

## **Rural Women of Bangladesh: Unpaid Contributions to Child Education**

**Shovon Roy**

Lecturer, Department of Economics, Sheikh Hasina University, Netrokona, Bangladesh  
Phone: 08801764874449

Email: shovon.roy@shu.edu.bd

### **Abstract**

The role that families play in their children's education is an especially significant one. A child's upbringing and nourishment are greatly influenced by its mother. Besides the task of maintaining their family, they managed time to educate their child. Although this engagement and effort need to be considered in formal economics, standard income accounting does not take it into account. The purpose of this research is to determine the value of unpaid engagement and contribution to child education by rural women using the currently accepted methodology. For the sake of this endeavor, sample data has been used. Using the adjusted method of MAHC for our case and after making a few adjustments and using the cost of tutoring as a proxy, we determined that the average yearly value is BDT10907. The amount is around 5.6% of the family's total income.

**Keywords:** Unpaid contribution, child education, Bangladesh, MAHC

**Acknowledgment:** This article makes use of a specific section of a study project by the author. The project is funded by "The Mujib Centennial Research Fund" of Sheikh Hasina University, Netrokona, Bangladesh. We appreciate thanking the cooperation of the university administration and our coworkers for this endeavor.

### **Introduction**

Family is an institution that plays a crucial role in human existence as well as in formal & informal education. In this journey, among family members, the person who plays the greatest role is the mother. In our patriarchal society, there is a common belief about mothers' duty specifically what should be done by women. As it is assumed that the mother is responsible and has the obligation of parenting the kid, she also bears the responsibility of teaching the child. In this regard role of other women of the family cannot be considered infinitesimal. The traditional and contemporary roles of women in society include housekeeping and homework also evident from study that women are better at unpaid housework and caring tasks than males (Rubiano Matulevich & Viollaz, 2019). However, the function is shifting as a result of industrialization.

The situation is the same in Bangladesh, particularly in rural Bangladesh. In the changing trend of family structure family size in rural areas is still larger. In addition to a substantial amount of housework, mothers must find the time to educate their children. Our education system has had structural and methodological issues throughout history. The situation is especially serious in rural regions ("Bangladesh - Education", 2022). In this scenario, the majority of the time the mother is responsible for the child's education at home at preschool and schooling stage. The contribution includes direct financial support, teaching children and engagement to teach the

child by who is illiterate or has little education. In addition to her home responsibilities, the mother manages to devote a time to her child's education. This effort or endeavor has both economic and moral worth. This study tries to find an estimate of the economic worth of her time and labor. The issue is that standard measures of national income accounting do not account for it since there are no policies or instruments that can aid in understanding the intricacies because they never reach the market (Mankiw, 1992). Although it is not totally accurate that a mother's work or the time has no market worth (at least substitute), national income accounting ignores it.

If the value of women's unpaid labor could be included in the calculation of GDP, its size would increase by 76.8–87.2% ("POLICY BRIEF 04", 2020). Similar evaluations were performed for household income in Nepal, with the finding that family income increased by 27 to 56%. (Shrestha, 2008).

The same value is assigned to male and female family unpaid labor by the three current techniques (HAWRYLYSHYN, 1976, Kuznets; NBER, 1929, Morgan, et al, 1959, Sirageldin, 1964 and so more)

However, we have yet to locate an article that expressly addresses the contribution of rural women to child education in terms of the role of women in child education.

This essay attempts to assess the importance of the contribution of women to child education in this regard.

The remaining of the study is structured as follows: The rationale for the research is discussed in Section 2, followed by a discussion of the study's methodologies in Section 3, the study's results and discussion in Section 4, and closing comments in Section 5.

### **Rational**

The significance of the involvement and effort that rural women have in the educational development of children is the focus of this research. The ratio of women to men is greater in rural areas, according to the BBS (2019), and women make up 49.4 percent of the entire population in rural areas, while males make up 62 percent of the overall population (World Bank, 2022). The majority of women who live in rural regions provide unpaid labor to their families and devote a significant amount of time to the education of their children. The unpaid duty and contribution of women to our family in most cases remain unrecognized and our conventional analysis of the national account overlooks it though it should be recognized and valued. This section will attempt to describe this topic in a succinct manner.

### **Methods:**

The paper relies on a primary survey based on a structured questionnaire and purposive random sampling. Four suburb areas within four administrative districts of Bangladesh have been sampled in accordance with the study ethics. 662 responses have been collected for the study. Sample size is determined by the help of the formula developed by Cochran in 1977. Three approaches, WOCT, MAHC, and MAIFC, were used in the prior research to determine the value of unpaid family work. For this research, the MAHC (Market Alternatives = Housekeeping Cost) model that had been used to value family unpaid labor was adjusted based on these techniques.

The research utilized the cost of tutoring as a proxy for the time spent by the mother and female members of the family, adjusting for the mother's level of education.

**Results and Discussion:**

In around 13 percent of situations, mothers contribute to their child's education by either paying the whole amount of educational fees or splitting the cost with the father/family head. Among those who share the expense of school, the average financial assistance of mothers for child education is 2,411.02 BDT. The average amount of complete assistance is BDT2820.51 while the average amount of joint support is BDT2085. The overall average amount of financial support by women is BDT320.49.

Table 1: Child education funding by mother and other female members of family

	Full funding	Shared funding	Either full or shared funding	Average of total
N	39	49	88	662
Percent of response	5.89	7.40	13.29	100
Mean	BDT2820.51	BDT2085.1	BDT2411.02	BDT320.49
SD	BDT3609.11	BDT1413	BDT1353.92	BDT1905.97

*\*BDT values are calculated on monthly basis.*

We have used a modified version of the MAHC approach to assessing the worth of the mother's time spent on her child's education. Additional modifications were made to obtain the value. The first adjustment is made by assuming that the cost of tutoring serves as a proxy for the value of time. The second adjustment is made for situations in which both parents devote time to their kids. It is thought that mothers provide twice as much time as their male counterparts or two-thirds of the overall time. The final alteration consists of halving the average cost of tutors for illiterate women. The estimated mean value of mothers' time is BDT 784.31 after these changes. We have also evaluated the contributions of other female family members. For the value of this portion, no adjustments were made other than the substitution of tutoring costs. This value is determined to be 124 BDT. All numbers shown here are monthly. We have examined the importance of the estimated value based on the sample. The student t-test determined that all values are significant.

Table 2: Estimated value of time of mother and other female members of family dedicated to child education

	Given time by mother (hour/s)	Given time by other female members (hour/s)	Value of mother's time (BDT)	Value of other female member's time (BDT)
Mean	1.52	1.97	784.31	124.63
SD	1.54	0.70	1321.57	595.25

*\*BDT values are calculated monthly, and hour/s are measured on a daily basis*

This value of women's contribution to child education is 5.6% of total family income (value of time not included in valuation; based on HIES, BBS 2020). And it increased to 7.68 when we include the mother's direct assistance. The value is 23.17 percent of the education cost of a child for the mother only and combinedly it is 26.84 percent for the contribution of all women. This

suggests that the mother's contribution to their child's education is of great worth. This value may increase if urban women's contributions are included.

### **Conclusion:**

Only women are capable of bearing children, and their contribution to child raising is substantial. In addition to child parenting, a mother is responsible for a kid's basic education and formal education. Typical income accounting does not account for the mother's contribution to the education of her kid. It is crucial to quantify these values since they indirectly have market worth. According to our research, it accounts for 5.6% of household income. This suggests that the GDP's actual worth is greater than what is published each year. Calculating the contribution of urban women will increase the value further. Therefore, the projected progress can only be accomplished by integrating this group into the mainstream. Also, we must identify the remaining obstacles in this respect. If we can identify the issue and obstacles experienced by this group and come up with a potential solution, our next generation will get a better education.

### **References:**

- Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. (2019). *WOMEN AND MEN IN BANGLADESH Facts and Figures 2018* (p. 15).
- Bangladesh - Education. (2022). Retrieved 11 July 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bangladesh/Education>
- Cochran, W.G. (1977) *Sampling Techniques*. 3rd Edition, John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- HAWRYLYSHYN, O. (1976). THE VALUE OF HOUSEHOLD SERVICES: A SURVEY OF EMPIRICAL ESTIMATES\*. *Review Of Income And Wealth*, 22(2), 101-103.
- How do women and men use their time - statistics - Statistics Explained. (2022). Retrieved 6 July 2022, from [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php?title=How\\_do\\_women\\_and\\_men\\_use\\_their\\_time\\_-\\_statistics&oldid=463738](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php?title=How_do_women_and_men_use_their_time_-_statistics&oldid=463738)
- Kuznets, S., *National Income and its Composition*, Vol. 11, pp. 431-433, NBER, 1944
- Mankiw, N. (1992). *Macroeconomics* (p. 23). New York: Worth Publishers.
- Ministry of Planning, 2020. Comparative Matrix of Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) (2005 – 2016). Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).
- Morgan, J. N., David, M. H., Cohen, W. J., and Brazer, H. E., *Income and Welfare in the United States*, 1962, Chapter 8, pp. 95-105

POLICY BRIEF 04. (2020). Retrieved 9 July 2022, from <https://cpd.org.bd/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/CPD-Policy-Brief-2020-04-Estimating-Unpaid-Work-in-Bangladeshs-GDP.pdf>

Rubiano, Eliana & Viollaz, Mariana. (2019). Gender Differences in Time Use Allocating Time between the Market and the Household.

Rural population (% of total population) - Bangladesh | Data. (2022). Retrieved 1 June 2022, from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS?locations=BD>

Shrestha, M. R. (2008). A Study on the Economic Valuation of Women's Unpaid Work in Kathmandu Valley. Kathmandu: Resource Centre for Primary Health Care (RECPHEC) and Health Bridge. Available at: [https://healthbridge.ca/images/uploads/library/Nepal\\_summary\\_report\\_nal.pdf](https://healthbridge.ca/images/uploads/library/Nepal_summary_report_nal.pdf)

Sirageldin, I. A. H., *Non-Market Components of National Income*, Survey Research Centre, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, **1973**.

IJSER