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The First Educated Generation as "Social Transformers" in Rural Bangladesh: An Overview from their Childhood to Adolescence in a Village of *Jamalpur*

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Abstract

The contemporary young generations who have received a primary education under the large-scale education program begun in the late 1980s seems to be contributing to Bangladesh's bottom line of economic growth predominantly in the garment industry since 2000s. This article aims to discuss how their educational careers are related to their urban migrant work; whether their education has meaningfully contributed to economic growth or not.

From 2000 until the present, I have conducted anthropological research in a Bangladeshi rural society, focusing on children's socialization and the impact of their education on the course of their lives. After graduating primary school, their paths have diversified gradually; many boys migrated to urban cities to work at garment factories, and many girls got married. It is notable that although the majority of the workers in urban garment factories are women, most urban migrants from my research area are boys, not girls. Most of my female subjects have got married around their villages, and some of them continue their education even after the marriage. This unusual example of the girls in the village in Jamalpur, as well as the factors/motives of the boys' migrant work, indicate that the expansion of education on the one hand, and the current massive job opportunities in garment industries in the other,

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are not positively linked in their life paths.

This paper will discuss the discontinuity between their building educational career and their urban migration, with particular reference to the impact on young people's life trajectories.

I. Introduction

Since the turn of the century, the annual economic growth rate in Bangladesh has been sustained at about 6% and the country has been identified as one of the N-11 global economies. Particularly notable is the scale of exports by the garment industry in Bangladesh, which is the second largest in the world behind China. The number of garment factories is rapidly increasing in/around Dhaka city and the business is very labor intensive. The industry's growth has been supported by a large, inexpensive and mainly young labor force. Bangladesh is a "young nation", as 52% of the population is below 24 years old and 18.8% are between 15-24 years old. The majority of the young generation who migrate from rural areas are the "first educated generation" of their families, people who were born in the 1980s and started going to school through the expansion of mass primary education in rural areas in the 1990s. The expansion of primary education seems to be linked therefore to the country's economic growth; young people who have received a primary education are now contributing to Bangladesh's bottom line, predominantly through the garment industry. But how are their educational careers related to their urban migrant work? Has their education meaningfully contributed to economic growth or not?

From 2000 until the present, including yearlong fieldwork in 2000 and again in 2003-2004, I have conducted anthropological research in a Bangladeshi rural society, focusing on children's socialization and the impact of their education on the course of their lives. I have been following particular groups of children through childhood to adolescence. Most of them were the first educated generation of their families, and their childhood differed dramatically from that of their parents' generation. After graduating primary school, the majority of them went directly on to high school, but not a few of them left before completing their secondary

education. Since then their paths have diversified gradually; many boys migrated to urban cities to work at garment factories, and many girls got married. It is notable that although 70% of the workers in urban garment factories are women, most urban migrants from my research area are boys, not girls. Most of my female subjects have married in and around their villages, and some of them continue their education even after their marriage. The tendency for boys to vacillate between continuing education or pursuing migrant work, and the tendency of girls to stay in or around the village, both suggest that migrant work at garment factories in urban areas is not something they aspire to.

Following this introduction, I will briefly explain the key features of my research field and the methodology of my fieldwork. In section III, the childhood environment and experiences of my subject group will be described, to illustrate how their education opened up new paths and options to them. Section IV will then focus on the course of their life through adolescence, when paths tend to diverge by gender; the boys often pulled between continuing education and pursuing urban migrant work, whilst the girls continue in education without employment opportunities. Finally in conclusion, it will be argued that improved access to a school education has not been a significant determinant of Bangladesh's (predominantly garment industry-based) economic growth, even though the young generation today has been a key actor in both phenomena. This paper aims to discuss the discontinuity between the students' efforts to build educational career son the one hand, and their urban migration on the other, with particular reference to the impact on young people's life trajectories.

II. Overview of the Research Area and Methodology:

Before the discussion, I want to describe the overview of my research field as well as the research methodology I used. As mentioned above, despite the fact that the majority of laborers working at urban garment factories are women, only men from my research area migrate to work in urban cities, which could be related to the features of the surveyed area.

The village investigated, named village N, is located in *Jamalpur*, the central northern district of Bangladesh, about 200 km from the capital, Dhaka. The land elevation of the area is relatively high compared to other districts in Bangladesh, and consequently is not affected by floods to the same extent apart from the area around the basin of the *Jomuna* River. Rice cultivation is active throughout the year. In Bangladesh, which is frequently flooded, seasonal labor migration to urban cities is common practice, particularly during the rainy season when it is difficult to cultivate the land. *Jamalpur's* lower risk of flooding means the village has had no need for seasonal migration.

Although *Jamalpur* is not subject to the same serious combination of poverty and environmental challenges as many other districts in the country, it had been one of the worst performing districts in regards to education. There seemed at times to be an inverse relationship between natural disasters and the expansion of education in Bangladesh. Since independence the government and NGOs have been providing social services like health programs and school education, in addition to disaster management, as part of their approach to rural development, especially in flood-prone areas. The expansion of such public services and, in some cases, the ideas and ideology about education perpetuated through urban migration, has supported the adoption of higher levels of schooling, and interestingly education levels have become higher in some flood prone areas than in places less affected by such environmental risk.

Nevertheless, since the latter half of the 1980s, access to primary school education has expanded rapidly throughout the whole of Bangladesh, including *Jamalpur*. In 1991 the literacy rate of *Jamalpur* was the second lowest in the nation (21.48%), and school enrollment was 28.9%, compared to the national average of 36.5 % [BBS 2011a]. As the first educated generation shows, however, the school expansion program has brought about some dramatic improvements over the past few decades. The 2011 census reported that the school enrollment rate in *Jamalpur* had risen to 54.7%, higher than the national average of 52.7%. According to the government's national literacy survey in 2010, 75.09% of 20 to 24-year-old sand

82.17 % of 15 to 19-year-olds could read and write their mother language, whilst the literacy rate for those over 25 years old was only 52.75% [BBS 2011b]. It means that the literacy rate of the generation born after the late 1980s has grown significantly, and is directly connected to the spread of school education in the 1990s.

In my survey at village N in 2004, there was huge gap in school experience between generations. Almost all teens and younger children had received a school education, whilst many of the villagers over 30 years old (53%) had no experience of attending school at all.

A non-formal primary school run by a Bangladeshi NGO, Basic Development Partners (BDP), has offered a school education in village N since it was founded in 1991. Since there was no school in village N prior to that, the few people who were educated before 1991 were those who had attended the government school in a nearby village. One of the government schools is not far from village N, however because the catchment area encompasses several nearby villages, the school's enrollment exceeded its capacity, and many students dropped out before their graduation. At the BDP school, a woman living in the village became the first teacher, starting the class at her home with 30 students. Most of her students at first were from village N, but the school' catchment spread gradually and children began to come from other villages nearby. Although the BDP school is categorized as a "non-formal primary school" run by an NGO, it operates like a formal school; new students enter the school every year and it has classes from first to fifth grade. They use textbooks published by the government. After the BDP school started, two other government registered schools started in the vicinity of village N. BRAC, a pioneer NGO for non-formal education in Bangladesh, also temporarily ran school, but only for four years[1].

I carried out fieldwork at the BDP school, focusing on 22 students who were in the fourth grade in 2000, and 16 students who were in the fourth grade in 2003. During my long-term fieldwork, I stayed with one of the families in the village, sharing the lives of the children. This included going to school every day to study or to play with those children. As an anthropologist, I wanted to understand

the growth of the children and the transformation of the society from the children's perspectives. Since then, I have been following the life-courses of 38 students in total. To follow-up on my long-term fieldwork, I have continued to visit Bangladesh twice every year, for two weeks to a month at times. I visit *Jamalpur* and try to see my informants during most of these trips. Nowadays mobile phones also help me to stay in contact with each of them. I also meet those who have migrated to Dhaka and its environs for work. I sometimes visit the family-in-law homes of the married girls. When I see them, I always ask them about their present situation, their future prospects, and their memories of the past. Occasionally I record their narratives with video. Although I cannot meet all of them every year, at least I can stay up-to-date with their progress by phone or through their families or friends.

They were the first educated generation of their families. The literacy level of their parents was 31.6 %, which was lower than other nearby schools: 55.3% at one of the government schools, 45.5% at a Madras a, and 91.6% at a private (KG) school[2]. The 73.7% rate of their families' engagement in farming is also much higher than that in other schools[3]. It could be said that the socio-economic status or social mobility of the families whose children I have focused on is relatively low.

Nevertheless, the village N in *Jamalpur*, where the majority of people are engaged in subsistence agriculture, has a new generation who have started going to school. Their childhood, as well as their adolescence, is clearly different from the experience of their parents. In the following sections, I will examine their life choices as well as the meaning of their school experience.

III. School-Generated Childhood:

The expansion of primary schools might itself have created a new state of childhood. It might be difficult for us to imagine a childhood without a school education, however, it is possible to see the difference a school education makes in their lives if we carefully observe their relationships and negotiations with their parents[4]. Since the childhood of the first educated generation is far different from that of their parents, school presently exists as a sphere of freedom

for children, and they get the opportunity to map a future that is completely different to the one available to their parents' generation. This is what is meant by a "school-generated childhood." In this section, I would like to consider the way in which schools are viewed and the subject of negotiations between children and their parents.

Primary education in Bangladesh has been extended by a variety of actors, not only by the government but also by NGOs, the private sector, and by religious groups, leading to the current plurality of schools. As a result, various types of schools coexist in villages. In my survey too, government (registered) schools, NGO schools, private schools, and Madrasa operate within the local environment, and most of them were established in the 1990s. Most children attend the school nearest to their house, but some students, and their parents, select a school other than the neighborhood one, choosing according to the character of each school. This selection of schools has been discussed in detail in another paper [Minamide 2005]. Since the young children naturally cannot choose their school by themselves, their parents take the initiative to decide which school they will send their children to. Although most of the parents have no experience of having attended school when they were children, a few exclusive schools have long existed around the village, catering to a proportion of the upper class. If parents know that less-privileged social classes can enhance their social status through their educational experience, there should be no reason to deny that an education has the potential to advance their children's future lives also. Furthermore, children of primary school age are not capable of supporting the household. Parents therefore do not see any loss if they send their children to school, as otherwise they would just be "playing" around the village. The parents consequently welcome school education in the village, and sometimes actively cooperate in running the schools.

However, their acceptance of its importance is tenuous enough to be easily affected by external factors. Children are readily absent from school in order to visit relatives, or to help out during the farming season. Not only the parents, but also the school teachers as neighbors within the village, tolerate the children's

absences. In the village society, children have a lot of things to do that are considered more important than going to school.

In addition, parents are not familiar with the contents of a school education, saying, "Our children know more about school than us." Or they say, "Children cannot help doing that, because they *bhuj-nai* (not understand)", even in cases where the children are breaking school rules. Nor do they criticize their children even if they transfer to another school on their own volition after fighting with friends. Indeed, children know enough about other schools to visit them or even transfer there without parental permission. Children in the fourth grade were thinking about which high school they wanted to attend after graduating from primary school. Some boys desired to go to a high school a little further away from home so as not to be scolded by parents when they fight against friends. This situation indicates that a school is now a new sphere and form of childhood for the children in the village, although it is quite vulnerable and could easily disappear due to its provisional role in villagers' lives.

Many children mentioned their dreams of securing *Chakkuri* (salaried work), or becoming a schoolteacher or a medical doctor. There was a time when many boys wanted to join the army. One of the BDP school graduates entered the army (civil service) after having completed his secondary education. The children imagined their own future based on ideas from role models. And their future plans are clearly different from those that their parents had. None of them mentioned that they wanted to be farmers. This "non-agricultural mindedness" and the new career opportunities they see before them have clearly grown out of the "school-based childhood" they have experienced, which brings with it a vison of "preparing for a better future" outsides their reproductive society.

However, to what extent will the prospects that they have gained in the school-generated- childhood be realized in their future? Do those prospects disappear once their childhood ends? In the next section, I will follow their actual paths at adolescence.

IV. Their Life-Course at Adolescence:

Their paths after graduating from primary school together have been diverse. Almost all of my informant children went on to high school, but a significant number of them left education before completion.

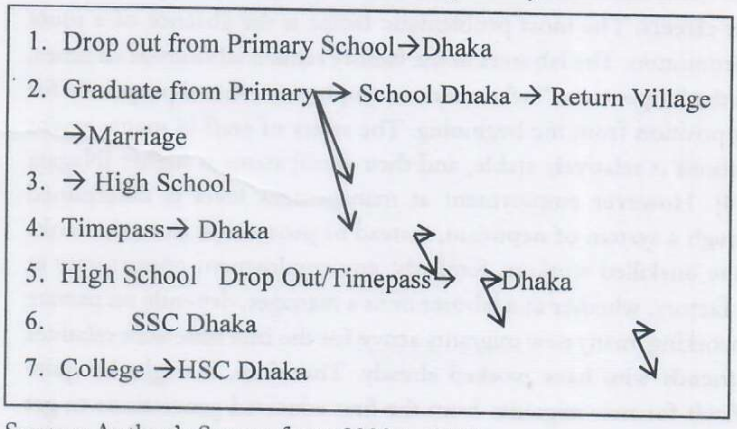
17 students out of the 38 children I followed completed lower secondary education up to tenth grade without the need to repeat a year. Four of them have stayed in higher education. In their teenage adolescence, what kind of choices apart from a school education do they have? How do they make their choice?

This section discusses the different paths they can take at adolescence according to gender, because the non-schooling paths open to children in the village diverge between the boys and the girls. Not a few boys leave their village and end up moving back and forth between the village and the urban cities, sometimes for economic reasons, sometimes based on other personal motives. On the other hand, a girl dropping-out from her school education usually results in her marriage. Most of these are "arranged marriages" set up by their guardians, and their families-in-law are usually not far from their original village. Many of the girls, however, manage to continue going to school/college even after their marriage. This section discusses their paths at adolescence according to gender.

i. Education vs. Urban Migrant Work among Boys

Continuing school education or pursuing urban migration are two parallel choices open to the boys. Chart 1 illustrates the various points at which they may leave education for migration.

Chart 1: Boys' paths after primary school



Source: Author's Survey from 2000 to 2015

For boys in the village, migrating to work in Dhaka is the most

prominent alternative choice to an education. The majority of the migrants work in garment factories in the absence of alternatives. Interestingly, as the chart shows, movement between an education and urban migration does not only occur in one direction, rather boys have some times been back and forth between their village and the cities, even stepping in and out of their school education more than once. A few boys who had moved to urban cities just after graduating from primary school have already returned to their village and started families. Their going in and out of their village and stopping or re-starting their education has not had a detrimental impact on their career. In fact, the working conditions between those who migrated to work just after graduating from primary school, and those who migrated to the city after completing HSC, are not so different. Intensive labor work in a garment factory is unlikely to have featured in their childhood dreams either. It could be said that they do not deliberately choose to work in garment factories in order to climb the social class ladder, however those seeking a non-agricultural occupation either in the village or in the cities have no real alternative.

It is commonly understood that the workers at garment factories in Bangladesh receive low wages, despite the long hours of hard work, and their educational status does not make a difference to their careers. The most problematic factor is the absence of a route to promotion. The laborers in the factory remain laborers at all times, and the "supervisors" who monitor employees rehired purposely for that position from the beginning. The salary of staff in management positions is relatively stable, and their social status is higher [Nagata 2014]. However employment at management level is determined through a system of nepotism, instead of promotion from the ranks of the unskilled workers. Similarly, any employment opportunity at any factory, whether as a laborer or as a manager, depends on private networking; many new migrants arrive for the first time with relatives or friends who have worked already. Therefore, it might be quite difficult for new migrants from the first educated generations to get jobs at the management level. One of the boys who migrated just after getting his SSC said, "I did not have 'anyone,' so I went to

Dhaka by myself and knocked on the door of a factory and went through an interview to get labor work. If I had 'someone,' I could work in a better position."

Their salary depends on when they started their jobs. Salaries in 2015 typically start from 5,300 BDT (=70 USD) for someone working in a T-shirt printing factory[5]. As the demand for labor in the garment industry has risen, however, it has become easier for them to get jobs at other factories. Consequently their salary should increase as they transfer between plants as experienced workers. For example, among my informants from the BDP school graduates, one of the boys who left high school education in the seventh grade and migrated to Dhaka nine years ago has worked at eight factories so far and is earning 13,000 BDT per month at aT-shirt printing factory. His salary was 2,800 BDT when he started the same work[6].

In spite of the lack of any correlation between their educational experience and their employment conditions, the growth of the garment industry attracts adolescents from rural villages to urban areas. There are three factors to motivate young people, particularly boys, towards pursuing urban migrant work.

The first primary reason must be their economic need. The example of the boy, already mentioned above, who dropped out in the seventh grade and went to the city, was forced to pursue work due to a family crisis; his father, who was a *rikshawalla* and sometimes a daily agricultural laborer, suddenly passed away, leaving his family with no means of support. The boy therefore had to earn money to support himself and his family.

The second incentive is their frustration and uncertainty over the future benefits and opportunities that may come from completing their education. The points at which they have left one path for another are diverse; some have migrated before finishing their secondary education, some have left just after completing SSC, whilst others have decided to move once they finished their higher secondary education after twelfth grade. It might be easy for boys who have lost interest in education to leave school and move to Dhaka for work. Some of them wish to complete their higher

education and get a "good job", rather than work at a garment factory. However, as they begin to learn of the difficulties of getting a better job and the costs of gaining a higher education, they decide to give up on education and to go to work. One of the boys who completed his higher secondary education and passed the HSC exam decided to discontinue his education, and to work in Dhaka. As he looked at his friends who have worked in Dhaka for several years and whose lives have shifted to "the next stage" complete with a cash income, he felt impatient about continuing education with no guarantee of future prospects. He mentioned, "It would be difficult for me to receive the same salary as uneducated laborers after I tried very hard to complete and pass the HSC."[7]

A third motive is that some boys feel a longing to go to urban cities or to leave their home. In rural Bangladesh, it has been tradition for unmarried men to leave home for a couple of years.Tadahiko Hara, who carried out anthropological research in rural Bangladesh from the 1960s to the 1980s, has described the boys' leaving home as gaining their "personal independence":

> According to the villagers, in the 1960s more than 80% of male adults had experience of leaving home without, or against, their parents' permission, and of living in cities for a few years without any contact with their families. One of the motivations expressed by such runaways was that they wanted to "try their fortune" outside their community, but half of them left because of conflicts with a father or a brother....Usually the boys who leave home are 15 to 25 years old. No one younger than 15 would leave because they might not get a job in the city....Also, they no longer need to leave home after becoming 25 years old, because many of them would marry and live independently from their families. Moreover, needless to say, it depends on the labor market whether they can easily get jobs or not. Of course it depends on the political and economic situation. In East Bengal, it was easy for them to leave home (and to get job) in the 1950s to the 1970s, but it was difficult in the 1970s to 1980s. [Hara 1986: 337-338 (translation mine)]

With reference to his analysis, it is the job opportunities into day's garment factories that provide them with the chance to leave home easily. The youths who have recently migrated to urban are as display the elements of "leaving home"; it may represent a transition from their "time passing" in the village, or it may follow their own decision to go. Further, the availability of job opportunities at garment factories for unskilled, uneducated workers, secured through kin/friend networks, makes it quite convenient for youths to leave home. In fact, as they alternate between education and migration, some boys come back to the village and return to school after working in Dhaka for a while, and others migrate to Dhaka not immediately after giving up education, but after a period of time has passed (see chart 1). It means their decision to migrate for work is not always out of economic necessity.

While their urban migration is sometimes incited by adolescent motivation, it is also true to say that their family has strong expectations that they will earn an income now, because the economic benefits are more visible than in the 1980s. In addition, the ubiquitousness of mobile phones now allows them to keep in touch frequently with their families whilst they work in Dhaka, making it difficult to withdraw from their community altogether. The same applies to overseas migrants too.

Thus, although their educational experience leads to non-agricultural-mindedness, and the economic growth in urban cities meets their economic needs, the jobs in the garment industry which are available to them are not affected by their educational careers. This lack of linkage between education and job opportunities sometimes leads frustration or turmoil. On the other hand, their urban migration gives an outlet for their temporary withdrawal from the village community during their adolescence.

ii. Growth of Girls' Educational Careers:

As mentioned previously, whereas many males migrate to Dhaka, I could find few females who went to work in the cities from my research area; among the 19 girls of my research group, only one girl whose family was extremely poor and without a father migrated to work in Dhaka as a house maid before completing her primary

education. Three others lived in Dhaka or the suburbs with their husbands after marriage, but were not working. Why do women from that village not migrate to work in the cities, even though many other women are working in factories in Dhaka?

One of the reasons might be that the environmental conditions of this area, where people can cultivate their land throughout the year, do not cause seasonal labor migration. Further more, whilst economic necessity could lead girls to work in the urban cities, the two other factors which may motivate the boys do not cause the girls to migrate. Whereas it is seen as acceptable for boys to migrate to cities in pursuit of personal independence during adolescence, the only time migration may be considered a choice for girls is out of economic necessity, as an escape route for the very poor.

The majority of my informants in *Jamalpur* were brought up on socioeconomically lower class farms, but the level of agricultural output was sufficient to enable them to stay in the village. There are a few families with one or more female members who work in garment factories, but they are relatively poor in the village and do not have their own land. Also, those women are married and work in the city with their husbands[8]. The temptation to go to urban cities for personal independence, viewed positively for boys, is not allowed for girls. Instead, pursuing an education is acceptable for them, even if it is gained after marriage, which is different from the boys, who typically have to choose between an education or working migration.

All but one of the 19 females among my informants have already married. Some of girls finished their education in eighth grade and then left to get married. The SSC examination after the tenth grade has become a common turning point; if they fail the exam, they tend to leave education without trying again the next year. Many girls get married while they wait for the results of the exam. If they pass the exam, they continue in education at a higher secondary college regardless of whether they are married or unmarried. At college, especially in rural areas, the students tend not go everyday, but just keep their seats and then sit the examinations.

In Bangladesh's paternal society, women are supposed to

move into their husbands' home after marriage. However, around village N, many of the married girls who continue to get an education continue to live in their original home. The reason why they can remain at home even after marriage is related to the urban migration of boys/husbands. Recently, in relation to marriage, it is important for girls that their partners have a cash income. The opportunities in rural areas for wage labor are however so limited that their husbands usually go to work in Dhaka alone. Therefore, for girls, it becomes easy to remain in their original home, as opposed to living with their family-in-law in their husbands' absence. A girl might have to do housework as the daughter-in-law if she lived with her husband's family, but at her home, her mother will do everything. One of the reasons for a girl to continue her education there fore could just be so that she can live at home to attend a college nearby. Of course the cash income from her husband or her father who works in the city also can support her education.

While boys migrate to urban areas for work, the girls who stay in the village can gain further educational experience. In fact, nowadays it is not rare for wives to have a longer educational career than their husbands[9]. The girls' educational experience in the village is often justified as preparation for those rare opportunities when a primary school teacher's position becomes available, or when an NGO is looking for staff in the village; it can also be rationalized by "Educated mothers can teach their children at home." Their parents, as well as their parents-in-law, may also tolerate their continued education with thoughts of a girl developing into "a wise mother." When her husband temporarily returns home from the city, he also temporarily takes his wife to his home. Nowadays it is also common for a husband to visits his wife's home, a situation that can continue even after her child is born.

A girl, named R, got married just after passing the SSC exam, but usually lives in her original home while her husband is away from the village. When I asked her where she lives most of the time, at her home or at her husband's home, she answered "half and half." In fact, however, I could always see her whenever I visited her original home.

That situation remained unchanged even after she delivered her baby. Not only her husband, but also her mother-in-law had to come to see their baby/grand child in the wife's parental home. When I asked her, "Doesn't your mother-in-law or your husband get angry if you don't go there?" she answered, "Well, they complain a little. But his elder brother's wife and his mother are already there; they don't need so many housewives!" She seldom went to college, and almost never attended after her pregnancy. However, she had never thought of giving up her education, rather she planned to go back after her child has a little grown up. In fact, after a four-year gap, she is restarted her education at Open college/university.

For women, marriage is the main rite of passage in their lives. However, since they remain in their original home after marriage, and continue to get an education, their "passing period" seems to extend even beyond the actual rite of passage. Their husbands 'migration alone to an urban center, or their own extended education might make this period longer. In a sense those girls are still in the "adolescent" stage of their life-course, even after they have delivered the next generation. Their experiences before and after marriage are clearly different from those of their parents' generation.

V. Conclusion

The spread of public education in rural areas and the economic growth in urban areas are not connected in any direct or meaningful way as far as the life opportunities and choices of the young people in villages like *Jamalpur* are concerned. The first educated generation does not intend to work in the garment industry which accounts for the majority of the labor market. Although the government and NGOs have aimed to develop through education the human resources necessary for the country's economic development, the workers engaged in the garment industry might not be seen as the successful outcome they were aiming or hoping for.

Nevertheless, the first educated generation has experienced a distinctly different childhood from their parents, and their expectations and horizons have broadened accordingly. Although their educational experience does not provide them with significant

labor opportunities, their non- agricultural- mindedness or longing to migrate to the city, especially amongst the boys, as well as the labor intensive market in the garment industry tend to attract young people from rural areas to urban cities. On the other hand, the research in this paper, where by the girls seldom go to work but extend their learning into higher education, has revealed that economic necessity is the only reason they would migrate to the cities. The girls are not given the same freedom to gain their personal independence as the boys. Even pursuing an education without the prospect of any appropriate job opportunities waiting at the end has been accepted as being better than migrating to work in the cities. In that sense, education has become an end unto itself rather than a means to greater career opportunities.

Thus, in the case of both men and women, there is no functional connection between their educational experiences and their job opportunities, at least in the process of their career paths and choices. However, even if it is not direct or intentional, it seems inevitable that the experiences and changed perspectives of the first educated generation will play an important part in the social changes in Bangladesh. I would like to continue to follow the group as they negotiate the future courses of their lives.

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End note

1. After four years the school was scaled back to a single feeder (pre-school) class.
2. It is interesting to note, however, that there was no significant difference among schools in the number of siblings; the majority of the children have 2-3 siblings in their families.
3. According my own survey in 2004.
4. [Minamide 2014] has discussed their childhood and the process of socialization in detail.
5. Information from one of my informants who has worked at one of the local T-shirt printing factories in Dhaka.
6. His role has evolved in that time; he had worked as a machine helper at first, now he operates the machine by himself with two helpers.
7. This point is very different from the experience of the rapid economic growth in the 1960s in Japan, the home-country of the author. There, working conditions including the starting salary were clearly differentiated based on the workers' educational backgrounds. The workers who had graduated from junior high school, the ones from high school, and the university graduates received different salaries even if they worked on the same tasks. Also, the employment opportunities in the cities in Japan had increased in their diversity, which had attracted more young migrants from rural areas. On the other hand, in the current global economy, the division of labor places the current garment industry in Bangladesh near the bottom part of the value chain, dependent on its army of "low-wage workers". Any labor market differentiation by educational background is neither structured nor complex, because the unskilled and low-wage labor market for the garment industry has a big appetite for workers

irrespective of their educational experience.

8. In my research case, all of them leave their children with their mothers (the maternal grand-mothers for the children) in the village.
9. I have observed this phenomenon not only in the village, but also in the city among new middle class people whose wives continue their education sometimes up to an MA while their husbands have relatively stable jobs. I often encounter situations in which husbands told me proudly that their wives were doing an MA even though they don't have one themselves.

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