Summary and Conclusion
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Due to colonial exploitation, political turmoil and resource constraints the people of Bangladesh had no opportunity and scope to formulate their own need-based policies, plans and programmes for development. Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 has paved the way for determination of national policies and programmes in a truly participative context on the basis of national needs. During the twenty-four years of independence, women's progress has been undoubtedly noteworthy, though not yet fully satisfactory. What is important to note is that a great momentum for women's development has been generated.

Numerous efforts have been made to eradicate gender discrimination in the fields of employment, education, business, industries etc. There is no legal bar to women's participation in political activities. There is no discrimination on wages in the public sector. Social facilities, keeping biological differences in view between male and female, have been adequately provided. In the education sector, elaborate measures have been taken to raise
the rate of girls' enrolment and to check their high drop-out rate by introducing appropriate incentives. A comprehensive plan has also been taken up to revise textbooks and syllabi to eradicate gender bias from the curriculum. Government agencies have taken elaborate programmes for the economic emancipation of women.

It needs to be noted that the most remarkable achievement in Bangladesh during the Decade of women (1976-85) and afterwards has been in focusing and highlighting the indispensable role of women in national development.

Consciously designed policies, carefully formulated plans and programmes for integrating women in development were adopted and launched in Bangladesh since mid 1970s. National level organizations were created in the form of such institutions as the Bangladesh Jatiyo Mahila Sangstha (National Women's Organization) with rural and urban network throughout the country. As early as 1976, and an office of Assistant to President on Women's Affairs with the rank and privileges of a Minister of State was created to stimulate, catalyze, monitor and evaluate women's
participation in national development. In 1978 the Ministry of Women Affairs was established to further stimulate and strengthen the process and build supportive institutions for it. Quota for women's recruitment in government and government-backed Corporations was also introduced during this period.

These early initiatives and bold drives, in the context of general poverty and backwardness and male-dominated socio-economic culture situation, helped sustain the drive for achievement of equity and relatively more substantial participation of women in development during the subsequent years (1985-1994) following the adoption of Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies in July 1985.

The most spectacular achievement of the International Decade of Women in Bangladesh is its influence on the government to formulate plans, programmes and policies for improving the socio-economic condition of women. Compared to the earlier decades, greater emphasis has been given on the overall development of women. Although considerable resource constraints have inhibited progress,
the government is trying to achieve the objectives laid down in the NFLS for the advancement of women.

During the last decade, there has been remarkable improvement in the institutional support to look after the issues of development and empowerment of women in Bangladesh. Thirty nine Ministries/Departments as focal points have been identified for the development of women. These measures of NGO’s, social groups and women's organizations have given more attention to the WID issues. The international community can play a vital role in promoting women's development and empowerment through providing additional resources specifically targeted for women.

Over the last ten years of planned development in Bangladesh the emphasis on women's programmes has gradually shifted from the poverty, welfare and consumption oriented approach to more programmes has gradually shifted from the poverty, welfare and consumption oriented approach to a more programmatic, realistic, development oriented one which recognizes women as productive workers and as contributors to the country's economy. Attainment of a
reasonable growth rate, alleviation of poverty through generation of productive employment opportunities and increased self-reliance are inextricably linked up with the increasing participation of women in the development activities in Bangladesh.

The national policy and plan of action for the advancement of women are being implemented through promoting women's access to and control over productive resources such as skill training, credit, grassroots level organization and institution building, vulnerable group development programmes through food subsidy, programmes for raising awareness and legal reforms to protect women's rights for elimination of all discriminations against women.

The typical professional women come from a successful, relatively non-productional middle or upper-class background. Their parents are educated specially with most of the father having a minimum graduate professional degree and the mother usually with school level education. In the present study it is revealed in the sample that though the literacy rate in Bangladesh is very low in comparison with the neighbouring countries, some of the professional
mothers got graduation degree. These professionals look to their fathers as the source of their intellectual inspirations. Their mothers are somewhat dominant and very competitive with women who often work outside home. They are perceived as somewhat dependent on and very close to their husbands.

On the contrary, the professional women are independent, assertive and self-assured, which is a rare characteristics among typical women. She hardly ever describes herself as having been cheerful, active, and sometimes even aggressive. Nevertheless, throughout their adolescent years she concurrently maintained professional aspirations distinct from the usual feminine vocational endeavours.

As an adult the professional seek satisfaction within the traditional role and in personal occupational involvement. Active and self-assured, she maintains a complex personal integration based on a high level of energy and the experience of work and mastery as pleasurable and intrinsically gratifying rather than externally compelling.
She works not because she ought to, but because she wants to and very much enjoys what she does:

For the married professional, achievement is unrelated to social mobility since her personal family background as well as her husband's status already places her solidly in the upper middle class. It is considerable involvement in cognitive functionary problem solving, and intellectual discourse per se. Working regularly provides her with a solid day-by-day framework that encourages productivity and consequently enhances her self-esteem.

But from my study I got different picture about the professional women also. One Gynaecologist who is employed in one of the best post graduate hospitals at Dhaka says,

"I am grateful to my husband that he allowed we to come out in the mid night to the hospital for delivering the patients."

Though this doctor is very capable of doing her job with confidence, but in her private life, she is very much
cautious about her marriage harmony. Though she is earning at least four times than her husband, still she is very much obliged to her husband just because not object to doing her hospital duty at mid-night.

From the above statement it is proved, that though these women got independence in economic terms but socially these women could not get rid of the social norms and pressure.

My finding shows that education facilitates women to overcome gender difference in wages, as well as socially empowers them by strengthening their fall back position in their household regarding decision making and control over their own earnings.

Though it is true that the number of working women have increased during the last decade but this does not necessarily mean that the working women are as independent as the working men are. The number of working women, including married women, is increasing. Woman in the process invariably becomes dual earner in the sense that she has to continue with family chores along with her official
duties. The division of domestic labour is assigned to sexes in stereo type ways. The professional woman faces the dilemma of dual burden. The carrier and family represent a persistent problem for women. Work-family conflicts tend to have detrimental effects on both family relations and job satisfaction. Domestic labour incorporates houseworks, related activities which produce utilities, child care and more generalised care to family which she occasionally participates, but mostly marginally. This means that professional women end up becoming dual-workers.

In many cases, because these women go for outside employment, the family environment becomes less than desirable. In the absence of proper day care centre/baby sitting arrangement, household help, husband and children and dependent relatives feel deprived of certain services which the professional women are expected to provide. While problem of poverty is reduced, a new problem, stressed / broken relationships emerge. The society is presently going through transition. The working mothers face a special problem as to how to take care of the children in the absence a properly developed day-care centre.
There is a dilemma for them. Outside employment gives them extra income and reduces their poverty. It also creates the problem of strained family relations. It is difficult to decide how to strike a better trade off between employment and family peace.

"A great French Idealist, Charles, Fourier once said, "one could judge the degree of civilization of a country by the social and political position of its women." (India Jawaharlal Nehru on Women).

The women's question is complex and complicated. It has generally exposed the inadequate of established paradigms in the social science in providing satisfactory explanation of the structure and persistence of the pervasive male-dominant social organization or gender relation. The structure of relationship between the sexes admit of variation in societies in time, space and across cultures.¹ There have been societies in which relationships between the sexes have been based on reciprocity and symmetry of rights and obligation. There exist

societies with asymmetrical relations of power and position with male as ascendant, and, there is now an ever growing consciousness, a realisation of the need to order societies on sex-egalitarian principles.

This raises very complicated ideological and theoretical questions. First, what is a sex-egalitarian social structure? Is there any consensual ideal-typical model of such a society? Second, is there any relationship between a sex-egalitarian social structure and 'hierarchical versus egalitarian production structures?' (ILO, 1981: 43) Is equality among sexes 'fully' realisable in hierarchical societies? If so, what will be the nature of such equality? Third, it follows that in so far as the concept of equality is problematic, the sex equality too will remain correspondingly problematic. The status of women today reflects the national neglect of the women in Bangladesh and is discernable in the alarming trends that have come to sight. These are the persistent decline in the sex ratio; increasing gap between men and women in literacy, education and training for employment, accelerated decline in women's employment; growing disparity between men and women among the poorest sections of the population, in access to health care and medical services.
But on both Govt. as well as Donor's side there has been a pressure to empower the women in all the spheres of life.

Bangladeshi women are already active contributing to development. The late President Ziaur-Rahman gave special emphasis on the role of women in development activities. In Article 10 he incorporated, as a fundamental state principle, the requirement that steps shall be taken to ensure the participation of women in all spheres of national life.² (Moudud, Ahmed, Democracy and the Challenge of Development)

Since then organized group activities sponsored by the government and NGO's have facilitated almost 2 million rural poor women in starting various small scale income generating activities through credit, savings, and training in technical skills, literacy and legal rights.

In urban areas, a significant development in the last decade has been the growing entry of women into formal manufacturing industries. Women's incomes now contribute significantly, perhaps one forth to one half, to many family

² Moudud, Ahmad, Democracy and the Challenge of Development : A study of Politics Military Interventions in Bangladesh, Vikas Publishing.
incomes. Women’s work can pull households out of poverty. It is changing traditional values and gender role in Bangladesh society. Another important change in the last two decades has been the emergence of women into public life. Their too is a changing perception with respect to women.

The task of integrating and involving women in various income generating and development activities was often arduous and lengthy process. This is due to certain prevailing makeup regarding women’s status and also their role in the family and the society. The overwhelming majority of women in Bangladesh is not only poor but also caught between vastly differed worlds. One is determined by culture and tradition that confine their activities inside family, homesteads and the other is shaped by increasing landlessness and poverty that draws their outside into wage in employment for economic survival.

Most of the problems faced by the women in Bangladesh in their endeavor to come out of the houses and participate in the development activities were embedded in social and institutional structure of the country. Many of the problems were imposed by the society and were based on wrong
interpretation of religion and also women's role model in the family and the society.

In the World Bank Atlas (published in 1974) only Rwanda was tentatively estimated to have smaller per capita income than Bangladesh. Since the economy of Bangladesh has not yet achieved its target, the Govt. and NGO's are pressured by the international agreements to improve its economic condition specially for the women. Women are considered the "poorest of the Poor".

But very slowly there has been a change in women's position in Bangladesh. According to UNDP's 1994 Report on Human Development, women's responsibilities and role as primary and secondary income earners of their families have increased, and their economic roles and contributions have expanded. This enhanced participation in market economy has resulted in women's improved well being in terms of income, greater choices over their lives and decision making power within the family. But as their gender roles and differentials have not changed significantly, 'double day' burden of women have adverse effect on their health and leisure.