage, health and nutrition, the right to hold the leading position in politics and economic sectors.

To establish the voice of women and to ensure of getting basic human rights, in Bangladesh there are some fruitful government foundation and NGOs. The Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), is one of those remarkable government-established foundation who tried to empower women in order to show their capability as a human as well as economic and social facilities. Currently this organization offers both financial and non-financial services to over more than 10 million and 45 million families throughout the country. SDGs program has been conceived for the in-depth and united to implement multidimensional poverty demolishing activity in 150 units across the country, covering around 4.5 million people half of the citizens of Bangladesh who are women.

Previously, women were often used as depressed for lending money from microfinance organizations. But, now the PKSF foundation certify that women play significant roles in the areas of management of financial and non-financial assistances they benefit from the PKSF-POs (Partner Organisations of the PKSF, NGOs through which the PKSF implements its action programmes) under severe PKSF supervision and examining. These women hence getting to expand empowered in their families and in society. The PKSF also gives strong attention toward female education and provides campaigns against child marriage, harassment and violence of female at home and outside of home. Most importantly they are working to give recognition to women about their household chores as economic activities.

In the agenda of SDGs foundation, the supreme importance is to emphasis on women's empowerment where Bangladesh also working on the proper steps against all kinds of violence and discrimination against girls and children. As we know the slogan of International women's day carries very meaningful thoughts and spread it to the general citizen's heart to think about women all over again. In 2017 the slogan for International Women's day was 'Be Bold for Change' thus seems to be an appropriate slogan for women, in 2018 the slogan was "Press for Progress", in this running year 2019 the slogan for International women's day was "Balance for Better". So, on the occasion of International women's day Bangladesh must replenish its pledge to step up endeavours to present this country as a better place for women, trying to take strong attitudes to successfully address the continuous bias, disparity and violence

against women and help to shape women's advancement, celebrate their accomplishments regarding every task. However to establish gender parity in the sector of job and other areas, it is need to be believed that men and women in Bangladesh will lead the country as a better place after fulfilling the agendas of SDGs and to go for success both with men and women can make a balanced world where everyone will live under humanity, dignity and will be able to overcome all types of hurdles and struggles.

Cognitions of gender disparity in Bangladesh and the vulnerable situations of women

Since we saw that in Bangladesh gender disparity is very sensitive issue, therefore the government of Bangladesh did take some initiatives and also, they are still working on this matter about how to diminish the problem of gender discrimination in every sectors of people's lives. To reduce this issue of gender discrimination, Bangladesh is still lagging behind because of the patrilineal society. There is the presence of constitutional affirmations of gender equality but instead of that the right of women is being overlooked. Another reason of having obstacle to get gender equality is our society's worst thinking of not giving opportunity and as well as discouraging from participating in any public activity, and instead of this they are entitled to do only the household chores, taking care of husband, other family members and last but not the least they are known to perform their reproductive role by giving birth of children. To create the demarcation limit between male and female rights, the patriarchal social traditions and values are still dominating in most of the areas of Bangladesh. Now if we discuss about the policy of Bangladesh regarding gender issues then we will able to know about the extreme lackings to make explicit policy which is actually restraining women from taking part in different sectors such as education, health, employment, doing own business, etc. Also, in this country there is no guarantee of achieving effective initiatives for women in any educational institutions, outside of home, for example on road, in any organization, even at home women have no right in a proper way. Violence against women is very common in Bangladesh which is the matter of great tension for parents. They are not safe to go alone outside of home. That is why parents don't want to give permission of their daughters to go outside for working and force them to sit idle at home. In this country, this patriarchal society has one preoccupied mind-set that men are far more efficient and better than women and the women has no quality except managing of their household activities.

This is the main reason behind the discrimination between male and female from their births. In the matter of giving chance in any job, men are always the first priority than women. The employers think that men are more efficient than women, therefore they also think the outcome of men's work will be the perfect one while on the other hands, most of the employers think if they recruit any female then they will face lose. Another important reason of gender discrimination come by the phenomenon called early marriage. This early marriage is the prime obstacle among other obstacles from where girls can't come out and they simply can't join in education, health and the sector of employment. Young girls need to get education for better life but because of their early marriage their

dreams of having education become dreams only. As like the sector of education girls are also depriving from getting jobs in the job market. After these the issue of health come, in thus matter the girls are living in a vulnerable condition. Because of early marriage they are having kids so early and as a result the condition of their health getting worst day by day. In this situation they need supports from every members of family, but they are really not getting supports from the male members at home. Hence, they become more and more hopeless and start to live in despair.

Present state of gender equality in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh women are still dealing difficult situations to establish their proper rights inside of their family, society and as whole to the state. In a real sense woman are facing disparity, exclusion and injustice, in every sectors of their life they are getting negligence under the male dominated society in Bangladesh. The laws and policies about discrimination slow down its formal equality and socio-political situations that stopping women from practicing their rights. Because still in Bangladesh, girls have been considered as burden, especially for poor households where they are in danger of forced marriage at an early age where the practice of dowries which is illegal and burdensome. To take everyday meals, women are usually the last to eat which leads them to have chronically malnourished. Moreover, since women are observing and been treated very badly at the same time of their home and outside of home that makes them socially vulnerable. As a result, this hinders them from fully take part in social activities. Though in Bangladesh this vulnerable situation is going to minimize through some major progress taken by the several government and non-government organizations. For example, the gender gap in school enrolments both in primary and secondary levels, girls now outnumber boys' enrolment. In job sectors, women are now holding important positions and they have now access to be the members of local government council which got the significant responsibilities for rural and urban development and establishment.

In the garment industry, women are getting numerous scopes to get work because of its rapid growth throughout the country and it's consisted of over 90% of its labour force. The rate has been impressive since it's importantly contributed to Bangladesh's GDP growth over 5% than the past decade. Bangladesh government is taking the issue of gender inequality in a serious way that is why they are implementing different types of steps to establish gender equality and women's empowerment. The tempo has been created because of the vision 2021 and 2041 which taking Bangladesh forward. Among the agendas to move forward Bangladesh, Bangladesh government creating scopes for women to taking part in economic and political activities. Bangladesh government do realise the importance of ensure gender equality and for this reason the government is now working after attaining SDGs regarding gender equality and to establish women empowering. They are implementing the tradition on the extraction of all forms of disparity against women (CEDAW) and the Beijing platform for taking proper steps. As we know Bangladesh has already acquired the MDGs to in order to establish gender parity in primary and secondary education at the national level among other success of

the MDGs. Bangladesh has been working persistently to provide women's overall development and success to attain their equal and active participation in the prevailing socio-economic activities and trying to remove the different hindrance on their ways of empowerment. The following are some significant and fruitful initiatives of the government to close the gender gap in Bangladesh.

Women's success in different sectors of the society

In the area of politics, recently women got the empowerment through increasing seats for the National parliaments which is now 50 from 45. In the last national election, the increasing number of women's seats became 20% of total seats. Bangladesh government working on expanding more seats for women in politics through Union Parishad, upazila Parishad, and municipalities which is one-third of the total seats and women got access to be elected directly. In the Union Parishad election, more than 14,000 women are getting elected as public representatives. So now to enhance the dimensions of elected women representative at Upazila level women development forum has been arrived. Women's participation in local level elections was probably one of the greatest turning points for Bangladesh and it will help to close the gender gap.

It is a matter of great instance for other countries that, currently in Bangladesh, the Prime minister, leader of the opposition and speaker all are women. In the fields of Supreme Court, administration, secretaries, additional secretaries, joint secretaries, deputy commissioners, in the sectors of police, armed forces and UN peacekeepers did show improvement in women's empowerment. The government also reserved 10% quota for gazetted and 15% for non-gazetted 10 post for women. Here now we can see in several high court the appellate division judges and district judges are women. Women are being posted in the Field level Administrative dimensions as Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police and Upazila Nirbahi Officer. Thus, they are performing their duty very successfully. In military service, now many women are getting allotted in the armed forces, such as army, navy and air forces. Also, many women can be seen in the areas of police forces and different cadre services. In field of different universities of Bangladesh, women are also presented there, for example Vice Chancellor of Jahangir Nagar University, Pro-Vice Chancellors of Dhaka University and Chittagong University are women. The aspect of gender has been united into Bangladeshi peacekeeping missions as well. The improvement of gender gap for Bangladesh now reached to the great level where female police officers are now holding the top positions as a female police officers to the United Nations peacekeeping operations as formed police unit.

Gender accessible budgeting

From the year 2009 the gender-receptive budget has been programed by the Government of Bangladesh to ensure the participation of women in different types of activities. All the ministers did embraced gender-receptive budgeting and made that explicable towards their allocation for the economic and social empowerment for women. Allotment for women's development has been granted like 7,908.7 million, and this is 26.80% of the total budget in the current financial year.

Women's impressive notion in education

In all other South Asian countries Bangladesh got the first place to close the gender gap to provide primary education for girls. Bangladesh government achieved this remarkable success because of the effective public policy, resource allotment and strong commitment from public and private sectors. Bangladesh government is providing primary education as mandatory and free for all children aged between 6 and 10. All children are getting primary and secondary levels text books as free of cost. Up to grade XII in public educational institutions girl's education expenses are also free from the government. Another innovative program known as stipend program has been added to encourage girls in their studies and help to reduce drop-out rates, this is called as the alluring strategy to create girl's education that resulted as gender equality.

Women's success in the areas of economic and social activities

To accelerate women's economic empowerment, inclusive capabilities have been assured by providing substantial training, creating opportunities in job market and also ensuring the participation in the labour market is noticeable. Therefore, Bangladesh government is now providing the essential support to small and medium business-oriented women who are passionate about entrepreneurship. They are getting receive 10% of the Small enterprise fund and 10% industrial plots as an entrepreneur. In the society of Bangladesh more extensive social welfare and safety facilities have been taken for various kinds of women such as allowance for destitute women, in the time of maternity women are also getting allowance, then lactating mother allowance, disabled women allowance, divorced women allowance and so on. For ensuring food for vulnerable and extremely poor women, there is one fruitful group who is providing foods for them known as VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding). To establish the economic empowerment for rural women Bangladesh government is giving collateral free micro credit which is up to 2.5 million and has been given with a 5% service charge. For the economic empowerment of rural women, collateral-free micro-credit up to 2.5 million is given with a 5 per cent service charge. According to the garment industry's statistics of Bangladesh more than 3 million women are working in the RMG sector alone. Also women are very active in the field of agricultural production which is facilitated through access to agricultural mechanisms and loans that given for agro-processing, homestead gardens, nurseries, bee-keeping and other programs. Women's participation in agricultural production is facilitated through access to agricultural technologies and loans given for agro-processing, homestead gardens, nurseries, bee-keeping and other activities.

Success in the area of maternity and health

The current government has extended maternity leave for expecting mothers from four months to six months. Bangladesh has also got enormous success to reduce the maternal mortality rate (MMR) so drastically. Over the last two centuries MMR reduced up

to 66% and is dropping around 5.5% each year. Therefore, this kind of success is making Bangladesh highly successive for achieving the target of 143 deaths per 100,000 live births under the MDGs of 2015. According to a 2013 survey by different UN organisations, the estimated MMR in Bangladesh stood at 170 per 100,000 live births. Now the current government got more positive aims regarding MMR, they have plans to reduce MMR to 63 per 100,000 live births by 2030. The necessary steps have been taken already for delivering primary health care services to rural, marginal and vulnerable women through community clinics

To ensure gender quality Bangladesh government's acts and policies

Bangladesh government has formed several acts and policies in the last eight years to ensure gender parity and working to provide protection and security to women. Therefore, acts and policies that has been created by Bangladesh government which are given below.

- A. Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000
- B. Legal Aid Services Act, 2000
- C. Mobile Court Act, 2009
- D. Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2009
- E. Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010
- F. Acid Crime Prevention (Amended) Act, 2010
- G. Vagrants and Shelter less Person (Rehabilitation) Act, 2012
- H. Human Trafficking (Deterrence and Suppression) Act, 2012
- I. Children Act, 2013
- J. Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Act, 2014;
- K. National Education Policy 2010
- L. Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Development Policy 2013
- M. National Plan of Action to implement National Women Development Policy
- N. National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children 2013-2025; and
- O. National Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking 2015-2017.

Along with those above initiatives, Bangladesh government also took some other steps to establish gender equality and women empowerment. These initiatives are as such, social security and social empowerment of women, rehabilitation and legal aid for women victims, prevention of women's oppression, institutional mechanism for women's development, sports and women and digital Bangladesh.

Challenges of ensuring gender equality

As we know the government of Bangladesh has taken different

and effective actions to close the gender gap but the gender equality has not yet been ensured. But there are several challenges that hinders the process of establishing gender equality in Bangladesh. First of all, we can look towards the complicated situation for women in job sectors. So according to Human Development Index it has been clear that in 2011, 58.7% of women took part in the labour force compared to 82.5% of male. And this is sure that female participation is concentrated towards lower-level jobs and wages which is almost half of the male wage rate. Now in the area of education the gender parity has been acquired in primary and secondary education enrolment and the drop-out rates are higher for female students than male students which is quite disappointing. In the health sector, still the maternal mortality rate is high comparatively. The rate is 194 per 100,000 live births and only 24% of births have been fulfilled by skilled health physicians. Also 30% of adult women in Bangladesh are getting ill health because of malnourishment from their families which is happening only by their male members less attention to them. In the sector of early marriage, Bangladesh is utterly unfortunate. The average age of marriage Bangladesh is 16.4 but most of the people especially in rural areas are not following and as a result early childbearing which creates high fertility and maternal mortality. Several laws remaining to prevent violence against women but because of the enforcement those laws remain as a great challenge. Still in Bangladesh there is lack of the agency for women about providing their rights and entitlements that impedes them for playing the fruitful roles at the levels of administration and governance. Last but not the least the patriarchy and male-dominated society of Bangladesh also creating serious challenge to the women's movability and involvement in various types of conventional and unofficial areas.

Conclusion

The issue of gender disparity in Bangladesh got the significant interest throughout the country. The vulnerable status of Bangladeshi women is quite a matter of tension, but the government of Bangladesh took lots of programs to minimize the dangerous effects of gender inequality. They tried MDGs program and also SDGs program to reduce the vulnerable condition of women in Bangladesh, in some areas SDGs program got the success and provided noticeable progress to ensure women's safety and also, they tried to establish women's rights after living in male dominated society. So, the issue of gender equality came soon after getting success in diminishing gender inequality. This gender equality brings not only fundamental human rights but also it bears the essential foundation for a clam, prosperous and sustainable world, and then only we can call that as a globally sustainably world. In spite of getting success to make the balanced gender issue, enormous amount of gender disparity is moving all around the world. The first aspect of gender inequality is entered towards the violence against women, such as sexual violence by the intimate partner. After seeing the ratio, we have come to know that 1 in 5 women that having the age limit of 15-49 are experiencing physical or sexual violence within a 12 month period in 49 countries and they got no laws to protect women from domestic violence.

Though Progress is happening regarding harmful and unlawful practices such as child marriage and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), and it has been reduced by 20% in the past decade, but still there is need lot more work to be done to eradicate such practice completely. If the world can provide women the basic equal rights in the areas of education, health care, decent work, the access in politics, economy and decision making, then the sustainable society and economy can build up in a vast way. For this there is the need to implement new legal frameworks about female equality in the workplace to eliminate the harmful practices towards women. Thus, it will fuel the male dominated society to end the crucial gender-based discrimination that is over powering in many countries around the world. In Bangladesh this issue of gender equality is very urgent to establish and also need to build awareness among communities and families. Male and female needs some advocacy to create the balanced gender equality, advocacy needs to be executed with the family members to include women in the family and community level economic activities. They require networking among women, influential community and educational leaders to make the network strong and those influential leaders will work as a catalyst by bringing changes in society and to the boarder sense to the world. The necessary initiatives are required to be taken to develop the women's access to economic social services. To engage as a partnership with different institutions of influence can bring changes in the typical mind-set and the traditional structure of society. In the area of decision-making the implementation of foster equality is much needed. Also, the different types of programmes and agendas need to be implemented to facilitate women's access over resources. After that the government of a country need to launch effective and different laws to reduce the gender inequality in a larger way to ensure the safety and right of women.

To sum up it's obvious to tell that, the government of Bangladesh tried to implement some major steps on gender inequality, but those steps were not constructive therefore full of irregular monitoring. As we know in every society woman needs to have good status from every sector and in Bangladesh as well. But the Bangladeshi women are depriving from getting proper opportunities in different areas such as in job market women are depriving than male, after that in the sector of education women are lagging behind. They are even maltreated by the males in case of getting good care and nutrition at home. Women are only confined to do household chores and not allowed to go outside of home for doing job. Since here in this paper i have discussed about the statistics of gender disparity which actually did elucidate about less improvement about gender policy implementation in coming years than previous years. In order to have a balanced society our government needs to take effective actions for the establishment of gender equality and the tactics about how to emphasis on the issue of women empowerment. However, if they are able to get success for promoting the strong policy implementation on gender then we would able to get sustainable development. Besides this, the main goal about reaching towards the SDGs targets, it will again become difficult for Bangladeshi government to get success. As we know, the rate of gender disparity is very high in

Bangladesh and the patriarchal society are dominating the root of male centered society. Therefore, it is quite tough to achieve gender equality without going through the gender inequality. The society of Bangladesh usually follow their traditional rituals and also, they are very conservative regarding the freedom of women. That is why women in this country are depriving from getting proper rights just like males both in private and public areas.

The core structure of this attitudes of doing discrimination between male and female members in a society got some reasons, such as poverty, poor and uneffective community structures, some cultural practices which are utterly destructive and inappropriate, then the issuance and usage of expedient in the background of a muscular patriarchal society so it is to be noted that women in Bangladesh are extremely confined within the tasks of their own families instead of serving their community and also work place. They are always subjected to the term gender inequality. Since we know the issue of gender disparity come from the very first time of a female child and it continues till her death. This issue of gender discrimination carries its ruling power from past few decades. Though the society of Bangladesh did achieve some positive outcomes to minimize the obstruction for getting women's success and gradually building development. But recently the government of Bangladesh is taking some effective steps to attain gender equality through various types of refined policy and programme development. They are also doing efforts through some non-governmental organization such as NGO's to uplift and expand women's contribution in socio-economic ventures and intensify the ability of women's economic conditions. Where there is the matter of progress, we will always face that provocation are also there to gain genuine equality between male and female. As a whole it can be said that the government of Bangladesh needs to be cautious and also, they need to find innovative strategies and fruitful perspectives, otherwise the goals of attaining gender equality might remain like an evasive and a faraway aspiration.

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