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Low-income level group and expectation of better standard of living for the next generation:

A case study on different professionals

It is almost a natural phenomenon that parents desire a better standard of living for their next generation. Therefore, they accept sufferings for their own. This paper is an attempt to search the tendency of expectation for different professionals whose incomes are generally very low. Moreover, income is not the only determinants to fulfill their desire. There remain many influential components to settle on a better livelihood.

The second section of this paper illustrates the conventional way to show the definitional relation between low-level of income, basic needs and poverty's dimensions; the variation of standard of living is mentioned in the third sections; the measurement methods and its limitations were described in the fourth sections and in the next section the proposed poverty definition incorporating the expectation of better standard of living for the next generation is explained. The idea of livelihood framework is presented in section vi and the scenario of different professionals and expectation from their next generation is portrayed in section vii. The concluding part is just an attempt to relate the empirical scenario with the theoretical framework that has been mentioned earlier and also rest an indication for further study.

II. Low income earners and poverty:

Usually low-income earner's group are identified as poor. Poverty is a curse for human society, but its definition and system of the measurement do not have a constant form; rather there are some incompleteness and contradiction in every description.

Poverty consists in the lack of certain capabilities of the human being -the capabilities to live a healthy active life free of avoidable morbidity and premature mortality, the capability to live with dignity, with adequate clothing, shelter etc. Therefore, now poverty

is a broad front. It is about income, food security, asset base, human resource capabilities, and income erosion. (Pinker, 1999)

Dimensions of Poverty

There are two concepts of poverty-

- (i) Uni-dimensional concept, and (ii) Multi-dimensional concept

(i) Uni-dimensional Concept

This concept of poverty explains poverty on the basis of per capita income and calorie consumption.

This concept consists-

- (a) Poverty line income
- (b) Poverty line consumption

(ii) Multi-dimensional Concept

This is a qualitative study of poverty. Besides per capita income and calorie consumption it consists of several dimensions such as

- a) Health and Sanitation e) Education
- b) Housing f) Participation in political process
- c) Security g) Access to credit as a human right
- d) Access to state distribution h) Crisis coping capacity

III. Standard of living varies-Country to Country'

Poverty is considered as the failure to earn the *minimum standard of living* and in different countries the *minimum standard of living* consists of different components.

- In an underdeveloped country they who can fulfill the minimum need for food and clothing- is considered as on the poverty line or just above it.
- But in a developing country beside food and clothing, health and education facilities are also included.

- In a developed country it is also considered that to live in a society people need some amusements or entertainment.

IV. Measurement of Poverty and its limitations

For uni-dimensional Poverty measurement, there assumes an income and expense level and then those persons who live below this are identified as Poor.

Let, The number of total households = n

The income (or expense) of every family = Y

The poverty level income (or expense) = Z

Then,

$$Y_1 < Y_2 < \dots < Y_q < Z < Y_{q+1} < Y_{q+2} < \dots < Y_n \quad (A)$$

Therefore, the number of households under poverty level = q

The broadly used method for the measurement of poverty as 'Head Count Ratio or HCR'. (Mujery,1997)

Here, $H = q/n$

These measurements sometimes overlook the following requirements: such as,

- To be able to bear the extra expenses in the time of pregnancy and immediately after the birth.
- To be able to spend the minimum cost for the marriage ceremony and though the dowry system is a curse and very much unethical but it exists, so sometimes it has to be taken under consideration that whether the father of a bride can pay it or not. Ethically we don't support it but we consider its existence.
- To have the access to law and order forces, to get the service from the government one has to pay. Here though we don't support bribe or illegal gratification we are undone. In reality it exists and one has to consider the expenses in real life. So unfortunately to get the services from the state the other (!) expenses come under consideration.
- To resist from sharp shock and security in old age are also needed to make a part in the field of poverty. (Rahman,1997)

V. Poverty and expectation of better standard of living for the next generation

To find the link with the profession, social and economic status and poverty, this paper wants to consider an important question, which is that whether there is any chance for the next generation to have a better standard of living. A life with fulfilling basic needs and having more dignity, being a more active force to decision making and so than the present status are considered as the components of better standard of living for the next generation.

Therefore, this paper defines the poverty by 'IF or OTHERWISE'. Every citizen (poor and non-poor) has some rights and these must be provided by the state. State should ensure that one should get service from the law enforcing public service authorities. But it is seen that the corruption dominates there and the poor people do not have easy access to these services. Moreover, there is law against dowry but it has a very little or no effect in the society. These are the cases of the failure of the state or government. This failure costs a big amount for the poor community. So, to calculate poverty the violation of the citizen right like this has to be considered. IF the state can serve this property the let M is the poverty level income (or expenditure), OTHERWISE $M+N$ (N is extra expenditure which the poor are obliged to spend to get their right because of the failure of state) is the poverty level income and $M+N > M$. The personal or size distribution of income is the measurement most commonly used by economists. It simply deals with individual persons or households and the total incomes they receive. The way in which that income was received is not considered, Thus, this paper want to say that the way of income source is also important to leave in a society and it has a great influence to the next generation to have a better standard of living.

The same money incomes for all the hardcore poor do not necessarily imply equal chance for poverty alleviation (or better standard of living) for the next generation. Let us think that one garments worker and one sex worker earn the equal amount of money or wage. But their gain (to alleviate the poverty or better standard of living for their next generation) is not same. Because of their social status the children of a garments worker may have a better access to improve job facilities and social functions than that

of a sex worker. It becomes hard for the later one to get rid of her ancestor's dishonoured profession because people hate them but do not hesitate to use them.

This remains true for a rickshaw puller and a thief (as we consider it as a profession) and so on.

So, a proposed new index can be such -

Let the poverty line income = Z

the income (nominal) of a hardcore poor = Y_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, q$

Where $Y_1 \leq Y_2 \leq Y_3 \leq \dots \leq Y_q \leq Z \leq Y_{q+1} \leq \dots \leq Y_n$

So Y_1 to Y_q = below the poverty level income

Y_{q+1} to Y_n = above the poverty level income

Let us think the income level of two hardcore poor A and B remain as Y_q and the probability to alleviate poverty ($Y_q \rightarrow Z$) of next generation from the present strategy β_A and β_B respectively.

Thus the present incomes in terms of alleviation of poverty of the next generation are $\beta_A Y_q$ and $\beta_B Y_q$

And if $\beta_A > \beta_B$

then $\beta_A Y_q > \beta_B Y_q$

and the probability of the A's alleviation of poverty is greater than that of B though their income level was same.

This index β would be calculated according to social status of their profession.

Here 'a better standard of living of the next generation' means that the people of the next generation can overcome the 'income constraint' as well as 'social obstacles' that

their ancestors faced and thus they will have some sort of poverty alleviation—and our purpose is to derive its probability. This β or the probability of having better standard of living for the next generation will be calculated in our study where first we would determine some standards or criteria and then plot them to our samples.

(It is assumed that consumption remain same)

VI. Livelihood framework

Only the amount of income and monetary asset base are not adequate to realize the livelihood strategies of the poor and their expectation from the next generation. To realize the linkage between livelihood strategies and better expectation there remains many other factors to consider. Natural, physical, human social, financial and in some extent political assets construct the livelihood capital assets. Moreover, the transforming structures (government, private sector) and processes (laws, policies, culture, institutions) play a vital role to utilize the livelihood capital assets. Besides them vulnerability context (shocks, trends, seasons) is also very crucial. Thus, livelihood strategies in constituted. This livelihood framework is presented in fig.1.

VII. Different professionals and expectation from their next generation

This study is mainly based on few professionals (formal, non-formal or odd jobs all of them here is considered as professions) in Dhaka. The survey was done in 2000/01 and on the people involving with the following professions: beggar, horizon(sweeper), hawker, minti, jogali, rickshaw puller, garments worker, sex worker, maid servant(bua). The survey team collected data about their income and talked about their expectation from their next generation. This is presented in table1.

Table:1: Different profession and expectation

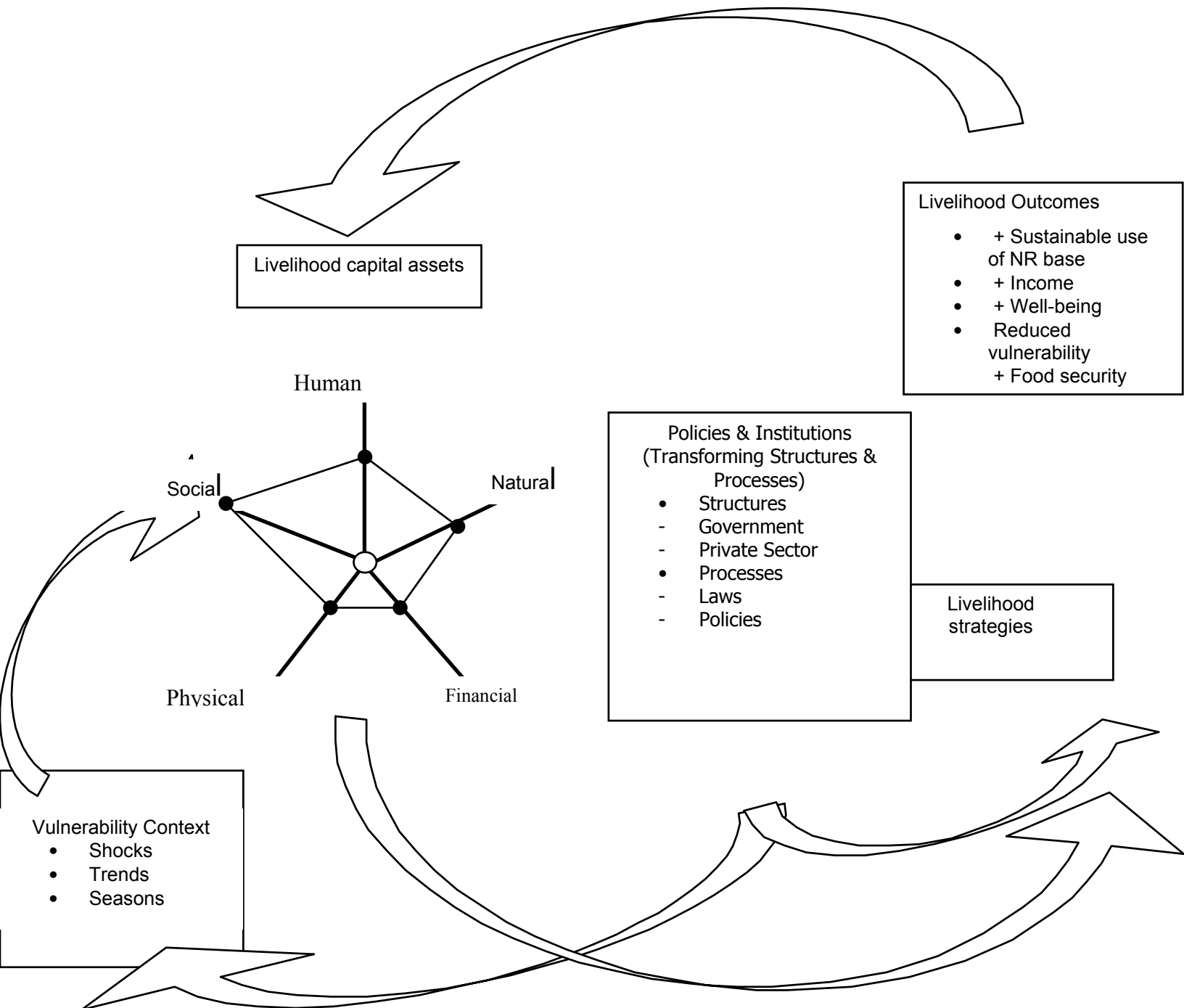
| Profession | Average monthly income | Expectation from their next generation |
|-----------------|------------------------|---|
| Beggar | 1170.5 | service holder, garments worker, house wife, maulana, alem |
| Horizon | 3047.5 | service holder, doctor, computer engineer, horizon, teacher, football player, banker |
| Hawker | 2254.50 | service holder, alem, painter, businessman |
| Maid Servant | 657 | service holder, business man, garments worker, salesman |
| Garments worker | 2800 | police, car mechanic, garments worker, lawyer, doctor, teacher, engineer, driver, maulana |
| Jogali | 1660.66 | service holder, teacher, farming, engineer, business man, alem |
| Minti | 4500 | business man, garments worker |
| Rickshaw puller | 3500 | teacher, business, service holder, doctor |
| Sex worker | 2570 | driver, service holder, business man, doctor, lawyer, karati master, garments |

Source: , Coping Strategies for the Urban and Rural Hardcore Poor & Expectation of Better Standard of Living for the Next Generation, PRPA Grameen Trust. Dhaka, 2001

The data of table:1 reflects almost all people expect from their next generation to be service holder. Another thing is noticed that almost none expect from their next generation to remain at the same profession in which they (parents) are presently involved except horizon. The expectation scenario of the horizon is very much diversified: some are highly ambitious (expect next generation to be computer engineer) but at the same time other expect from them to stay at the same profession. In the past there the society expected that the horizon ought not switch from their profession and there remained the oppression tendency from state. But at present they worked under the authority of municipality and their working conditions have been improved due to modern sewerage system. And thus their expectations are gradually changing. This table also reflects so some beggars, hawkers, garments worker, jogali look forward from their children to be alem or maulana and so it can be said that the expectations are not necessarily structured only in terms of income but a life with dignity and honour are also

very notably considered. Some sex workers viewed for an uncommon one- karati master. The physical insecurity may be the cause behind this.

fig.1: Livelihood Framework



VIII. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to find the expectation of better standard of living for the next generation. With IF OR OTHERWISE method the status for a better standard of living of the various occupations can be explained as the variation of N. The income changing or generating situation, probability of having job according to their desire, access to community life, decision making power and so are the components to determine N. Different N along with the education and health status would help to calculate β and the expectation. This paper has not yet calculated the mathematical framework and the value of β . It requires further study.

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