Mothers' Participation in the Family Decisions and Daughters' Education

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Abstract-This paper is persuade toexamine whether rmothers' participationin the householddecisions making process impact to reduce school dropout ou tcome for daughters which has been overlooked insofar research on school dropout arena. 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- Girls education, Bargaining,household decision-making, **S**chool dropout.

I. INTRODUCTION

IN Bangladesh, although enrolment rate for gilrs in secondary school level has been increased than ever before, the rate at which girls early dropout from schooling remains still high (80%, Bangladesh Education Bureau of Statistics Report, 2005). 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.

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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 Biglinsoy [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] andSong [9] explored household expenditure patterns and found that girls are at a disadvantage relative to boys in developing countries. Edmondsand 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, 12]. 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 [13]. 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.

II. LITERTATURE REVIEW

Studies on the dropout issue have been explored in several ways. In many of the conceptual models, student engagement is one of the most important individual behavioral precursors to dropping out of students [12- 16]. One group of researchers found that the characteristics that best distinguished dropouts from their academically similar peers who stayed in school were problem behaviors like truancy and lateness. The major focus of most studies was examining whether working more hours increased the odds of dropping out of school. Although one study found that employed students, as a group, are more likely to drop out and another study found that the number of hours worked was a significant predictor of dropping out [18]. Good mental and physical health may be both a cause and a consequence of dropping out. Research has clearly shown that high school graduates have better health and incur lower health care costs than high school dropouts [19]. Research indicates that school-aged children who suffer from protein-

energy malnutrition, hunger, or who lack certain micronutrients in their diet do not have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished children. Studies suggest that these children attend school less frequently, are more likely to repeat grades, drop out early and fail to learn adequately due to poor levels of attention, low motivation and poor cognitive function [20]. Hallman's [21] 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 [22]. 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 [23]. 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. Family Decision As A Bargaining Problem

Several authors describe family/household decisions as a bargaining problem as a non-cooperative and cooperative way in order to explain the welfare of household members [24].

A. *Household-**Decisions as a Non-Cooperative Game***

The family makes no gain if its members act non-cooperatively. In this case, there is no distinction between a family household and separate single-person households. For this reason the models suppose a consensus is assumed. However, which decisions the partners agree upon appears too arbitrary.

B. *Household **Decisions as a Cooperative Game***

Household members make gain if act cooperatively. The family bargaining game is described by the set of players, by the set of all feasible payoffs and by the outcome in the case of disagreement. It is assumed that there is at least one feasible payoff vector with a better outcome for each player than in the case of disagreement that can be reached by cooperative behavior.

IV. Influences On Household Decision-Making Process

Partial model [25] on the decision making process identifies which factors affects the family or household decision based on the characteristics of partners. Figure 1 identifies some these factors.

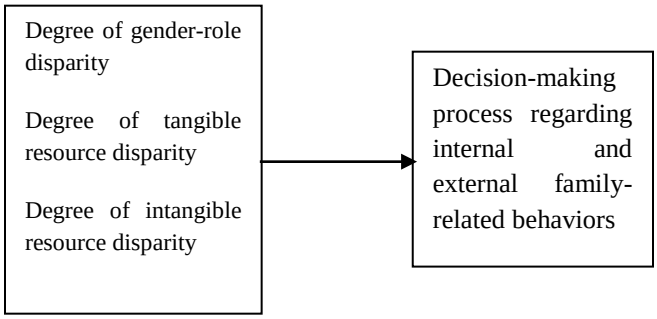

Fig. 1. A partial model of family decision making [34].

A. *Degree of Gender- Role Disparity*

This model posits that preference vary by the utility of partners in which scholars [25] assess how traditional or modern the individual's attitude regarding the role of the wife is (partner). In brief, women who conform to long-standing (traditional) prescriptions regarding the sex roles are likely to carry on their decision in the way as to promote primarily the well-being the family as a whole. At the same time, traditional men do not expect women to equate their own goals or rewards with those of the family group. Men whose carry on decisions by keeping their own interests primary-based on the assumption that if they do well the family will too. Te traditional men expect women to recognize the primacy of men's interests. On the other hand, men of modern continuum are more likely to carry on decision in a different manner than traditional men. They recognize that the validity of women decision to achieve their own interest-interests that are not necessarily centered in the household. They want to promote their own well-being of spouse and other family members alongside their own.

B. *Degree of Tangible Resource Disparity*

If partner's tangible resources such as educational level, employment status and income level has more of each of these resources, he / she more likely to make the household decisions. These three disparity dimensions tend to be associated or correlated. That is because, people with more years of schooling tend to have higher status jobs and also to earn more money. Some researchers maintain that even when wives work as consistently as their husband, and have no education disparity, they often earn less money which result of women's own sex role. In turn, some constrains influence women's income disparity which, in its way, affects decision in the household.

C. *Degree of Intangible Resource Disparity*

Partner's intangible resource as like as tangible resource also influences on the household decision making process. For

instance, some studies have indicated that women tend to possess a lower self-concept than men, and therefore, women tend to think less itself. Accordingly, a self-esteem disparity exists between the husband and wife. In this regard, a study on negotiation philosophy [25] 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 intangible resource 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.

V. Methods

A. Data and Measurement of Variables

Data collected from one the town zone of the sub-district namely Pirgonj Upazila of Rangpur District in Bangladesh 2010. Questionnaires were used for 268 participants (mothers) of girls. Dropout status measured as dummy in where dropout = 1, and non dropout = 0 indicated in this study.

B. 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.

C. 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.

D. 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.

VI. Results

The results in table I 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.

TABLE I

LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL ON SCHOOL DROPOUT BEHAVIOR FOR GIRLS IN BANGLADESH

Dependent variable = Dropout	Model-1 B (SE)	Model-2 B (SE)
Constant	9.22*** (2.11)	7.33*** (1.11)
Mothers' PI	-4.45** (0.56)	-2.23*** (0.15)
Mothers' bargaining power	-3.44*** (0.33)	-2.35*** (0.41)
Fathers' income		-3.11*** (0.43)
Fathers' education		-2.61*** (0.22)
Number of siblings		4.53** (0.45)
Household chores		4.24** (0.25)
Negelkerker R^2	0.26	0.41

N = 268; P^{**}<.01, P^{***} <.001.

VII. Discussion And Conclusion

In the logistic model, the mothers' level of participation in the household decision-making negatively affect school dropout outcome, which implies that the mothers' participation in making decisions reduces the likelihood that

their daughters will drop out. 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. The norms and cultures of these societies inhibit women's involvement in market transactions and curb their potential to generate income, thus reinforcing their economic dependence on men. Women encounter many unpleasant experiences including economic deprivation and a lack of freedom of choice in every aspect their lives. 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. As a result, the decision-making power and the ability of women to participate in household activities are reduced. Thus, the results of this study suggest that mothers have less bargaining power and participate less in the household decision-making process.

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