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Impact of Education Expansion on Employment in Bangladesh: Comparing Two Cases of Villages in Remote and Suburban Rural Settings

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Abstract

A number of institutions and organizations such as the government, NGOs, international development partners and agencies and religious groups have been working to develop education in Bangladesh. Educational development projects related to the Education for All (EFA) have contributed to the development of the education sector. As a result, enrolment rates have increased significantly over the past two decades in Bangladesh, not only in primary schools but also at the secondary level. As a result, it is increasingly common to find individuals with Secondary School Certificate (SSC), Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and even higher education degrees in the population at large. Still, 85% of the population of Bangladesh lives in rural areas. At this point, the most important questions are whether educated rural people are able to find employment after graduation and whether educational development policies expand people's life options. This study compares educational development in two regional settings, one in the western part of the country and the other in the east. The aim is understand educational attainment in two different geographical settings—one in a remote rural area far from industry and the other a semi-urban rural area closer to industry.

Introduction

Since 1990, a number of educational development efforts have been initiated throughout the world. Except for Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, worldwide primary net enrolment rates exceed 93% (UNESCO 2012). This is a result of the collective efforts of international organizations, governments, NGOs and religious groups. Educational development programs have greatly increased the quantity of education since 1990s; however, the issue of quality remains as an important issue in many developing countries. The paradox of increasing educational quantity and decreasing quality is a major concern for policy makers, researchers, teachers and parents. Despite such concerns, however, educational development programs such as EFA (Education for All) have led to ever-increasing numbers of primary and secondary school graduates. As a result, Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) graduates have become common even in the most remote areas of Bangladesh. Of course, some of them have

dropped out of school, and dropout is still one of the major problems facing education. Even so, newly-mushroomed schools are producing huge numbers of graduates. Are these graduates able to get jobs? Are they productively employed in the rural economy in Bangladesh? Most formal school graduates are produced in rural areas where 85% of Bangladesh lives. Yet the cash economy is relatively undeveloped, and formal sector employment is not commonly available in rural Bangladesh. Many rural graduates have to compete with each other in tiny rural job markets. As a result, many graduates move outside rural areas for work. Some move to urban areas such as the capital Dhaka, while others seek employment outside the country. Both those who successfully graduate as well as those who dropout struggle to find work in the very small rural job market, which has seen little change despite educational progress and expansion in the education sector.

This study aims to investigate this complex relationship between educational expansion and employment in rural job markets. While a great deal of research has focused on educational quality, there has been less systematic research on what happens to graduates after they complete schooling in rural areas. The methodology involves a household survey carried out once in 1999 and 2001 and a follow up survey 10 years afterwards in the same villages and households. This approach permits examination of changes in educational attainment in each household and a longitudinal assessment of education and work.This method also helps illuminate the educational visions and job career trajectories of individuals according to their place in the social and economic hierarchy. It also highlights the relationship between educational and occupational aspirations at one stage and their achievement, or not, ten years later. This methodology permits answer to questions such as: "Who was able to reach their educational and employment goals in ten years?" "How do villagers perceive the relationship between education and employment?" "What the minimum education requirements to get a wage-earning job beyond traditional agricultural work?" Rather than focussing on macro-level relations between school education and the job market, this study focuses on micro-level findings. The research objectives are organized under the following four categories:

1.To understand the effect of school education in rural areas in light of the socio-economic environment of surrounding areas over the last ten years.

2.To find out parents' goals and aspirations for their children vis a vis school education in a rural context.

3. To see whether educated rural people are able to secure employment even if they are from poor families.

4. To verify the impact of educational expansion on employment particularly in remote and suburban rural settings in Bangladesh in the two case studies examined.

Necessity of Linking Micro-level Research with Education and Employment

Much of the research on educational development and labour is dominated by human capital theory. For example, Psacharopoulos and other economists have found a positive correlation between human capital formation and increased wages using macro data and mathematical models to test economic theory (Psacharopoulos 1983, 1985; Psacharopoulos & Patrinos 2004). In another example, Duflo used cost-benefit analysis to analyze the effectiveness of Indonesia's largest school construction program between 1973 and 1978. Its impact was: "each primary school constructed per 1,000 children led to an average increase of 0.12 to 0.19 years of education, as well as a 1.5 to 2.7 percent increase in wages" (Duflo 2001, p.418). Duflo also concluded that the program "affected children likely belong to the poorest segment of the population because they were prevented from attending school by the lack of infrastructure. On the other hand, they took advantage of the opportunity once it arose" (Duflo 2001, p.445). These early studies based on human capital theory demonstrated the economic value to beneficiaries of the establishment of schools and construction of educational infrastructure. On the other hand, it is also clear that building educational facilities does not guarantee benefits for poor households. Many poor families are closely tied to local values, customs, traditions and the local economic context. Parents may not recognize the value of schooling, or understand the necessity of education especially when they are uneducated and living impoverished lives. Despite progress in increasing female enrolments, many rural girls live in a cultural context where parents arrange marriage for them at the age 15 or 16. Such cultural, religious, regional, and patriarchal elements should be examined to justify the effectiveness of particular educational programs. In many cases access to primary education and its quality remain challenging and have yet to be resolved. Therefore, many researchers are not concerned exit surveys of school graduates. Yet, given the costs of schooling to parents and the national treasury as well as the need for well-paid employment, it is important to inquire at the micro as well as macro level whether education has an impact on graduates getting jobs in the socio-economic context in which they currently live.

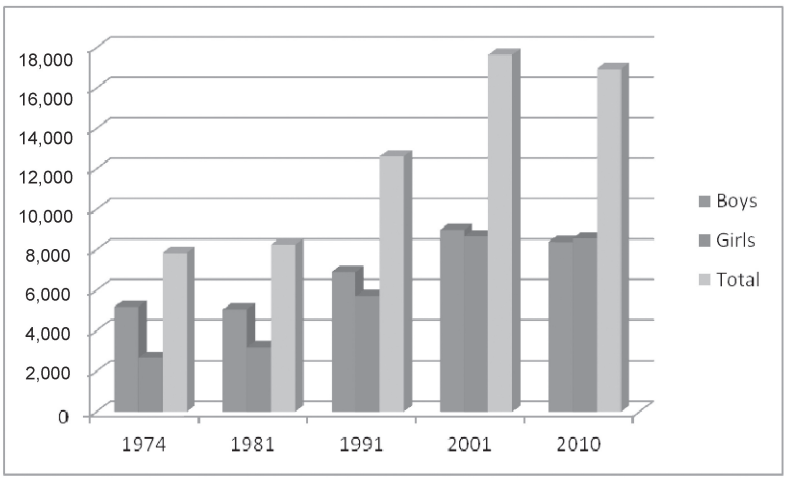
Many education researchers from Bangladesh also tend to focus on educational development. For example, gender studies in Bangladesh focus entirely on advocating equal educational opportunities for women (Sattar 1982, pp.23-25). However, micro-level empirical studies especially in rural Bangladesh could make a significant contribution to understanding gender disparities in education. Moreover, in much of the educational research, cultural, religious, regional, and patriarchal issues have been overlooked. Often studies focus on illiteracy, school access and drop-out rates among women in Bangladesh (e.g. Mubina 2003). However those studies have utilized only an education framework or human rights approach. While reviewing several issues of the journal "Teacher's World" published in Dhaka, I found hardly any research linking educational expansion and economic development. Yet one primary reason for promoting schooling is economic--so graduates can join the wage economy. This study looks at the economic as well as social

outcomes of education from a micro-level perspective.

Appropriateness of Bangladesh as Target for this Study

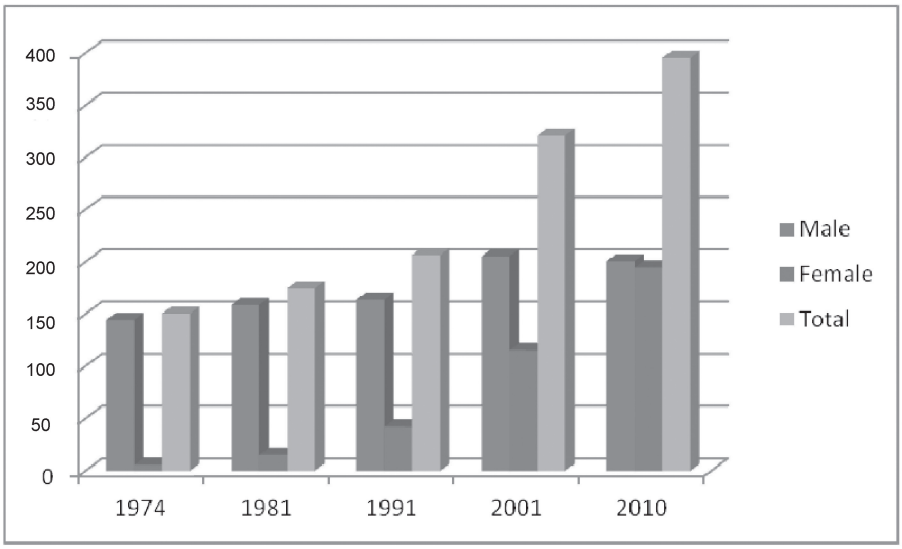
Bangladesh is an appropriate country for this study because from 1990, a series of policies have institutionalized the development of education. Initially the government instituted the Compulsory Education Act of 1990. This law declared and confirmed primary education as a basic human right. Following this, the government implemented two additional laws to make certain that poverty did not keep children out of school, the Food for Education Program (FFEP) in 1992 and the Female Secondary Education Project (FSEP) of 1994. According to FFEP, the government provides 10-12kg of wheat or paddy for students who achieve an 85% attendance rate. With FSEP, the government provides cash incentives to girls with school attendance of more than 75% per a month and earn scores higher than 45%. From 2002, the Stipend for Education Project (SFEP) provided 100tk cash in place of 10-12kg wheat or paddy of FFEP. As a result of these policies, the numbers of primary school students and teachers has increased significantly (see Figures 1, 2). The number of secondary students has increased as well.

Figure 1 Growth of Primary School Students (thousands)



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 1985, 1999, 2006.
Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) 1992, 2010.

Figure 2 Growth of Primary Teachers (thousands)



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) 1985, 1999, 2006.
Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) 1992, 2010.

Methodology: Comparative Study of Two Villages

In order to identify the factors that contribute to greater socio-economic change in one area than in another, two villages with different geographic and socio-economic backgrounds were chosen and compared to see how each coped with changes in social and economic conditions. In both cases, rural rather than urban areas were selected for this study because the tremendous growth in participation in school is observed mainly in rural areas. Secondly, the distance from the village to the closest town was taken into account, since village location is directly related to penetration of the industrial economy, which incites school attendance. For instance, people residing far from industrial areas are more likely to remain engaged in traditional agrarian labour because of their limited access to chakri (wage labour), which requires a formal education. Development of the industrial economy and degree-issuing schools are positively correlated, even in the micro context. Given these conditions, two target villages, one from a remote rural area and another one from a suburban rural area were chosen.

Karamdi: A Remote Rural Village

Karamdi village is located in the Gangni county of Meherpur district, the westernmost region of Bangladesh. The village is close to the country's national border, which divides the area from India's West Bengal state. Many villagers cross the border to visit relatives in West Bengal, and until recently many engaged in small-scale cross-

border businesses. The construction of the Jamuna Bridge in 1999 shortened the journey from Dhaka to Karamdi from eight to four or five hours, but the village is still quite remote. The majority of farmers are landless peasants called *bhumihin*, who do not possess enough land (or any at all) to support themselves and their families. Thus, many are obliged to travel to other districts as labourers during harvesting periods because of the lack of agrarian labour opportunities intheir villages. What is worse, they seldom have an opportunity to work in factories, mills or in any other industries, and so remain largely outside the wage economy. This study attempts to understand the *bhumihin* and other poor households to see whether their children have begun to secure employment or more advanced educational certification as a result of educational development in the area.

Gohira: A Suburban Rural Village

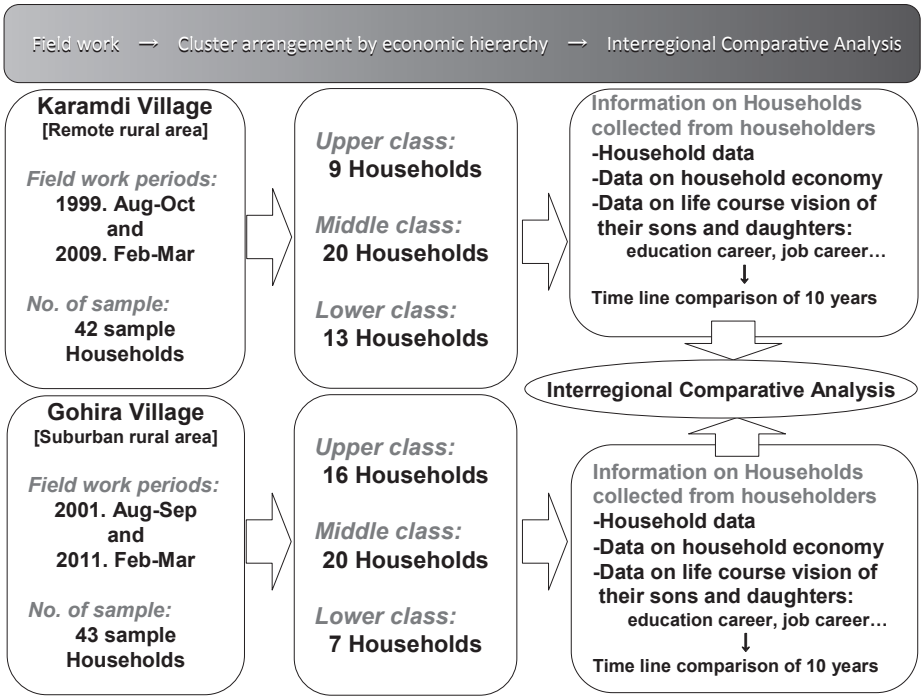
Gohira village is located in Raozan County in Chittagong district, the easternmost part of Bangladesh. From the 1960s to 1970s, industrial development progressed in this area. Chittagaong is the second largest city in Bangladesh. Japanese, American and other foreign companies have invested in garment manufacturing as well as heavy industry--chemicals, motor bikes and machine factories--in Chittagong's large Economic Processing Zone (EPZ). These industries come seeking a cheap labour force. Gohira supplies labour to these industries because of its close proximity to Chittagong, which can be reached in only forty minutes to an hour by bus. To obtain a job in a factory, at least a secondary school certificate is required and this, in turn, has promoted education in this village.

Research Framework

This study consists of a comparison of households in two villages (See Figure3). Field work was carried out in each village Karamdi Village in 1999 & 2009 and in Gohira Village in 2001 & 2011 in three main content areas.

First, I carried out a community census of householders in each village. 42-55 families per village were selected as sample households. I collected household data from each householder. Then I used the Census Scheduleto carry out one to two-hour interviews. Secondly, I visited all primary schools, secondary schools and Madrasas and carried out a school survey. Mainly I interviewed the head teacher or principal and collected factual data from schools (number of pupil/students, number of teachers, how the official work plan is carried out, whether teachers have side businesses or not, and so on). Third, I carried out an education administrative organization survey. I interviewed the County Education Officer (*Thana Education Officer*: TEO) and about present conditions of education in the county. Finally, I compared results from the two villages with an interregional comparative analysis.

Figure 3: Research and Analysis flow



Karamdi Village: 1999-2009

Difficulty of Development in Remote Rural Areas

Since the first field visit in 1999, Karamdi village has remained a remote rural area. While the construction of the Jamuna Bridge in 1999 shortened the journey from Dhaka to Karamdi village from seven or eight to four or five hours, corresponding increases in traffic jams in Dhaka mean that bus passengers have to spend more time than ever to moving back and forth. As a result, mobility was as difficult in 2009 as in 1999. In addition, neighboring towns or cities did not develop into attractive urban areas, and Karamdi villagers have little opportunity to become *chacree* (wage earners). As a result, there has been little change in their economic situation. For example, in 2009, brick firing was observed to be the heaviest industry in the village. This suggests economic development. Indeed, total annual income in 2009 in 42 sample householdswas three times greater than that in 1999 (1999: 1,160,565tk to 2009: 3,608,800tk). Additionally, the total amount of money villagers borrowed increased four-fold from 112,400tk in 1999 to 459,000tk in 2009. Again, this suggests steady economic development. On the other hand, this economic development was not connected to the outside economy. The other rural industries in evidence were blacksmithing, paddy husking, agricultural day labor,

grocery shop keeper, agricultural implement repair, cattle sales, etc., all occupations serving a primarily agrarian economy. Barter exchange remained common. Considering increases in prices over the intervening ten years, the quality of life had not improved. While the village economy, based on agriculture and rural industry, is steadily increasing, the quality of life of people in the village has not changed. And most jobs in the village do not demand education. The exceptionis civil servants, who are relatively few in number.

The Impact of Educational Expansion: Emergence of an Education Career-based Society

As contrasted with the gradual pattern of economic growth, educational development policies have been vigorously implemented in all areas since 1990. Karamdi has been greatly impacted by these policies as compared with other rural areas. As evidence of this, time line of school establishment shows us only four schools had been built in this village before EFA policies were put into place. Since then, the number of schools has increased to 14 including secondary level schools. This has led to accessibility to secondary schools in the village for the first time. The question then arises, "What effect does additional access to schooling have on students' employment prospects?"

Dates of school establishment in Karamdi village

1920	Karamdi Government primary school
1970	Japani primary school
1973	Karamdi Jr. High/High school
1974	Karamdi Aliya madrasa [Islamic school]
1991	Karamdi No.4 primary school
1994	Satellite primary school
1999	Karamdi KG primary school
2000	Karamdi Collage [for Higher Secondary Certificate]
	Karamdi Konranpur Jr. Secondary Girl's Collage
	Mathpara Karamdi Registered primary school
2007	Two BRAC [NGO] Schools
2010	Progoti primary school

The 42 sample households in this study include 77 children, 40 male and 37 female. To address the research questions, I examined the educational attainment and employment status of children in 2009 based on their parents' aspirations in 1999. Table 1 summarizes results of this analysis. Given the differences in expectations and roles for men and women, it is useful to separate the analysis by gender.

Table 1 : Decadal transitions of Children's life course in both villages

Karamdi Village (Remote rural area)			Gohira Village (Suburban rural area)	
Male 1 Female 0	1 (1.2%)	Higher education level	5 (4.2%)	Male2 Female3
Male12 Female17	31 (40.2%)	Finished SSC or HSC, Still primary or secondary school student	49 (41.8%)	Male 30 Female 19
Male 2 Female 0	2 (2.6%)	Waged job	21 (17.9%)	Male 15 Female6
Male23 Female 0	23 (29.9%)	Farmer, Labour, Business, Rural industries	11 (9.4%)	Male 11 Female0
Male 0 Female20	20 (28.6%)	House wife, domestic help	19 (16.2%)	Male0 Female 19
Male 0 Female 0	0 (0%)	Loafer, Lost job, others	12 (10.2%)	Male6 Female6
Male40 Female37	77 (100%)	Total No. of children	117 (100%)	Male 64 Female 53

Source: Field data 1999-2011

Most parents answered questions about their future aspirations for their children in terms of educational attainment and employment. There were essentially two groups, those who basically realized their parents' ambitions and those who were sidetracked.

Males in Karamdi

First, we can see that one group of 23 boys became farmers, agricultural laborers, or other rural industry workers. These data suggest the difficulty of finding wage employment in rural Bangladesh. Looking at the extent to which boys realized the aspirations of their parents in 1999, one group of five cases meets the definition according to 2009 research results. Those include the son of HH136 who is working in Malaysia, a son of HH16 who is in the Army, a son of HH69 who is seeking a college degree, a son of HH35 who earned a Secondary School Certificate, and a son of HH131 who earned a BA in Dhaka. Only the son from HH131 is from a rich household. Three are from middle class families and one from a lower class background.

The son from HH131 was typical of traditional access of village elites (elite by local standards) to education and wage employment. During fieldwork in 1999, son 131 was a 4th year primary school student. By 2009 he was 20 and enrolled in a bachelor's

degree program in Dhaka. When asked about his aspirations for his son in 1999, the father answered “Machine College Engineer”. HH131 is the richest household in the village. The father is a member of the air force engaged in border security work. He earns a monthly income and also runs a farm. In 2009 his annual income was 172,000tk. The son used his advantaged socioeconomic background to achieve his father’s ambitions. Though not typical of his village, the pattern is typical in South Asia, where only the wealthiest families send their children to higher education.

The question arises of how sons of households 136 and 16 got wage jobs. On questioning, it appears that the son of HH136 paid 220,000tk to a broker to purchase a visa for work in Malaysia. The son of HH16 answered an open recruitment call in a news paper from the national army. This suggests that successful employment in rural Bangladesh may be depend on the job–seeking skills of individuals rather than a consequence of educational attainment and increased skill.

One son of a well-off household turned away from a "better job career". In 1999, the son of HH24 was a high school student in grade 10. His father’s ambition for his son was “College Degree~Teacher”. The son however dropped out later that year and started helping his father. Surprisingly the household was the 3rd richest in the village. However, we cannot say he "failed". When I returned in 2009 HH24 had increased his landholding from 0.5 bigha owned and 4 bigha borrowed in 1999, to 0.5 bigha owned and 6 bigha borrowed. The son’s father had expanded the agricultural land under his management. For the son in that situation, the decision to drop out made economic sense.

The remaining 12 sons were still attending primary or secondary schools. Future field visits will trace their activities.

Females in Karamdi

As for the females, 20 daughters dropped out of school and married at a comparatively early age. This makes very clear the gender disparities within the village in school, and family obligations. Considering families in 1999 with further aspirations for their daughters, only the daughter of HH143 fits into such a framework. In 2009 she was trying to pass the SSC examination. She had failed twice, but was going to take the Secondary School Certificate examination again in 2009. The other 16 daughters were still attending primary and secondary school.

Thus, school attainment has almost no relationship with employment for young male villagers. What might be considered orthodox career paths in Japanese or Western contexts were quite rare in this village. However, most children, both male and female, were able to complete primary school, and maybe continued with secondary education. Educational expansion had expanded school enrollment, but the payoff in terms of employment was not yet manifest. If school is intended to lead to work, the school-work system is malfunctioning in the village. On the other hand, some males were more successful than their family background would likely have led them to be 20 years earlier.

Gohira Village: 2001-2011

Various Effects of Mega-city Chittagong and the Economic Processing Zone

Chittagong is the second largest city in Bangladesh, and it is often seen as the economic capital. A number of satellite villages surrounding the city supply it with labor. When I carried out field work in 2001, Gohira was a typical suburban area. It was a one-hour ride to the industrial area of Chittagong named the EPZ or Economic Processing Zone. This gives Gohira a clear advantage over Karamdi in terms of commuting proximity to a city. Though both rural, the nature of the rural economy in the two villages, for example regular traffic service, construction service, etc. differs. Gohira villagers can easily access *chacree* (wage labor). Hara has explained this phenomenon of "semi rural village" (1969). In 2001, I observed a number of householders maintaining small-scale agriculture while also engaged in *chacree*. Chittagong is also a supply area for workers in the Middle East, where many Bangladeshis seek employment. When I visited a Bangladeshi community in Dubai, many workers reported coming from Chittagong.

Ten years later, I revisited Gohira and interviewed the same villagers I visited previously. I also carried out a school visit survey and interviewed thana (county) education officials. In 2011, 6 of 44 sample households had moved to Chittagong. One household traveled home on weekends. (I caught two households by mobile phone). There were now 24 persons who had sought employment out of the country, in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Oman and United States, up from 14 in 2001. The number of part-time farmers hadn't changed much, from 13 in 2001 to 12 in 2011. More people were taking jobs in Dhaka or Chittagong. Significantly, a number of cloth factories were constructed on the road between Chittagong and Gohira. The village has been semi urban for some time; it now has an urban economy.

Those economic developments affected the villagers. For example the total annual income in 38 households (excluding the six households that moved to Chittagong) increased two and a half times from 2,816,700tk in 2001 to 7,328,550tk in 2010. However, price inflation had also increased significantly. The total amount of money borrowed from all sample households also increased from 185,000tk in 2001 to 1,621,000tk in 2010, an 8.7 time increase in 10 years. The reasons given were almost always "for daily life". This suggests that villagers have an increased dependency on the monetary economy.

Autonomous Acceptance of School System

Since establishment of the first primary school in 1884, primary and secondary schools have increased in number until 1996. Recently, enrollment has stabilized as there are a sufficient number of educational institutions to serve the population. That no schools have been established since 1996 suggests that village people sought education by themselves, rather than receiving it as a result of EFA policies. Gohira developed its

school system comparatively early. Economic development in Chittagong is likely to have had its first effects on village education after 1970. A number of private companies and factories have long required applicants to have the SSC or HSC.

Dates of school establishment in Gohira village

1884	Shingha Gov PS	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1908	South Doroinagor Gov PS	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1915	Gohira Gov PS	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1929	Chikdail Munsipara Gov PS	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1930	Gohira High school	
1932	Dokkin Gohira Kansahe Gov PS	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1938	Gohira F.K Madrasa	(1973 accredited as Gov PS)
1946	Gohira Madrasa Gov PS	
1960	Kundeshori Barika Bidha Mondir Girls High School (SSC)	
1970	Kundeshori Barika Biddaroi (HSC and Degree)	
1970	Gohira Degree Collage	
1980	Chikdail High School	
1989	Gausia Monia Madrasa	
1991	Saied Bodolurunesa KG Madrasa	
1994	Santildir Adorsho KG PS	
1996	EGR Gov PS	

*Qawmi madrasas (unrecognized Islamic education institution) also have established from 80s.

Impact of Educational Expansion:Emergence of an Education Career-based Society

Follow up research of the 43 sample households in this study included 117 children, 64 males and 53 females. As in the Karamdi case study, we look to see what sort of children realized their parents' aspirations between 2001 and 2011. Here also, it is also helpful distinguish male and female data.

Males in Gohira

As compared with Karamdi, the male children in sample households in Gohira were much more diversified in terms of their current education and occupational status. Nine were engaged in service work or business; six were jobless or loafers; nine had moved to the Middle East and one had moved to another country. One was a day laborer, and one was a farmer. Full-time farmers are quite rare in this area, but most households maintain

some fields. Of the six households that had moved to Chittagong, there were five male children from the sample. The remaining 32 children were still in school. Most parents considered sending their children to Chittagong to seek *chacree* (wage labour). Young people who start working as *chacree* in Chittagong are able to earn at least 5,000-7,000tk per month. This is not a high income but sufficient for a modest household's everyday expenses. The cash economy influences the village even here. There is almost no space to farm and so no safety net (as observed in Karamdi) for young people who lose their jobs. Instead of farming, the safety net is the opportunity to seek work outside the country. For example, a son of HH20 now lives in Dubai. This is a lower middle income level household, so parents are limited in their ability to send their children to higher levels of education. One son's father was working in Dubai. The father called the son and prepared him to come to Dubai after the son graduated from college. One man working in the Middle East can send home approximately 5,000tk a month. Villagers say that in the Middle East does not require a school credential. Rather what is needed is a connection or cash for a foreign visa broker. Working overseas has become a meaningful career path.

Most of the sons in the sample, except for the six jobless youth, had attained parents' aspirations to a certain extent. At least they were employed. The following cases illustrate. A son in HH3 is one success. He passed the HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate) examination at age 19. He started a real estate business after graduation and earns 7,000tk monthly. In 2001, the son was an upper secondary school student. The father had no specific aspirations for his son but he answered that "any person should earn at least a degree". This household was categorized as upper middle class, so it was not so difficult for them to send their children to upper secondary school. There were six other sons who were now engaged in service or business in the village. 2011 field data tells us their salary helped the household economy. While is not a "big" success, these sons succeeded in achieving their fathers' visions, becoming *chacree*. Thus, small successes such as becoming chacree were quite very common in this village as compared with Karamdi.

In contrast, despite the fact that a son of HH23 is 27 years old, he lost his job several years before. Fortunately, since he dropped out of junior high school in the 6th grade, he found a job in a packing factory in Chittagong. Unfortunately, his father's death led to mental illness. Now he has nothing to do in the village. His household is poor. Once a poor householder gets into trouble, particularly a health problem, there are many obstacles to continuing children's schooling. Despite the opportunities for access to the nearby job market, six of the sons were unemployed despite their education. The cash economy has eliminated farming as a safety value, thus pressuring the males to find work or to fail.

Females in Gohira

Twenty two of the female children in the sample remained in school; six were jobless or loafers; 19 were married, one had become a teacher, and five had migrated to Chittagong. A daughter of HH4 became a primary school teacher after dropping out of

a college degree program. She is the only female in the sample who became a *chacree*. Still, the female children in the village are interested in social mobility because of influences from Chittagong. Their awareness of social mobility facilitated establishment of a girls' high school in 1960.

In Gohira, most children entered secondary school. Even so, pressure from the monetary economy on poor households coupled with relatively few jobs and no local safety values restricted the benefits of educational development to the poorest families. Graduation from primary school was completely accepted by villagers, and almost all young people, both females and males, had access to secondary school. It was clear that job opportunities in the Gohira were better than in Karamdi. In addition, there was the alternative of work in Middle East for male children. The linkages between education and work were clearer than in Karamdi village except among poor households. Still among females there were a considerable number of dropouts and marriages. However in relative terms, educational levels were higher than in Karamdi village and as we saw with the daughter of HH4.

Conclusions: Comparing Villages

First of all, the educational options in both villages have expanded. EFA had a greater impact on Karamdi in the remote rural area because schooling was relatively undeveloped there as compared with Gohira in a suburban rural area. Gohira had developed schools much earlier in response to pressure from the monetary economy and economic development. Educational development in Gohira added value to the labor force. Some graduates were successful in business or service work, earning 5,000-7,000tk per month. Others took jobs outside the country, where they also sent 5,000tk home every month. "Becoming *chacree*" is a "big" success in Karamdi, whereas in Gohira village, chacree has a much more common meaning.

These economic contexts are deeply related to educational development. In Karamdi, educational development based on EFA has little coherence with the labour market. In Gohira, coherence between economic development and the labour market led to expansion of schooling prior to EFA. Comparing the two villages shows the importance of the linkage between educational development and the social and economic structure.

Even in remote areas, parents' aspirations for their children's education have increased in the last ten years. In Karamdi, EFA policies expanded schooling for their children. However, most children dropped out of secondary education.

These field data suggest that there is little relationship between schooling and work and that educational development does little by itself to lead to employment opportunities for very poor households. In neither village could very poor households recover from disasters, diseases and so on. These case studies suggest that educational development has not yet ended poverty, and the middle class still has an advantage in both education and the job market. One of fundamental reasons for schooling education is to improve social

mobility. Perhaps poor Bangladeshi will have to wait another ten years for the promises to be fulfilled.

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Map: Location of Target Villages

(Source) www.nationsonline.org