

Dependency and Position of Rural Elderly People in Family

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Abstract:- Dependency and elderly are very much related terms and both of the two concepts are now emerging aspects of all over the world. Although both in rural and urban areas of our country are not secure from this problem but elderly and dependency problems in rural areas are more vulnerable. This study was a qualitative scrutiny in the field of sociology which is mainly explored the dependency level and the relationship among dependency and position (role and status) of the rural elders in their family. A methodological triangulation of data sources helped to pick up information that was analyzed qualitatively as well as statistically. A purposive and random sampling procedure was followed in picking up information from the sample units. The study depicted that in rural area aged are very much dependent on their family and somewhere on neighbor and relatives in their many sectors. Nevertheless, affluent aged has less dependency. Again, property and allowance also identify their authority and position in their family and society too. In this study the aged explicated that family support, social consciousness, govt. allowance can be helpful to narrow down the dependency problem and aged can take a better position both in their family and society.

Keywords:- Elderly, Rural, Dependency, Family, Status.

I. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh is a developing country and mainly village oriented where 75% people live in villages [1]. In this highly populated country aged people are considered as burden/problem as like other social problems especially in agriculture based rural areas. Ageing of the population is now one of the most important facts that came to the foreground in the 21st century [2]. Bangladesh is one of the twenty countries in the world with the largest elderly populations too [3] where 6.42% of the total population is of the age 65 years and over [4]. Besides, population aging has a significant impact on demographic dependency [5] and now the elderly dependency ratio is 7.7 in Bangladesh [4]. In Bangladesh, due to over population, scarcity of resources, existing poverty, insufficient health facilities, absence of social security, changing socio-economic, cultural, demographic situation and adoption of western culture, they have become an important topic of discussion from polymorphic angles [6]. The ongoing process of forming nuclear family will add more pressure on the elderly support system [7].

Anility is universal, inviolable, overwhelming and eternal truth. Anility comes very naturally. It is the last stage of human being in where men/women lost their physical strength and become dependent on their children. Energy, physical and mental strength, vital force, ginger, acceptance on new things, patience, etc are lost or decline and expectation, dependency, etc are increased in this stage of life [8]. As the aged people are very helpless, that's why their dependency increased. This stage has a severe impact on the family and social life because it is completely different from other stage in life. Generally aged life starts from the retirement of working life. At the end of life, they have become more helpless and dependent though they were the steering person of the family and society at a time. Population ageing and its social and economic consequences are drawing increased attention of policy makers worldwide [9]. Socio-economic discrimination and several cultural factors at individual, societal and institutional levels are known to limit access to healthcare services for elderly rural women in Bangladesh, who represent a highly vulnerable population group in Bangladesh regarding healthcare and healthcare access [10]. The root causes of vulnerability of elderly are medical, economical, emotional and social issues which are concerns not only for the individual or family, but also a concern for the community [11].

The position of elderly in familial decision making is not so satisfactory in all states of familial affairs as per expectation [8]. Even in urban areas, the elderly people were deprived from take care of their family members due to some factors, which include family members have no time, they are busy, no earning capacity. It is also found that they feel lonely, not satisfied according to current behaved. The elderly people were unhappy and not satisfy to take care of their family members, their loneliness and misery is indescribable and suffering from different health & mental problems [12]. Quality of life was related to three "objective" life factors; age, services received, and relationship status [13]. The role and status of the elderly and its matter of enjoyment largely depend on how much wealth and property they have because wealth has great influence on the enjoyment of role and status [14].

Generally 60 years exceeded people are called aged people. But it varies from society to society, culture to culture and country to country. According to Bangladesh government principle, after exceeding 57 to 60 years, aged stage starts. Compared to developed countries, the pace of population ageing is much faster in developing countries

[15] and Bangladesh is more vulnerable on this issue because older is growing faster than the total population [16]. Age, level of education, physical fitness are significantly associated with the current occupation of elderly people. About 46 % of physically sound elderly are jobless and 15 % aren't engaged in job due to lack of physical fitness and other causes [17].

Recently, aging population is considered as the "marginal group" of the society. The attitude and behavior on the aging population in Bangladesh is very frustrating and mournful. We should become more co-operative and humanitarian on the aging people because it is very sensitive stage of life. At the biological level, aging results from the impact of the accumulation of a wide variety of molecular and cellular damage over time and this leads to a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity, a growing risk of disease and ultimately death. Beyond biological changes, aging is also associated with other life transitions such as retirement, relocation to more appropriate housing and the death of friends and partners [18].

Our investigation is to find out the various mode of dependency of this class of people and also to find out the proper recommendation to our nation. It is also investigated that any kind of property or support and consciousness can give pleasurable position for the elderly people.

II. STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEMS

At present aging is a very crucial and complicated problem in the society to the whole world. Industrialization, urbanization, socio-economic changes, etc are basic causes for aging problem. Average life of human being have increased for the development of new medical science, discovery of new vaccine for various diseases and improved life-style (standard of living). Aging problem is increasing due to the increase of the average life. Though this aging problem is comparatively higher in the western world, but they have taken various steps for the elderly people. On the other hand third world countries especially Bangladesh is lacking behind to take various steps for the elderly people. In Bangladesh the elderly people are completely dependent on the family as well as they rely on the family for all kind of financial and social aspects. Moreover, at this stage of life men/women are affected by various complicated physiological problems and loss physical and mental strength. So, this helpless class of people is becoming burden in the eye of society.

More or less all the elderly people are workless and have a severe impact on the GDP of the economy. Per capita for the elderly people are very low. The condition of rural elderly people is more vulnerable than urban older people. In rural areas there have no earning source for older people because they are physically weaker. That's why rural aged people are severely poor. So, without taking proper steps for this large group of people the overall development of the country is not possible. For this reason,

researchers have tried to find out the actual scenario of this mass population group.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are -

- To identify the sectors of dependency of the rural elderly people.
- To portray the importance of the elderly in their family.
- To mark out the relationship between dependency and ownership of property of the respondents.

IV. TYPE OF RESEARCH

The study is exploratory in nature.

V. METHODS OF THE STUDY

A 'methodological mixes' was apply to collect data for this study. Data will mainly be collected by survey method through scheduled interview; informal meeting, spot observation and non-participant observation have been and were used to explore and to gain critical overview of overall aspects of the dependency of rural elderly people.

A. Sampling and sample size

Study locale for the present research has been selected purposively. After conducting preliminary baseline survey, it was found that the total number of population is 1230, among them 70 are elderly in which 45 are female and 25 are male members. Among them, 35 of the aged people (n=70) were randomly selected for the in depth interview. Serial numbers were given to each aged people before being selected for interview and those serials were kept in a large rectangular box and mixed thoroughly. Required numbers of serials were randomly drawn from the box to make a list of elderly for interview.

B. Locale of the Study

It is vivid from the topic above that respondents of this study are aged and they are rural people not urban one. It is known from literature review that no single study has addressed the issue of dependency associated with aged people in Tagasi village of Bagmara Upazila under Rajshahi district of Bangladesh. The researcher has purposefully chosen the village as the field for present research.

Justification of the study area goes as follows –

- Bagmara Upazila mainly Tagasi village is a large and predominantly an agriculture based area. Mode of production and livelihood patterns of the study area justify it as rural.
- The study area is composed of 1230 population and 70 people are elderly.
- Among 1230 people, all are muslims and no other religious people in the village.
- Principal researcher has grown up in the study area. She was a student of Sociology. These two factors contribute her deep understanding of the society and culture of the study area.

- Being grown up in the study area, it will be very easy for the principal researcher to build rapport with the respondents.
- The principal researcher will be able to collect primary data from the respondents and comprehension of every dialect, gesture, posture was made possible as she is a member of the village.
- It was cost and time effective to collect data from the study area as principal researcher can avail parental residence.

The locale of the study area is indicated in the following map of Bagmara upozila.



Fig 1:- Map of Bagmara upozila, Rajshahi and the study area is the Tagasi village of Suvodanga UP.

C. Unit of Analysis

Elderly people are the unit of analysis of the study.

D. Data Types

Mainly qualitative data were employed for the proposed study. Complementarily, quantitative data regarding social, economic and demographic aspects etc. were used in this study.

E. Data Sources

Both primary and secondary data were used in this research. Primary data were collected from the respondents in relation to the objectives of the study. Secondary data from books, journals, related research reports, documents were also used as per requirements.

F. Techniques of Data Collection

Keeping the objectives of the study in view, an interview schedule was prepared to collect relevant information from the elderly people. Simple direct questions were included in the interview schedule for determining the independent and dependent variables. Informal meeting, spot observation and non-participant observation were also be used to explore and to gain critical over view on the whole aspects of adolescent health and its

aftermath in the study area. Besides this, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and In-depth Interview (IDI) were used as data collection techniques to explore the authentic result of this research.

- **Interview:** Interviews of the aged people were taken by using a prepared questionnaire. The questionnaire was purposively developed and pre-tested under field situation. Necessary modifications of the questionnaire were made after pre-testing. The final version of questionnaire was used to collect data. However, all the data were cross-checked for ensuring the accuracy of data collected from the respondents.

- **Focus Group Discussion (FGDs):** The FGDs were conducted to identify the problems and to collect elderly people recommendation regarding the problems identified. FGD is a very effective method for collecting large number of necessary information of interest within a short period of time. A total of 3 FGDs were conducted during the study period. In these FGDs, 5-10 rural aged were present in each FGD.

- **Case Study:** Cases studied were also carried out during survey period.

G. Data processing and Analysis

After completion of field survey, data from all interview schedules was coded, compiled, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. Local units were converting into standard units and qualitative data will convert into quantitative ones by means of suitable scoring whenever necessary.

The analysis will performed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) computer package. Descriptive analysis such as range, number and percentage, mean, standard deviation and rank order will be used whenever possible. Correlation coefficient test will be used in order to explore the relationship between concerned variables.

H. Study Period

The present study was conducted for a period of one year from May, 2018 to June, 2019.

I. Scopes and Limitations of the Study

Present study was covering only dependency of aged in rural Bangladesh. It was not cover urban areas. For exploratory nature of the research topic, present research may need methodological and strategic change afterwards.

J. Research Instruments

In-depth interview schedule, a check list, intuition of researcher, jot book, camera, recorder and mobile phone will be used as research instruments during data collection.

K. Types of Questionnaire

Both open ended and close ended questions will be applied as per convenience.

VI. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dependency of the elderly or aged people in the context of rural society of Bangladesh has become an emerging topic of discussion related to elders. Wheresoever’s, in the past, elderly contributed a lot for the betterment of family, society and country by their stock knowledge, experience, wisdom and activities. That’s why they are treated as the important guardians, mediators and members of the family and society. Now-a-days they are becoming stereotyped by the members of the family, society and country in various ways [6]. Because of their dependency in various aspects they are considered as the threat to the national economy also.

A. Decision making and Dependency

In the past, elders are considered the mentors and they contributed in giving information, suggestion, advice to others, even they become a judge in many society and contributed to judgments in locale cases. They can give their opinion in each and every sector either positive or negative. Now a day’s elders can’t participate in these sectors, even they can’t take any decision for themselves too. In the study, elders are very much dependent on their family members and others for their valuable aspects. The scenario of the dependency on decision making of the rural aged people in a selective area is given below table I.

Dependency on decision making	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Son(s)	13	37.14	5	14.29	18	51.43
Own	2	5.72	5	14.29	7	20.0
Other family members	5	14.29	1	2.86	6	17.14
Others	4	11.43	-	-	4	11.43
Total	24	67.57	11	31.43	35	100

Table 1:- Dependency on Decision Making About Personal and Other Aspects of the Rural Aged People.

The above table shows that in Tagasi village 51.43 % elders are dependent on their sons for their personal and overall aspects of their life. Only 20 % elders can take their own decision, they are not dependent on others for taking decision. As dependent members they loss their own power and authority also.

B. Dependency and Social Importance of Rural Elderly People

Socially, elderly are considered as a cultural figure. But gradually elderly are considered as negative aspect of a society. In industrial society, elders are detached from various activities because of the economic growth. They are treated negatively and considered as burdens in a family as well as society. It is logically visible that the changes of political, social, mental, economic, demographic, law, norms and value; relation with the elders is changing. Gradually elderly are considered as marginal people. The rate of importance of rural elderly people is shown in following pie diagrams.

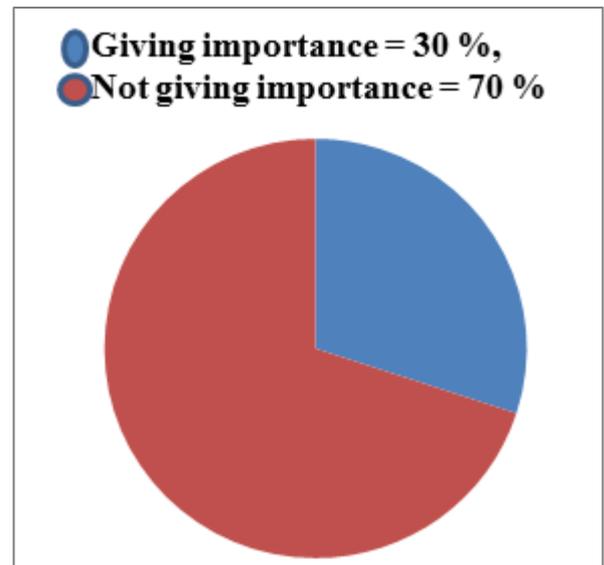


Fig 2:- Pie diagrams of social importance of rural aged people in Tagasi village, Bagmara, Rajshahi, Bangladesh.

In the above figure, it is mentioned that 30 % elders think that they get importance from their society though they are dependent. Nevertheless, male members get more importance than female members. Only affluent female members can get importance from their family and society. The rest 70 % elders think that they get less importance from their society than they were young and energetic. Age makes them neglected very much. In the study area maximum female respondents are widow and they are more feckless.

C. Authority of Rural Elderly Members in Their Family

A person can apply his/her authority when he/she has some power. Without power one can’t become dominion. Physical, financial, social and mental power decreases gradually with the increase of age. So, aged people loss those energy and dominance. Because of losing authority, aged people can’t meet their biological, mental as well as social needs alone. So, they expect others help and become dependent. Following table II represents the percentage of authority of rural elderly people.

Mode of authority	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Partially	5	14.29	4	11.43	9	25.72
Completely	2	5.72	5	19.29	7	20.0
No authority	17	48.57	2	5.72	19	54.29
Total	24	68.57	11	31.43	35	100

Table 2:- Authorities of Rural Elderly Members in Their Family in Research Area

In the study area most of the elders are in a very innocent position and they can’t apply their authority. Only 20 % aged can apply authority on their family and who are in single family. Here, aged husband and wife stay separately and the aged husband can apply authority on his

aged wife. Very few female aged can apply authority partly and the number having no authority is very high (54.29 %).

D. Position in the Society

Traditionally elderly was considered as respectable and honorable person in the society. Even, past two or three decades, elderly people lived with enough honor. But in industrial society as high birth rate and death rate are changed to turn lower birth and death rate and that is why elderly are increased. Because of developing economic sectors, the young age people get more concentration and the aged are losing their position. So, logically aged people’s position in social, economic, cultural and political sectors is narrow down [8]. The obtained result of the scenario of the position of rural aged people in the society is given below table 3.

Social position	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Good	6	17.14	4	11.43	10	28.57
Average	8	22.89	5	14.29	13	37.14
Worse	11	31.43	2	5.72	13	37.14
Total	24	68.57	11	31.43	35	100

Table 3:- Social Positions of Elderly People in the Research Area.

According to the above table it is shown that among the total respondents 28.57 % respondents have better position in society, and rest of the respondents’ position is average or very worse. Here, this difference creates for their dependency.

E. Distribution of Property and Dependency

Most of the elderly populations are landless and they earn very little from land. Elderly men and women have lack access to land and agricultural resources. Poor older people in rural areas faces very difficult circumstances as they attempt to meet their basic needs [14]. Present research showed that among the elderly, many of them are owner of the property. Even many elderly have very few proportion of land or property. Again, many of them distribute their property among their children. Most of the male members distribute their property and female members didn’t distribute as most of them are widow and property is their main asset to live. In the study area, 48.57 % elderly are the owner of property. Among them 17.14 % female aged are true owner and 2.86 % female elderly distributed their property among their children. So, total elderly (male and female), only 22.86 % elderly distributed their property. The data obtained from the survey is given in the following table 4.

Opinion towards property distribution	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	1	2.86	7	11.43	8	22.86
No	5	14.29	4	20.00	9	25.71
Total	6	17.14	11	31.43	17	48.58

Table 4:- Property Distributions of Aged People in the Research Area.

F. Government Allowances and Dependency of the Respondent

In rural area, professional, social and cultural role and status of the elderly are changed. Those who were in a profession, loss their status and they play a very little role in their family. Most of the aged are illiterate so they can’t get any pension from their workplace. Besides this allowance from the government can’t reach to all of the elderly. In the study area, among 35 elderly people, only 12 (34.29 %) aged get allowance from government fund and rest of the 23 (65.71 %) elderly are not getting any allowance from government fund. The actual scenario of reaching government allowance to the rural elderly people in the study area is given in following pie diagram.

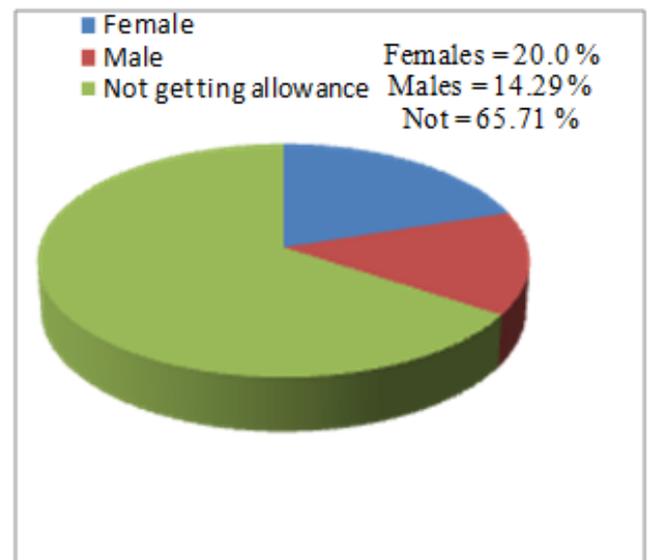


Fig 3:- Percentage of the elderly people of getting government allowances

G. Opinion of the Respondents to Overcome the Dependency

Ageing is a very normal process and it is though that dependency also a normal process for elders as elder are not able to do work physically, mentally, politically, culturally, economically and socially [17]. In rural society it is strongly believed that elderly are more dependent on their family members in their all spare of life. In the study area, most of the elderly think if they get some support from various sectors, they can overcome their dependency.

Sectors	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Govt. allowance	3	8.57	1	2.86	4	11.43
Familial support	18	51.43	5	14.29	23	65.71
Social consciousness	2	5.72	5	14.29	7	20.00
Others	1	2.86	-	-	1	2.86
Total	24	68.57	11	31.43	35	100

Table 5:- Auxiliary Source of Overcoming Dependency According To the Opinion of Respondents

The above table shows that most of the elderly live in their family with their sons and they concern family support to overcome the dependency. In the study area, 23 (65.71 %) elderly expect their family support to overcome dependency. Although, dependency can't remove from the elderly, but some support can decrease the level and pattern of dependency and the aged can live freely and healthy.

VII. CONCLUSION

The above analysis represents that the elderly are very much dependent on their family. Where, in young age the respondents can take every decision in their personal and family life, now their overall decision is taken by their family members. As elderly are detached from professional, economic, social and other position they are treated very less important person in their family and society. For the same case they have less power in ascendancy. Again, property is very valuable sector to take good position. Elderly, who have property are respected from all stage. but who have not property or who distributed their property they are neglected by their family members as well as society. Govt. allowance or any other pension also increase their esteem and keep their in better position. So, it is concluded that any kind of property or support and consciousness can give pleasurable position for the elderly people.

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