Mothers’ Participation in the Household Decision-Making Process: It’s Effect on School Dropout Behavior for Girls in Bangladesh

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**Abstract** - This paper aims to explore how mothers' participation level in the household decisions making process affects on the educational outcome for girls, an area that has, thus far, been overlooked during the research regarding school dropouts. Data were collected in September 2010 from questionnaires administered to the mothers of female students in the sub-district of Pirgonj in Bangladesh. The individual participation index (PI) of mothers was estimated for four major household matters. Logistic regression was then conducted to examine how the participation levels of mothers predicted dropout outcomes for girls. Results show that the mother’s participation negatively predicts the dropout outcome for girls.

**Keywords**- Bargaining, household decision-making, son preference. School dropout.

1. INTRODUCTION

The country, Bangladesh has a significantly higher dropout rate for girls than it is for boys were nearly 80% of the girls in the secondary level leave school before completing grade X (Bangladesh Education Bureau of Statistics Report, 2005.) Although the school dropout issue for girls has been explored before, the decision-making process exercised by the parents for girls to leave school early has been neglected. To determine the factors underlying why girls drop out of school, it is important to explore whether household decisions are made with or without the mother’s participation in the household decision-making process, as several scholars have argued that the intra-household allocation of resources in favor of male children over female children [1-2]. The unitary model [3], also called the “common preference” model, is based on the notion that a single decision maker acts for the good of the entire household, and it assumes that all household resources are allocated by a household head who represents the distributor’s taste and preference.

As a consequence, in the male dominated society, decisions regarding the well-being of children, including their education, become gender biased, thus resulting in a situation where girls may receive less preference relative to boys by the father. Accordingly, Thomas [4] noted that fathers prefer to invest their resources in their sons rather than their daughters. This study argues that when the mother participates with the father in the household decision-making, household decisions are less gender biased or daughters receive preference over sons. Scholars have explained this phenomenon by stating that women are, on average, more altruistic and less gender biased than man [5-6]. Berik and Biglinsosy [7], found that mothers are more likely to prefer daughters or are less apt to differentiate with respect to gender. Several literatures on gender preference suggest that parents have a general propensity toward a preference for sons over daughters. For instance, Pande [8] and Song [9] explored household expenditure patterns and found that girls are at a disadvantage relative to boys in developing countries. Edmonds and Pavcnik [10] found that girls are expected to perform more household tasks than boys, a gap that grows with the preference for sons. This preference for sons is also linked to differential treatments between boys and girls when parents consider allocation of family resources with gender disparities in parental investments in children’s health and education being well-documented in the literature [8, 11]. In a male-dominated society, household decisions are made, for the most part, solely by the husbands. The bargaining model on household decisions argues that the stronger the bargaining power of decision maker, the greater that decision maker influences on resource allocation decisions [12]. Thus, in patriarchal societies, if women (mothers) have higher bargaining power, they are more likely to participate in the decision-making process, a factor that may be relevant when examining educational decisions for girls. However, in the patriarchal developing social settings, women are constrained by the norms, beliefs, customs and values, which limit their freedom of choice in every aspect of their lives. Mothers traditionally play their household roles in less or without bargaining process with their husbands. From this perspective, this study hypothesizes that less bargaining power of mother and their lower level of participation
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study considers the literature on the household context and school dropout behaviors of children. Several studies found that parental income and education both are the dominant predictors of schooling attainment and dropout behavior for children [13-17]. Parental income is associated to a variety of factors for instances when children begin school, how often they attend, whether they have to temporarily withdraw and when, and if, they drop out [18-19]. Boyle [20] explored that children from rich families are more likely to continue the school, while those who are from disadvantaged families are more likely to drop out. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) observed the relationship between household earnings and dropping out of school. High school students from households within the lowest 20% income were six times more likely to drop out of high school as are students from households in the top 20% of the income range [21]. Another essential factor that is often associated to whether a child drops out of school is the level of the parents’ education [22-24]. Brown and Park [25]) also found that parents with low levels of education are more likely to have children who do not attend school, and if the children do attend school, they are highly tended to drop out. Scholars examined that parental education is the foremost determinant of child education and higher level of parental education is allied with higher access to education, higher attending rates in school and lower school dropout rates for children. They found that lower levels of parental education negatively affected the children academic attainment, which had a significant effect dropped out the outcome. Grant & Hallman’s [19] conducted research on educational access in South Africa determined that children those lived with mothers were less likely to dropout. In another study on South Africa described the association between students’ family background and dropping out the outcome. Here, children from single-parent and poor families and with lower educated parents were more likely to school drop-out early. The number of children in the family is also an important factor of dropout rates [20].

Regarding the household size some studies examine that children in large household size are more likely to the financial burden and workload which lead them to drop out of education [31]. In other studies observed that the number of siblings under 5years of age in the family has a negative impact on older girls’ schooling which consequent the dropout. Moreover, some household factors such as low educational levels of household members, birth order of children also influence dropout rates.

Although studies on the school dropout issue have been enlightened in many ways however, most of the prior studies have been performed regardless the gender of the children and less pursued to determine the underlying causes of dropout which affecting especially for girl children. In terms of household contexts, a number of factors affect educational access and the potential to drop out, there is no clear understanding of how mothers’ participation in the household decision making process can be impacted on school drop out of girls.

III. INFLUENCES ON HOUSEHOLD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This section identifies which factors affect the bargaining power of decision making as several factors impact the family/household decision making process. Figure 1 identifies some these factors.

![Fig.1. A partial model of family decision making [34].](image)

3.1. Degree of Gender-Role Disparity

Scanzoni & Szinovacz, developed this item to measure how traditional or modern the individual’s attitude regarding the role of the wife is. A person who responded that she or he “strongly agreed” with this item was labeled strongly traditional because that individual accepts the idea that a woman’s chief task in life is to devote herself to her husband. On the contrary, those who responded with “strongly disagree” were labeled as strongly modern or egalitarian because he/she rejects the idea that the female should be completely devoted to providing for her husband’s needs. The authors measured (using a Celsius scale) the degree of sex role disparity by comparing these two responses and argued that the degree of traditionalism-modernity held by each spouse with respect to the role of the wife affects the household decision making process.

3.2. Degree of Tangible Resource Disparity

The tangible resources behind family decisions refers to certain background factors such as educational level, employment status and income level of the individual. If the husbands have more of each of these resources, the wife is more likely to acquiesce and allow the husband to make the decisions regarding household matters always or most of the time. This finding suggests the degree of power the husband has, while the significance of these resources implies the disparity between the husband and wife. In this respect Authors examined an example where there are two husbands, each of whom earns $15,000 per year. If the wife
of the first husband earns $13,000 and the wife of the second husband earns $6,000, the impact on the decision-making process is accorded to the disparity of income between the wives.

3.3. Degree of Intangible Resource Disparity
Self-concept is learned through certain social situations and that in some situations a person's self-image is higher than it is in other situations. They also stated that self-esteem is a benefit and a resource that helps and enhances its possessor similar to the way that tangible resources do. Therefore, the self-esteem disparity is likely to affect decisions analogous to that of tangible resources. For instance, some studies have indicated that women tend to possess a lower self-concept than men, and therefore, women tend to think less of them. Accordingly, a self-esteem disparity exists between the husband and wife. In this regard, a study on negotiation philosophy by Scanzoni & Szinovacz, found that certain measures of self-worth and self-evaluation were positively related to sex-role egalitarianism. Consequently, the self-esteem disparity is connected to the ways in which partners actually perform during the decision-making process. Thus, where there is no self-concept disparity and husbands and wives consider themselves equal, wives are more likely to behave in identical ways to their husbands in the household decision-making process.

IV. METHODS

4.1. Data and Measurement of Variables
This study was carried out in one the town zone of the sub-district namely Pirgonj Upazila of Rangpur District in Bangladesh 2010. This study included data from 268 parents of girls. Questionnaires were used. Dropout status measured as dummy in where dropout = 1, and non dropout = 0 indicated in this study.

4.2. Participation Index
Mothers were asked to respond to the questions: “How much you participate when the following household decisions are made?” There are four household issues included as part of the survey: (a) decisions on household expenditures, (b) decisions on educational matters regarding the children, (c) decisions on household labor regarding the children, (d) decisions regarding health care for the children. All of the responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. A participation index (PI) was estimated by adding the values of all 4 items for each participant.

4.3. Bargaining Power
The bargaining power was measured by the individual income level of mothers. [12] Sen (1990) found that the stronger the bargaining power the individual has, the greater the influence on household resource allocation decisions. The bargaining model considers the factors that determine the bargaining power or fallback position of decision makers, and the foremost determinants of bargaining power are education and income of the individuals. Scholars considered certain background factors such as education and income level of the individual as the tangible resources of family decisions. Therefore, in this study income level of mothers has been considered as the determinant of bargaining power.

4.4. Analytical Method
The study conducted a logistic regression model to determine the outcome of participation quality in the decision-making process of mothers with respect to the educational attainment of girls. A logistic regression analysis was conducted with the dependent variable (dropout) as a dichotomy variable. The model measures the effect of mothers’ participation levels and their bargaining power in the household decision-making process on the school dropout outcome for females.

V. RESULTS
The results in table 1 reflect the maximum likelihood estimation of the logit model. The robustness of the most statistically significant variables are further verified by the minimal change in the coefficient values that occurred after controlling other foremost affecting variables on dropout outcome. The mothers’ participation index significantly (p < 0.001) and negatively affects the dropout outcome. This finding means that a one unit increase in the mother’s level of participation in making household decisions decreases the likelihood of the daughter dropping out by 2.23%. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the mothers’ level of participation holds. Accordingly, if the level of the mother’s participation in making household decisions increases, the likelihood that the daughter will drop out of school decreases. On the one hand mothers’ bargaining power also significantly (p < 0.001) and negatively affects the dropout outcome. Therefore, if the level of bargaining power of mothers increase, the likelihood that the daughter will drop out of school decrease.
necessities of the household members, while the mother's fathers are responsible for providing all of the financial provided for by a single earner, the father. Accordingly, South Asian societies where most of the households are typically male dominated, a fact that is especially true in the gender of the children in the household. Asian societies are why mothers tend to be more altruistic regardless of the parents tend to prefer sons to daughters. However, the literature, as well as this study, suggests that mothers are fathers regardless of the gender of the children. The altruism or preference for daughters is important for the daughters' educational attainment when fathers have a propensity to favor the sons. However, despite the mothers’ altruism, they usually cannot act upon it, as they have no autonomy or power in the household decisions. When mothers have no income or make no financial contribution to the household income, they do not even autonomy to bargain with their partners regarding household decisions. Gender inequality is a serious concern in developing patriarchal societies in Bangladesh where women suffer inequalities and lack authority in the household decision-making process, thus allowing the males to make all major decisions and control all valued resources, in general. Women are often constrained by the traditional norms and beliefs in these South Asian patriarchal societies. For instance, traditional women in these cultures who have no education believe that men always make the proper decisions and the wife should not argue with or contradict their husbands. Females should not attain a higher level of education than males, and women should not work outside the home. In fact, women's marginalization begins at infancy and continues thereafter, and it, in fact, pervades their society and is reflected in women's low self-esteem and powerlessness. Therefore, based on the results of this study and according to the bargaining theory, it can be concluded that household decisions in Bangladesh are made by the fathers who discourage the girls from attaining an education.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Many studies on son preference provide evidence that parents tend to prefer sons to daughters. However, the results of this study indicate that mothers have a negative effect on the schooling outcome for girls. In the logistic model, the mothers’ level of participation in the household decision-making negatively affects school dropout outcome, which implies that the mothers’ participation in making decisions reduces the likelihood that their daughters will drop out because mothers either prefer daughters or they demonstrate a more altruistic preference than do fathers regardless of the gender of the children. The literature, as well as this study, suggests that mothers are more altruistic than fathers [5]. There are many reasons why mothers tend to be more altruistic regardless of the gender of the children in the household. Asian societies are typically male dominated, a fact that is especially true in the South Asian societies where most of the households are provided for by a single earner, the father. Accordingly, fathers are responsible for providing all of the financial necessities of the household members, while the mothers live as dependents of their husbands. In this situation, fathers may feel anxious when they consider their future old age. However, mothers are not worried about their future life, as their husbands (fathers of children) are responsible for supporting them in the present and the future. Consequently, mothers do not separate or show preference to one gender over the other because it does not impact their future to the degree that it impacts the fathers’ future.

Another reason for the altruism of mothers is reflected in their levels of education and income. Mothers with an individual income feel more secure about their future old age than do mothers with no income. Educated mothers are more conscious about the future success of their children and try to promote the well-being and success of their daughters because women are so often neglected by society in general. Thus, the mothers’ altruism or preference for daughters is important for the daughters’ educational attainment when fathers have a propensity to favor the sons. However, despite the mothers’ altruism, they usually cannot act upon it, as they have no autonomy or power in the household decisions. When mothers have no income or make no financial contribution to the household income, they do not even autonomy to bargain with their partners regarding household decisions. Gender inequality is a serious concern in developing patriarchal societies in Bangladesh where women suffer inequalities and lack authority in the household decision-making process, thus allowing the males to make all major decisions and control all valued resources, in general. Women are often constrained by the traditional norms and beliefs in these South Asian patriarchal societies. For instance, traditional women in these cultures who have no education believe that men always make the proper decisions and the wife should not argue with or contradict their husbands. Females should not attain a higher level of education than males, and women should not work outside the home. In fact, women’s marginalization begins at infancy and continues thereafter, and it, in fact, pervades their society and is reflected in women’s low self-esteem and powerlessness. Therefore, based on the results of this study and according to the bargaining theory, it can be concluded that household decisions in Bangladesh are made by the fathers who discourage the girls from attaining an education.

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REFERENCES


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### Table 1. Logistic Regression Model on School Dropout Behavior for Girls in Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable = Dropout</th>
<th>Mo del-1</th>
<th>Mo de 1-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mo ther’s PI</td>
<td>-4.45**</td>
<td>-2.23***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.56)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo ther’s bargaining power</td>
<td>3.44***</td>
<td>2.35***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.33)</td>
<td>(0.41)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa ther’s income</td>
<td>3.11***</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.43)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa ther’s education</td>
<td>2.61***</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of siblings</td>
<td>4.53**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.45)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household chores</td>
<td>4.24**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**N = 268; P** .001, **P** .05, .001. \( \chi^2 = 391.21 \) (6), \( P < 0.0001. \) Negelkerker \( R^2 = 0.26, 0.41 \)


Song, “Gender effects on household resource allocation in rural China”, in Carl Riskin, Zhao Renwei and Li Shi (Eds), *China’s Retreat from Equality. Income Distribution and Economic Transition*, Armonk, New York:


Assessment and review entrepreneurship education in universities

Esmail Shabani Nejad, and Avishan Yazdani

Abstract—Attention to topics of entrepreneurship in universities led to the path that guides students while coping with their personality characteristics, unemployment can also inhibit the process of generating employment and development of the country forgive quickly, because one of the important components of development a country. There are educated entrepreneurs in the economic realm is, therefore, according to necessity entrepreneurship education in today's world, this paper has tried to define the principles and concepts and evaluation of entrepreneurship education in universities to evaluate the effect of entrepreneurship education in universities on knowledge about entrepreneurship to identify and stimulate entrepreneurial talents and skills and explore new opportunities to be addressed in this context to examine learning experiences of countries also discussed.

Keywords—evaluation of concepts, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial university, the effects of entrepreneurship education.