

Education and Language and the Role of the Power: A Study of a Rural Area in Bangladesh



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Date of Submission:

4th June 2021

Education and Language and the Role of the Power: A Study of a Rural Area in Bangladesh

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of English and
Humanities University of Liberal Arts,
Bangladesh

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of BA in English

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.

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Table of Content

Abstract

Chapter: 1

1.1: Introduction	1
-------------------	---

1.2: Objectives of the Report	1
-------------------------------	---

Chapter: 2 Literature Review

2.1: What is Power?	2
---------------------	---

2.2: Power in everyday life	2
-----------------------------	---

2.3: Power as an tool for authority and corruption	3
--	---

2.4: Power in Relationships	4
-----------------------------	---

A. Interpersonal Relationships	4
--------------------------------	---

B. Power Dynamics in the Workplace	5
------------------------------------	---

C. Power in Marital Relationships	5
-----------------------------------	---

2.5: Power and Education	5
--------------------------	---

2.6: Power and Gender	6
-----------------------	---

2.7: Power Structure in Rural Bangladesh	7
--	---

Chapter: 3 Methodologies

3.1: Research Design	8
----------------------	---

3.2: Research Questions	9
-------------------------	---

3.3: Study Location Areas	9
---------------------------	---

A. Moheshkhali	9
----------------	---

B. Bhola	10
----------	----

C. Patharghata	11
----------------	----

3.4: Participants of the study	12
--------------------------------	----

3.5: Summary of the demographic	12
---------------------------------	----

3.5: Data Analysis	13
--------------------	----

3.7: Ethical Consideration	14
----------------------------	----

Chapter : 4 Findings

4.1. Thematic Analysis	15
4.2. Importance of Money and Wealth in Society to Maintain Status	15
4.3. Power Creates Gender Discrimination	15
4.4. Education as a Tool to Exercise Power	16

Chapter: 5 Discussion

5.1. Power as the foundation of every Relationship	18
a) Power in Family Relations	18
b) Power Relationship among the Relatives and Neighbors	20
c) Power in Professional Relations	21
5.2. Education can be a way for developing lives	23

Chapter: 6 Conclusion

References	27
-------------------	----

Abstract

Power is the basic element that influences every situation and every relation in human and social life. People's thoughts, feelings and reactions are reflected through their language and expressions, and power has always a great influence on human attitudes and thoughts and language works as a medium to showcase the power relation in our life. Through this report, I examined how power relations are in rural Bangladeshi people's lives and how education plays a key role in it. I have also investigated how education can be a way for changing the rural Bangladeshi people's lives. Moreover, I tried to report how language is used to showcase power. I believe such approaches can help us to know better about rural Bangladeshi people, their struggles and their survival. We will learn how power relations work in rural areas in Bangladesh outside of the political spheres. For this research, I followed a convergent mixed-method. I used a questionnaire survey along with interviewing the participants from the study areas to collect. Coding and thematic analysis both were followed to interpret the data from the psychological perspectives of the participants. The findings have been reported that relate power and the opportunities of education affecting rural life.

Chapter 1:

1.1: Introduction:

Power is the most wanted thing in human life. It has become an existential element in human society. Nowadays for existing in a society with other people one needs power. It is not only a word or fact or subject; rather it is an element with relation to other multiple elements. Power is interconnected with many other things, especially being related to skills or knowledge. It is also connected to authority, often acting as a source of happiness for many. Again, for some, power is the ability to exert authority over powerless people. In society, we decide one's status by measuring his/her power (money, wealth, position, fame), and using the power he/she dominates other people who are dependent on him/her. Through this report, we are going to investigate different aspects of power relations in Bangladeshi rural socio-cultural life expressed through the use of language. I will also examine the influence of power relations in Bangladeshi rural socio-cultural life as the base or the foundation of every relationship in life. In this report, power will be discussed as the foundation of human relationships, and I will be investigating how human attitudes and psychology reacts with power in different rural socio-cultural phenomena and how language works as a medium to showcase power.

1.2: Research Objectives:

My objective is to portray power's place in human life by indicating power connection in every sphere of life. Such as, in personal life, professional life, society and economy, etc. We also will observe the influence of power in human discourses and attitudes. Again, to know both positive and negative aspects of power relations. Moreover, power can be a tool for undeveloped people to bring changes and improve their life.

Chapter: 2

Literature Review:

Power has always been a popular topic to be discussed. Power relations are discussed in various literature as a topic by interconnecting with various facts like knowledge, authority and corruption, in education, gender and human relationships etc. Power mostly is seen as a hegemony to practice authoritative power under political views. In some literature, authors have discussed power structure from Bangladesh's perspectives. They have described the structure of local governing power in rural society in Bangladesh, and showed how rural people face problems for such local power since power is mostly practiced for oppressing the powerless people by political authority. But no literature has been found that indicates power relations from the point of view of human attitudes and nature from Bangladesh's perspectives.

2.1: What is Power?:

To define modern disciplinary power, Foucault stated that power relations are conducted through different connections or networks of institutions, authorities, agencies in the society (Marsden, 2001). According to Foucault (1977, p.93), power is neither any kind of institute, nor it has any kind of structure. Rather it works as a non-structural process within a society that strengthens oneself in any perplexing situation. The power works as an interconnected wave among the relations to oneself, to others, to different agencies, to different authorities by their attitudes, by their attributes, by their personal and individual relationships and actions (Eagleton, 1991, p.7).

2.2: Power in everyday life:

Subsequently, Foucault says that power is related to everyday actions or discourses such as human thinking and speaking process; their ideas, thoughts, knowledge, practices, attitudes

and approaches (Marsden, 2001). In everyday life, power is desired in every corner of life. Foucault described how power is exercised in our day-to-day life stating that power is everywhere, and power is practiced through every action that expresses the true self of our's (Foucault, 1991; Rabinow, 1991). He moreover added that power comes from everywhere, not in a structural form but also works as a metapower (Foucault 1991; Rabinow 1991). Power is compared with the human actions by Foucault in "The Subject and Power" where power is mentioned both in capital or small letters with a universal idea that can only be performed through different human actions (Foucault, n.d.).

2.3: Power as a tool for authority and corruption:

Power is explained by Pittacus as a measurement tool of one's eligibility as an individual which is measured by his actions. Power is also mentioned as an authoritative mood by a German sociologist called Max Weber. According to Weber, power is the ability to push one's own will on other individuals (Weber, 1922). Instead of exercising personally power works on a wider and larger scale. Power is exercised in different large spheres like social groups, different professional institutions, and government organizations. Again, the power that is exercised in government organizations is not only practiced over its citizens. Besides, a dominant nation usually influences other governments to take over control over other nations (Lumen Learning: Government and Politics). Normally power is exercised through various actions and reactions, it also can be exercised through violence but power itself is not violence. Rather it is a way of people's acting subject or subjects through which people conduct their actions. (Foucoult, 1982) Power is usually performed through corruption. Lord Acton said that power acts intending to perform corruption. He also mentioned that complete power intends one to corrupt fully (1887). Authority is related to power; accepting and the following power. Power always favors or listens

to the authoritative individuals and they gain and are thought to be respectful. Authority also is thought to be truthful, reasonable and fruitful (Lumen Learning: Government and Politics). Weber mentioned three types of authoritative structures relating it to the social economy. The three authorities are; traditional authority, charismatic authority and legal-rational authority. Traditional authority is the acceptance of power that has a source of perceived legitimation, Charismatic authority is the power legitimation that has the base of an authoritative figure's extraordinary individual qualities. Legal-rational is the legitimation of rules, regulations and laws (Weber, 1922).

2.4: Power in Relationships:

A. Interpersonal Relationships: Psychologists John French and Bertram Raven have conducted a theory regarding five main types of power in the 1950s explaining that a person can influence one's surroundings such as his close ones, environments, and even the incidents of his life. For example, coercive power, reward power, formal power, connection power and referent power. (Kovach, 2020, p.2) Power can impact interpersonal and mutual relationships. In the relationships where equality is available, those relations are sound, safe and healthy. For healthy relationships people should have some necessary elements like; each individual in any relationship should have their value, respect towards each other's feelings and interests. Again, Millar and Rogers explained how the control power is influenced by the right of giving directions, the right for defining the limits and delimits, the interpersonal actions and reactions. (1976) Rogers-Millar and Millar linked the concept of relational control of different interpersonal power in two ways. Firstly, they explain three power domains such as bases, processes and outcomes. The relational control is more connected to power processes than bases and outcomes. They additionally mention an opposite relational control which people conduct

for maintaining power. Secondly, they have explained relational control as “meta-power” as some dynamic behaviors that select some rules in a relationship.

B. Power Dynamics in the Workplace: In the workplace usually power works through the process of negotiation. During the hiring process in the company normally negotiation happens between the employee and the employer as a mechanism to exercise power. Mostly the employers negotiate or decide the salaries for the employees, but in some cases, employees also can negotiate for a higher salary for the help of their skills.

C. Power in Marital Relationships: Webster and Rice (1996) in their studies describe equity theory in a marital relationship while they make decisions. This equity theory is established based on the presumption that people are desired to be treated equally in marital relationships. According to this theory, couples normally compare their marital status with other married couples relationship’s status. In this method, if anyone finds their relationship status lower than others, they will feel that there is inequality in their relationship. Adam (1965) has established an equity model with four essential points;

1. Any kind of assumption can create difficulties.
2. The number of difficulties can be measured by the amount of inequity.
3. The created difficulties influence the individuals to recover it.
4. The desire for reducing inequity is equal to the assumed inequity.

2.5: Power and Education:

Authorities are referred to as the people who are engaged with making compulsory decisions. (Bolman and Deal, 1991, p.193) School heads and principals have enough authoritative power by their higher respective positions in society. Heads and principals can formally influence through their position. (Sources of Power in Education) Holey explains how

power is being operated in any educational institution. Holey (1982) mentioned two ways for power operation; such as authority and influence. The most certain source of power in any institution is the formal authority which is a legitimated power that is considered as one of the most recognized and acknowledged power for interactions. This formal authoritative power is a socially approved one that makes power relations. This only occurs while such power is recognized as one's right for ruling some specific spheres of human life under acceptable authority. (Morgan, 1997, p.172)

2.6: Power and Gender:

According to the General Secretary of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, gender equality has always been one of the big questions. For the patriarchal societal system and gender discrimination, there has been a power gap in every sphere like national economies, politics and corporations. He also added that women in society are still out of serious and responsible positions like in the government sectors and in the corporate sectors and many other respectable positions. Female figures often face threats and social harassment at every step of their lives. (Guterres, 2020) The gender discrimination females face in regards to their rights, role and not having equal power in different traditional societies can greatly create an impact on their mental and physical health. It affects women's reproductive roles, it can create high birth rates, maternal mortality can be increased which can influence women's self-confidence, and can affect their ability of decision making. For instance, Nepal had a high maternal mortality rate of 830 out of 100,000 childbirth which is less than 15 deaths in any other developed countries. (Ay et al., 2009)

2.7: Power Structure in Rural Bangladesh:

The available local power structure in Bangladesh can be explained under two domains; the Marxian and the Weberian domain. According to Marxian thought, the power structure of Bangladesh is mainly production-based and portrays the economical status through one's land ownership and his position or class in society. On the contrary, Weberian thoughts focus on the power factors like position, class, political stability (Habib, 2016).

Bangladeshi rural power structures both formal and informal institutions are changing and influencing the lives of rural area people. Through these power changes, rural individuals are facing disadvantages socially and economically. For example, farmers are forced to sell their lands to influential landlords, the owner of the brick industries, and the brokers. Mostly they force the farmers who have no political support. Those powerful influencers can force them since they have a good connection to the local political authorities (Lewis & Hossain, 2008).

Through this report, I will show how power is practiced outside any governing institutions, inside any social institutions like in family by male individuals like husbands, sons, fathers, brothers over female family members like mother, sisters, wives, daughters; again, inside any professional institutions among the employees and the employers. Moreover, this report will investigate how such power practice is conducted through the medium of their language and speech and their attitudes, how power is exercised through physical force, monetary remuneration, oppressions, political patronage, and cultural ideology such as patriarchy, gender discrimination, religious belief and social superstitions in rural Bangladesh (Damico et. al, 2008). I will examine in this report how people speak differently in different situations, how their speech and language differ with different plots, time, and with different individuals (Stanford University, 2019).

Chapter: 3

Methodology

I will mention the research details in this section. I will be discussing the research methods that we have applied throughout this study. I will moreover discuss the research questions along with the study location areas and participants showing up the demographic and statistical data. I will show how I analyze the data I found during the study. Additionally, I will mention the ethical consideration I maintained throughout my study.

3.1: Research Design:

This report has been conducted by following a convergent mixed-method study since both qualitative and quantitative methods are done iteratively at a time for this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). During the study, data has been collected in two steps: firstly, through a quantitative method, I collected information regarding the statistical data about the participant's family members, their literacy rates, income, age and other numerical information, a survey is done with a questionnaire using numbers. In the second step, a qualitative interview has been taken to collect information regarding participants about the objectives of this study. A survey is done in different rural areas in Bangladesh such as Moheshkhali, Patharghata, and Bhola. A questionnaire has been made and some data has been collected through this questionnaire. Some quantitative data is collected through the questionnaire with numbers and statistics like family members, the number of children in a family, monthly and yearly income, the number of lands and assets, etc. A large number of interviews have been taken of the people from those study areas to get qualitative data. From the interviewees' life struggles and their experiences, we realize their cultures and their status in society. We also used some qualitative studies like power theories to build up some links with power and the rural socio-cultural life during the study for

better results and understanding. Again, some psychological approach is applied during the study to connect with the interviewees' feelings, emotions, their thoughts and problems, and after that the data are linked up qualitatively with the power theories. About 186 interviews were taken from the study areas and the questionnaire has been solved by each of them.

3.2: Research Questions:

1. How does power use language to influence relationships in the social-cultural life of the rural people?
2. How can education and the mastery of language help rural people change their lives by gaining social power?

3.3: Study Location Areas:

A. **Moheshkhali:** Moheshkhali is an island of Bangladesh which is situated at 21°28' and 21°46' Northern latitudes and in between 91°51' and 91°59' Eastern longitudes. The island is surrounded by Chakaria on its Northern side, on the Southern part Cox's bazaar and Bay of Bengal is situated, on the Eastern side the Cox's Bazaar and Chakaria Upazila are located, and on the Western part, there are Kutubdia and Bay of Bengal. (Banglapedia) Moheshkhali has an area of 362.18 sq. km with a land area of 249.8 sq. km and a riverine area of 112.38 sq. km. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics BBS, 2013) It has 1 municipality, 9 wards, 28 mahallas, 8 unions, 25 mauzas and 25 villages. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) It has 58177 households and a total population is about 321218 with 165693 males and 155525 females. The sex ratio (M/F) of this location is 107 and the average size of households is 5.5 and the density per sq. km is 887. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) According to the statistics of 2011, in Moheshkhali among 321218 total populations, there are 301858 Muslims, 16647 Hindus, 2682 Buddhist, 6 Christian, 25 other religious people. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics,

BBS, 2013) According to the statistics of 2011, among 116760 males about 49.8 percent of males are married and about 49.8 percent of males are unmarried. On the other hand, among 110272 females 35.3 percent of females are unmarried and 58.2 percent are married, 0.3 percent males and 5.9 percent females are widowed, 0.1 percent males, and 0.6 percent females are divorced/separated. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) Moheshkhali Island has 570 ponds, 1 dighee, 2 river flows, 4 flood camps/shelters, 72 cyclone shelters, 6 stadiums/playgrounds and 0 park/amusement parks. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013)

2. **Bhola:** Bhola is situated at the center of the Southern Bangladesh, and it has the largest island of Bangladesh “Bhola Island”, and it is located under the Barishal District. Bhola is located in between 21°54' and 22°52' north latitudes and in between 90°34' and 91°01' east longitudes. Bhola is surrounded by Lakshmipur and Barishal district in the Northern side, in the Bay of Bengal in the Southern part, in the Eastern part Lakshmipur and Noakhali districts, the lower Meghna River and Shahbazpur Channel, and in the Western part Patuakhali and Tetulia River is situated. (Banglapedia) Bhola is a delta island with a total land of 3403.45 sq.km, 2104.59 sq. km land area, reserve forest 165.4 sq. km and 1133.46 sq. km river area. Bhola Upazila has 5 Municipality, 45 Wards (PSA), 64 Mahallas, 68 Unions, 349 Mauzas, 439 villages and 60 Depopulated Mauzas. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) Bhola has 372723 households with 884069 males, 892726 females, 1776765 both sex. It has a sex ratio (M/F) of 99, an average size of households of 4.76 and the density per sq. km is 522. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) According to the statistics of 2011, the total population by religion is 1776795 among them 1715497 Muslims, 61162 Hindus, 35 Buddhists, 71 Christians and 30 other religious people. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) There are 637417 males

and 654965 females and among them 38.6 percent males and 26.3 percent females are unmarried. Again, 60.7 percent males and 67.8 percent females are married, 0.7 percent males and 5.7 percent females are widowed, 0.2 percent males and 0.3 percent females are divorced/separated. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013) There are 76915 ponds, 49 dighees, 12 rivers flow, 16 flood camps/shelters, 339 cyclone shelters, 252 stadiums/playgrounds and 1 park/amusement park. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013)

3. **Patharghata:** Patharghata upazila has an area about 387.36 sq. km which is located in between 22°14' and 22°58' in the Northern latitudes and in the Eastern longitudinal part it is located in between 89°53' and 90°05'. In the Northern part there are Mathbaria and Bamna upazilas, on the Southern side there is Bay of Bengal, In the Eastern part there are Barguna Sadar and Bishkhali river, and in the Western part there is Haringhata river. (Banglapedia) In Patharghata Upazila there are a total area of 387.36 sq. km, a total land area of 234.11 sq. km, a reserve forest area of 37.29 sq. km and a riverine area of 115.96 sq. km. It has 1 municipality, 9 wards, 9 mahalla, 7 unions, 42 mauzas and 66 villages. It has 43085 households, 81 males, 83 females, 164 both sex, the sex ratio (M/F) is 97, average size of households is 3.8 and the density per sq. km is 423. Population by religion in Patharghata is 146863 Muslims, 17031 Hindus, 1 Buddhist, 31 Christian and 1 other religious people. The number of males in Patharghata is 62733, females is 65793, widowed males are 0.9%, widowed females are 8.5%, the number of divorced/separated males is 0.2% and divorced/separated females is 0.9%. In Patharghata there are about 24821 ponds, 11 :dighee, 2 river flows, 6 flood camps/shelters, 20 cyclone shelters, 4 stadiums/playgrounds and 2 parks/amusement parks. (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, BBS, 2013)

3.4: Participants of the Study:

The targeted interviewees were both the males and females of those study areas. No religious boundaries have been followed during the interviews. Mostly the rural common people (both males and females) who live their lives with great hardship and live hand to mouth like the farmers, day laborers, hawkers, fishermen, rickshaw pullers, CNG Drivers, Pipeline workers, masons, housewives of different age groups from 18 to 60 years old were the targeted interviewees to learn the core problems and the rural cultures in depth.

3.5: Summary of the Demographic:

Table-01: The demographic table of the respondents from Moheshkhali, Patharghata and Bhola: (Source: Author)

Study area	Males	Females	Average Income	Average household size	Literacy Rate In rural area in percentage
Moheshkhali	32	19	11.66 per head	5.5 per households	43.1%
Bhola	47	23	10.76 per head	6.5 per households	36.89%
Patharghata	37	28	11.72 per head	5.6 per households	72.4%

Moheshkhali, Bhola and Patharghata have 32, 47 and 37 male participants, 19, 23 and 28 female participants respectively. The average income of these study areas are 11.66 per head,

10.76 per head and 11.72 per head. The average household size of these areas are 5.5, 6.5 and 5.6 per household. The literacy rate in rural areas in percentage of these three study areas are 43.1%, 36.89% and 72.4%.

Table-02: Proportion of the males and females respondents of this study: (Source: Author)

Study Areas	Total participants	Total male participants	Total female participants	Total male participants in percentage	Total female participants in percentage
Moheshkhali	51	32	19	61.53%	37.25%
Bhola	70	47	23	67.14%	32.86%
Patharghata	65	37	28	56.92%	43.08%

Total participants from three study areas Moheshkhali, Bhola and Patharghata are 51, 70 and 65. Total male participants are 32, 47 and 37, and total female participants are 19, 23 and 28. The percentage of the male participants are 61.53%, 67.14% and 56.92%, and the total female participants are 37.25%, 32.86% and 43.08%.

3.6: Data Analysis:

For analyzing the data, some analytical and theme-based approaches have been used during the study. From the questionnaire survey, I have come up with some numerical data that helped us to finalize an idea about the participants' family status, their income, age, rate of literacy, an average of the members of the households, etc. (Table 1 and 2) Besides, for qualitative data analysis a content analysis method has been used where transcriptions are made

to get texts through the surveyed information. All the data that have been found is coded, and analysed thematically like education and power relation, gender and power, power as the base of every relationship etc. Finally, with such thematic analysis and coding, we have identified the power relation in rural society in Bangladesh.

3.7: Ethical Consideration:

This study also has maintained some ethical considerations or issues. The ethical consideration of any research study normally can be maintained through six categories such as voluntary consideration, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, the potential for harm, communicating results and other more specific ethical issues. () during this study, we also have tried to consider such ethical considerations. All the participants voluntarily participated and were all informed about all the queries before they were interviewed. While conducting the research study we were very much aware of our participants' confidentiality and anonymity. We tried to keep in mind that our participants should not face any potential harms like physical, psychological, emotional harms, or any kind of harassment. During the research communication, we were very careful about the result communicating issues like plagiarism, academic frauds and we did not misrepresent our results. We also were prepared for any sort of ethical issues that could have arisen during the study conduction in the study areas and took precaution for those issues.

Chapter: 4

Findings

4.1. Thematic Analysis:

The results we found were based on the thematic analysis of the transcriptions made from the interviewees' perspectives and answers. The thematic analysis is the representation of the power relation in different socio-cultural scenarios in rural Bangladesh. The themes that emerged from the questionnaire and interviews are discussed below.

4.2. Importance of Money and Wealth in Society to Maintain Status:

Most of the interviewees thought that for maintaining social status having money and assets is too important. Without money and wealth, no one gets respect in society. Most of them thought that if they had more money, they would have more power. They are powerless in society, and no one listens to them at all as they don't have enough money. They blame their poverty for their struggling lives, and this is the reason why they are suffering for their whole life. Very few of them disagreed with this point and thought that only money cannot bring respect and happiness, rather good work and positive attitudes are responsible for achieving respectful status in society. According to them, many people are very wealthy and powerful, but they are not happy at all. They are corrupted and people do not respect them. Moreover, they are suffering from different diseases and stress. On the contrary, people who are honest, pious, helpful; are happier in life even if they do not have enough money. They suggested that good deeds, responsibilities and money all are important for maintaining a good status in society.

4.3. Power Creates Gender Discrimination:

Women are dominant in our society, and they are not allowed to make their own choices, or take decisions regarding their families. They could have been able to raise their voice, and

could have fought for their rights if they could have earned money. They cannot talk for their own sake as they are not financially independent. This is because they are not allowed to work or go outside of their house. Most of the male respondents and unfortunately some of the female respondents also think that women should be not allowed to raise their voice even if they would have earned money for their family. They think that women are not allowed to take their own decisions by born, they are destined to remain under their male members' dominance in the family. It is thought that women should stay inside the home since they are their husbands', brothers', fathers' and sons' responsibilities. To some extent, they are influenced by their religious and superstitious beliefs. They think women's lives are destined to be ruled by males. One of the respondents Ayesh Khatun (Name Changed) stated like that,

Listen Sister (Boin), we are females, we are mothers. Allah created us to remain in the house. Naturally, we are soft and kind. Our responsibility is to take care of our husband and children. Why should we get out of our house for earning? We are getting our food and clothes from our husbands and sons. Even we got everything when we were in our father's house before our marriage. We never need to earn. Even our mother, sisters, and other females also did not do any job and earn money. This is the new trend that has been evolved by modern girls and women.

4.4. Education as a Tool to Exercise Power:

All of the interviewees think that education is very important for life. They think education is the only thing that can enlighten their lives. Through education, they think they can develop their lives and status. They can enhance their eligibility. They can get good jobs and can earn more money which will give them respect and a good position in society. So they consider education as a tool of power. And such opportunities will make their lives worthier. All the

participants want their offspring to be educated. According to them, if their children are educated, they will be more eligible for getting jobs. Education will add more skills to their childrens' career. They will be good human beings. They will shine in the future, and by getting good jobs they will change their poor status. They will get more respect, and people will listen to them. Their children will change their family's status in society. They will not have to worry about their future anymore. Though for their low income and life struggles, they often face problems to maintain their children's studies, they wanted to make their children educated and established.

Chapter: 5

Discussions:

5.1. Power as the foundation of every Relationship:

Power is the base or the foundation of every relationship in society. In a relationship, two forces work together; actions and reactions. These forces, actions, and reactions are influenced by power. They act and react according to their power. Usually, in a relationship, someone more powerful wants to dominate his/her partner in the relationship.

a) Power in Family Relations: During the study, we found that in our study areas also power relations work among every relationship. In the family, wives and other female members are dominated by their husbands or their sons. It is because the husbands and the sons normally are the earning members of a family.

Language and Power Showcasing Gender Discrimination in Family: Gender discrimination is one of the most faced problems in the rural society of Bangladesh. Our study location areas were not out of this social problem. We have noticed that females of these sites are also living with great discriminative treatments and attitudes. Although our country is developing day by day, the females are also now aware of their human rights and they are becoming self-dependent; the females of rural Bangladesh are still out of the blessings of development and enlightenment. They are not aware of their rights. They are not allowed to go out of their house and to do jobs so that they can be self-dependent and be able to change their fate and lives. Females are always bound to stay inside of the house and be dominated by the males of the society. For example, the females of our study areas are not allowed to go to the market for their regular daily shopping, they are not even allowed to go to the shops to buy some necessary groceries. Their husbands do that. Even the children are sent outside of their home for every

outside work, but the women cannot go outside. The wives need to seek permission even if they have to visit their father's place or relatives' house. Karim Sheikh (Name Changed) said,

My wife does not go outside of my house. It is not allowed in our family. I am there to do marketing and grocery shopping. What is the necessity of my wife to go outside of the house? My wife does not even go to the neighbor's place.

They cannot take any decision for themselves and their family also. As they are not allowed to earn money, they are dependent on their husbands and sons, their husbands and sons always rule over them. Another respondent who is a housewife Josna Banu (Name Changed) stated about her husband who is a fisherman and who has to stay out of his house in the deep sea for a long time for fishing. She said that my husband forbade me to go outside of my house when he will be staying in the sea. According to her,

My husband said I don't want to see you outside of the house. Never go out of the house. Even when I am outside in the sea. If you need anything I will bring that for you. It will be very bad for you if you do so. I will not tolerate this. If there is no food, you will stay hungry but never try to go out.

From the above response we can see how women in our rural society are ruled over by the males of the society. Also, how the husbands took decisions of their wives' lives, and how they dominated their wives.

Sometimes for religious views and superstition women have to face such restrictions and go through such cultural dominance. Abdul Kalam (Name Changed) mentioned,

Each human being has to die one day. How will we stand in front of almighty Allah if we do not obey our religion? I cannot accept the fact that anyone will see my wife's face.

A respondent Karim Munsî (Name Changed) mentioned his two daughters who wanted to move to Dhaka for working in the garments sector and wanted to be self-dependent. They wanted to take their family's responsibility, but for the rural socio-cultural dominance he did not allow them to go to Dhaka. He said,

I have two daughters; one is 16 years old and another one is 21 years old. They wanted to move to Dhaka for doing jobs and for earning money. My daughter said, "Father, I want to go to Dhaka. I will do a job in the garment industry. I will earn money and send you that. Our situation will be changed." But I did not allow them to do so. I said, "I will not let you go and work outside the home. I will starve with hunger, but cannot accept your earning. As a father, this will be shameful for me. How will I face society!"

b) Power Relationship among the Relatives and Neighbors: Outside of the family surface, in society, other relations like the relatives and the neighbours also treat each other according to their power and wealth in society. People are seen connected more with those relatives and neighbours who are more wealthy and powerful in the society as they think that maintaining relations with such people will be beneficial for them. People think so, for the expectation of having benefited from them. One respondent's expression could be mentioned for supporting this statement. Such as Kohinoor Begum (name changed) stated,

My neighbor Nargis has a good relationship with me. I go to her directly whenever I am faced with any financial problem since she always gives me money in such circumstances. She can give me money as much as I need as her husband lives in Saudi. I took money from her with a very small amount of interest, and use it when I am in trouble. I can return the money when I wish.

While talking about the neighbor, Nargis the respondent was very delighted as she has been mentioning the individual from whom she gets favor. To her, Nargis is more powerful since she has money and status. On the contrary, while discussing her poor status it seemed like it was painful to her. While mentioning her stress, her voice gets low which is a symbol that she feels pity for her situation since she is powerless for not having money in society, and underestimates herself.

c) Power in Professional Relations: Even the professional sectors in the rural society of Bangladesh have the power relation. Every profession has specific hierarchical positions. The responsibilities, authority, and salary also differ according to the hierarchy in those professions. And the authority and salary also indicate one's power and status both in society and in the professional sectors. According to the rank in every profession the salary and positions are considered, people get treatment from others based on the position and the rank. The higher the rank and position is, the more money they get. And it is observed that by measuring one's money and wealth, people treat each other in society. One interviewee Nanu Majhi (Name Changed) a worker in the fishing boat said,

Although we have to work hard all day long. We don't get enough money. Our seniors get more money as salary. They get their salary and they get some percentage from the profit after selling fish. But we have a fixed salary. We have a hierarchy in our profession. After the owners of the fisheries or fishing company, each group has their captain or the boatman who is the boss in each group. We have to listen to him. Then there are the workers of the boat. The salary is fixed according to their position. Half of the total profit is taken by the owners, and the rest of the amount gets divided among the captains and the workers according to their hierarchy.

Again, according to the hierarchy the workers often have to face insults. Often the workers are treated inhumanly by their seniors for their faults, and sometimes they have to face ill-treatment by their seniors for their position even if they have no faults. Power also influences one's attitude and treatment through the practice of language and discourse. For example, owners generally talk to the workers in a low dominating voice, they show their power by delivering orders and sometimes in a worse way by using slang or by manipulating them. In the fishing communities, it is seen that the fishers have a specific fishing season when they go to the sea or rivers for fishing. They cannot go for catching fish throughout the whole year as there are 65 days ban declared by the Bangladesh government for the view of protecting the Hilsha fish (*Ilish maachh*). At that period, many fishers often struggled for low income as they did not get to go to the sea or rivers for fishing and they did not get other work to do. At that moment, they often take loans with interests from their owners to maintain their livings. If they cannot return their debt on time, their owners insult them. Sometimes they do not pay them their salary, they snatch their fish, and sometimes they even illegally beat them for the money. Jalil (Name Changed) stated,

Brother (Bhaai), I have been suffering a lot! I am drowning in debt. I have taken loans from my relatives, neighbors and my owner. I have already taken a loan in an amount of approximately 1.5 lakhs. I now have no ability to return the debt. I cannot even do our living. We cannot have three meals in a day. My children had to leave their school because they did not have money. My owner is pressuring me for the debt. But how can I return the money when we cannot even feed ourselves? I asked my owner for some more time to return the money, but he is not ready to wait anymore. Before someday his men came to my house to take me to my owner's house. When I reached his place he locked

me in his place the whole day and tortured me since I could not return his money. I don't know what to do? How to get rid of such a situation! Brother (Bhaai) please help me!

5.2. Education can be a way for developing lives:

Education is the only way to enlighten our life. To develop our lives with various skills. Education has the potential to change one's life and fate. Education is the medium by which human beings can embrace different qualities and can achieve a secured future for getting good jobs and by making themselves eligible for earning money. In that way, they can make them financially solvent and can change their status in society, and develop their lives. People in our study areas are nowadays aware of the fruitfulness of education. They consider education as the best way to change their status and to get rid of their poor, struggling condition. They want their children to get proper education so that they can make themselves eligible for getting good jobs. As they are not educated enough to get good jobs and earn enough money to maintain their living, they are facing poverty and suffering a lot. Moreover, they cannot switch to other jobs to earn more money as they do not have different skills. They want their children to have multiple skills so that they never have to face such problems. Faruk Hawlader (Name Changed) mentioned,

I was a good student in my childhood. I studied till class four. But the financial status of my father was not good. Moreover, during the flood we lost all our lands. So I had to stop my education. Now I am suffering. But I do not want my children to suffer like me. I wish for their better and developed life.

So, education can be their power to improve their condition and to achieve development. As they cannot change their fate, they are now trying to change their lives by educating their children. A housewife Moni Bibi (Name Changed) said,

I studied till class five. I was very talented. My results were always good. I wanted to study more, but my family arranged my marriage at that age, and I could not continue my study. Till now I am attached to education. When my two daughters study at home, I always sit beside them. And remember my school days. I want my daughters to study a lot. I want them to be self-dependent.

Chapter: 6

Conclusion:

Throughout the research, I found out that power is influencing every sphere of rural social life in Bangladesh. Alongside the political sphere, power is impacting their personal life, social life, professional area and everywhere. In family life, males exert power by ruling over the females, they dominate them and believe that it is their right to dominate and rule over them. Females in society also accepted this rule as a social construction. Women are always kept behind in every right and they are deprived by the patriarchal society. Women somehow compromised their lives and tried to accept their fate. Some women thought it is predestined to be ruled by males in society and live their lives in the corner of the house. This belief has come from the religious and superstitions which are constructed socially from the very beginning of society.

Again, males are not socially-developed in rural areas too. They are going through financial insolvency since they do not have enough income to maintain their livelihoods. They are not eligible at the same time to switch on to other jobs since they are not skilled enough. And for such financial insolvency most of the time they have to face embarrassment in their social and professional lives. Although such a situation would have been changed if the females in the family could support them financially, they, unfortunately, are not allowed to do jobs or go outside of their homes. Under such circumstances, education could be a hope for them and their children to develop and improve the situation and their life struggles. Education will enhance their skill and increase their opportunity to fight against the complex situations and struggles in their lives and it will help them in the future to secure a standard life. Moreover, through this

study, I have seen that language always plays as a medium to exert power in different situations which are expressed through their attitudes and reactions.

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