

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

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# CONTENTS

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>TITLE &amp; NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	THE ECONOMIC RATIONALE OF GOLD IN INDIAN CONTEXT <i>DR. M B MOHANDAS</i>	1
2.	A STUDY ON APPLICATION OF BALANCED SCORE CARD TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE IN MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL <i>DR. SUBITA P. PATIL &amp; DR. R. M. CHATURVEDI</i>	5
3.	HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITION OF ELDERLY PEOPLE: THE RURAL BANGLADESH CONTEXT <i>DR. GOLAM AZAM &amp; DR. HAFIZ UDDIN BHUIYAN</i>	12
4.	ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SBI AND PNB BANKS <i>MEENU SAINI &amp; DR. NIRMALA CHAUDHARY</i>	16
5.	RESILIENCE: SELF ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDENTS – A STUDY CONDUCTED IN A BUSINESS SCHOOL <i>DR. CHARU YADAV &amp; DR. BHARATI DESHPANDE</i>	20
6.	ACHIEVING INCLUSIVE GROWTH THROUGH MGNREGA AMONG THE RURAL POOR IN INDIA <i>DR. PARVATHAMMA.G.L.</i>	28
7.	TALENT RETENTION STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS <i>MOHAMMED RAFAEEQ &amp; ZAMEER AHMED</i>	31
8.	CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMERCIALISATION OF AGRICULTURE IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW <i>S. M. JAWED AKHTAR &amp; SABA PARVEEN</i>	38
9.	ENTRY MODES' CHOICE OF FOREIGN FIRMS IN ETHIOPIAN MARKET <i>GIRMA TILAHUN</i>	43
10.	A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE SERVICE QUALITY OF BANKS WITH REGARD TO OCCUPATION AND INCOME OF THEIR CUSTOMERS <i>DILIP KUMAR JHA</i>	52
11.	PRE AND POST-MERGER FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS OF RELIANCE POWER LIMITED <i>DR. PRATIBHA JAIN</i>	56
12.	A STUDY ON THE OPERATIONAL RATIO OF THE DISTRICT CENTRAL COOPERATIVE BANKS IN TIRUNELVELI REGION, TAMILNADU <i>DR. A.MAHENDRAN &amp; TOLERA MERDASA</i>	59
13.	A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN INDIA <i>FASALURAHMAN.P.K.PATTERKADAVAN &amp; MOHAMMED SALIM.P.K</i>	64
14.	PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF TOP PERFORMING MUTUAL FUND MANAGERS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY FROM INDIA <i>SHIVANI CHAUDHRY &amp; DR. MOONIS SHAKEEL</i>	71
15.	IMPACT OF DIVIDEND ANNOUNCEMENT ON STOCK RETURNS: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO DIVIDEND ANNOUNCEMENTS OF BANKING AND NON-BANKING SECTORS IN INDIA <i>DR. KUSHALAPPA. S &amp; LAXMI ACHARYA</i>	77
16.	NIGERIAN JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT AND PRODUCTION SHARING CONTRACT - PROS AND CONS: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE <i>DR. SANI SAIDU</i>	82
17.	EFFECTS OF SUPPLY CHAIN COLLABORATION: A STUDY OF AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN INDIA <i>ASAD ULLAH</i>	86
18.	RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY <i>ASHWANI K. GUPTA &amp; DEEPAK SONI</i>	92
19.	HIGHER EDUCATION AND GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN INDIA: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION <i>TAMANNA KHAN &amp; NASIM ANSARI</i>	95
20.	RURAL NON-FARM SECTOR IN INDIA AND THE ISSUES RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY <i>SWETA SHARAN</i>	101
	<b>REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK &amp; DISCLAIMER</b>	106

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**FINDINGS**

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**HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITION OF ELDERLY PEOPLE: THE RURAL BANGLADESH CONTEXT****DR. GOLAM AZAM****PROFESSOR, INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA  
DHAKA****DR. HAFIZ UDDIN BHUIYAN****ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR****INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL WELFARE & RESEARCH UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA  
DHAKA****ABSTRACT**

*The paper is an outcome of a qualitative research study undertaken in rural area of Bangladesh. The study was designed to examine human rights condition of the elderly people, particularly elderly rights abuse and violation. A total of 50 rural elderly people were chosen for the study by using convenience sampling procedure. Qualitative interviewing through in-depth individual interviews, partial participant observation followed by focus group discussions with elderly people and key informants was applied in data collection. The study findings showed that elderly rights abuse was associated with neglect, deprivation and exploitation of the elderly. Out of total elderly people, 80 percent were found to experience lack of right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services. In particular, they encountered insecurities in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood or other lack of livelihood. Thirty percent elderly people reported physical torture and emotional abuse perpetrated by family members. The elderly people who lived alone after death of spouse experienced highly negligence, economic and psychological abuse. Due to less power on properties, high dependency on children, the elderly people were subjects to economic rights abuse. About 40 percent elderly people were forced to surrender property rights to children. Particularly, elderly women were subjects to more economic and psychological abuse. In the event of illness, they were to experience inadequate supply of foods, medical care and emotional support. In the case of elderly recreation, majority had no access to modern recreational equipments except participation in "ADDA", a gathering and gossiping with neighbors, grand sons or daughters. Participation in family decision making and socio-cultural activities were found very insignificant. In fact, the human rights condition of the elderly people in terms of protection, participation and image was found very poor.*

**KEYWORDS**

Elderly People, Human Rights, Survival Pattern and Elderly Abuse.

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the past several decades, a massive change has taken place in key demographic area like age in the planet. Today population ageing has been a global concern, and the world is facing profound challenges associated with dramatic increase in the number of population living to an advanced old age. On the grounds of rapid declines in fertility rates and mortality rates along with substantial improvements in health care systems, one out of every ten people on the planet is now 60 years of age or older (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs). If the current trend of population growth continues by the year 2050 one, out of five people will be aged 60 years or older and by 2150, one out of every three people will be aged 60 years or older. [1] According to UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), Asia is the fastest ageing region in the world. "In the last 40 years, life expectancy in China has risen by 31 years, in the Philippines by 21 years and in Bangladesh by 20 years. Just over half of the world's older people currently live in Asia but, by 2050, Asia will be home to almost two-thirds of the world's older population.[2] However, over the past few decades, there have been changes in the age structure of Bangladesh population as well. The statistics of Bangladesh Population Census indicates that the percentage of elderly is being increased gradually. As for example, the proportions of people aged 60 and over were 4.4%, 5.6% and 5.67 in 1951, 1981 and 2001 respectively. Currently in Bangladesh, approximately eight percent of the total population is over the age of 60 years, life expectancy rates from 2001 to 2006 went from 64 years to 65 years (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2006). In the recent past, radical changes have taken place in the size, composition and living arrangements of families, ownership of property, and the focus of power. The pattern of inter-and intra-generational support and relationships between members of the extended family have dramatically altered. These changes can be witnessed in the increasing trend towards the nuclear family, the erosion of traditional kinship ties, and the weakening of the family as a support system. Today, elderly population of Bangladesh has become an important social concern like many other developing countries, because of the size of the population, scarcity of resources, existing poverty, insufficient health facilities and absence of social security. Consequently, a huge number of older people are bound to experience a wide range of economic and social insecurities including biological neglect and human rights violation (Azam, 2006). The elderly people in Bangladesh are now confronting routine denial of their right to food and 50 percent of older people in rural Bangladesh suffer chronic energy deficiency and 62 percent are at risk of malnutrition (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2006). Even though the older persons in Bangladesh are still passing their days amidst the tender care and support mostly provided by their extended families, there is no remarkable backing from the state. In recent years, this societal system is not in favor of elderly people and they are deprived of fundamental human rights and privileges as they received before by family and kin. Today elderly people are highly neglected, deprived and exploited segment of the population. The intensity of elder abuse in terms of psycho-physical mistreatment, neglect and social and economic exclusion is comparatively high in poor families where older people have no or limited access to economic security, health care and medical services, emotional support and basic necessities needed for their well-being. Speaking that a vast majority of older people live under poverty line with a lifestyle of deprivation, ill health and social isolation. They are really ill-fated, neglected, ignored and lack the resources to fulfill their basic needs in terms of food, clothes, housing and health and are also deprived of income opportunities. Apart from deprivation, elderly people are often subject to discrimination and varied human rights abuses. Human rights in terms of respect and image and protection are tremendously absent in the lives of the elderly. Their rights to life, property, freedom, liberty and voice are being enormously jeopardized. This is so much true for older women, who badly suffer from multiple disadvantages resulting from biases to gender, widowhood and old age. Women, particularly widows, who are without living sons or who live alone, are considered to be particularly at higher risk of economic destitution, social isolation, poor health and death. But Bangladeshi women can enjoy power and authority if she happens to be the head of the family. If this association is broken, her access to resources for care and sustenance is reduced, making her vulnerable. This risk increases for women who have no assets for survival, such as education, possessions or social status (Sattar, 2003). However, overall situations of elderly lives demand necessary initiatives in order that they can gain better quality of life. Obviously, an increased urgency to address to the problems of elderly rights and dignity need to be felt by the people from all walks of life. In Bangladesh, no significant efforts for providing health care and other supports to the rural elderly have been taken at government and private levels. With a view to dealing with elderly problems, extensive information are necessary and that can be done by undertaking research studies on different issues related to elderly problems. However, in the past, a number of studies on ageing were conducted which showed the socio-economic situation, social and health aspects, Government and Non-government organization intervention for elderly people and ageing as a social problem (Kabir, 1999; Kabir and Salam, 2001; Samad and Abedin, 1998; Help Age International, 2000. Rahman, 2002; BAAIGM; 2005, Nahar, 2006; Peckpek et al., 2007). So far the knowledge goes, no significant and extensive research studies have been conducted on the human rights problems of rural older people in Bangladesh. In view of the fact, the researcher intended to undertake the present study in

order to explore new dimensions of elderly problem in terms of living standard and human rights. In fact, the present study was an attempt to produce better understanding and information about human rights problems of rural elderly people in Bangladesh.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to explore human rights condition and survival pattern of rural elderly people in Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To know the socio-economic background of rural elderly people;
2. To examine the survival pattern of rural elderly people in terms of basic human needs satisfaction;
3. To explore the human rights situation of rural elderly people;
4. To identify some typical problems faced by the rural elderly;
5. To suggest some measures within the framework of policy implications.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

**Design and Site of the Study:** The present study was of a qualitative design. The study was limited to a rural area of Bangladesh. Two villages of an Upazila (Administrative Unit) under Brahmanbaria district were chosen purposively for the study. **Population of the Study:** The elderly people of both male and female, who lived permanently in the selected villages, constituted the population of the study. From the study population, a total of 50 elderly people were chosen for qualitative inquiry. **Sampling Procedure and Sample:** A total of 50 rural elderly people were selected for the study by using convenience sampling procedure. While selecting the sample, nature and magnitude of human rights problem the elderly encountered were taken into consideration. **Data Collection Methods:** Qualitative interviewing through in-depth individual interviews, partial participant observation followed by focus group discussions with elderly people and some key informants was applied in data collection. An unstructured questionnaire having a set of questions relating to livelihood and human rights condition of the elderly were used in data collection. Apart from this, a checklist prepared on major variables was followed in conducting qualitative data collection.

**Data Analysis and Presentation of the Findings:** Since the study was of qualitative design, data collected in the study were analyzed, and the findings of the study have been presented by using interpretive approach.

## KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### *Socioeconomic Background Information*

The present study showed that elderly people were within the age of 60-80 years. Most of the respondents (60%) were female. About 70 percent rural older people were found illiterate. Of them 20 percent completed 5<sup>th</sup> Grade or primary education. Only 10 percent elderly people completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade or SSC (Secondary School Certificate). Of the total elderly people, 50 percent were married and the rest were widow as well as widower. About 70 percent respondents were the member of nuclear family while 30 percent came from joint family. About 50 percent of the poor elderly were found to work in the houses of well-off families both in cash and in kind. The major occupations of the rest elderly were agriculture (30%), day labor (6%), business (4%), and housewife (10%). Household headship was enjoyed by about half of the total respondents of whom the majority was male. The female headship was found in a few women who were widowed and lived with younger children. The study showed that economic ability, gender and power played vital roles in determining the household status of elderly than chronological age.

### *Income Status and Standard of Elderly Life*

Income is the consumption and savings opportunity that the elderly need to maintain their lives or households. Without income no body can lead his/her life with the satisfaction of basic necessities and maintenance of living standard. Among the respondents, 34 percent had no income. About 30 percent had monthly income of BDT 4000 plus. [3] The rest of the respondents were financially better off whose monthly income was closer to BDT 10,500. But with meager amount of income, many of the elderly could not support their family well. Out of total elderly people, 80 percent were found to experience lack of right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services. In particular, they encountered certain insecurities in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood or other lack of livelihood. In the case of rural women elderly, economic dependency or lack of access to regular income was found as one of elderly concerns.

### *Survival Pattern of the Rural Elderly*

With regard to survival pattern, a large majority of the rural elderly were found to be so much dependent on adult children. Despite the fact, a number of the elderly had to do hard work to manage their livelihood. About 78 percent elderly people were engaged in a variety of economic activities, particularly in agriculture fields. Of the total respondents, 40 percent managed their livelihood by engaging in agricultural activities. About 60 percent elderly owned some pieces of cultivable land of approximately 30 decimals, where they produced crops for economic survival. Apropos of food intake, the poor elderly used to take one or two meals a day, mostly comprising rice and vegetables. The study showed that most elderly people were found to be devoid of good conception as to the nutritional value of foods, rather they merely knew to have foods to fill in their stomach. About 16 percent elderly were found to manage fishes and meat as regularly as possible. A few poor elderly living in abject poverty took fish and meat once or twice a month or sometimes on special occasions. It was also observed that a good number of adult sons did not provide their responsible care for their aged parents after having married and made separate living with their wives and children. Basically they had to live distressful life without full satisfaction of fundamental needs.

### *Housing and Living Arrangement*

Generally the living arrangements of the elderly are viewed as a measure of their wellbeing. There is a common assumption that co residence with children and grandchildren in multi-generational households benefit the elderly, and that the elderly who live with at least one adult child are better off and better provided for than those who live alone or with non-relatives. Living arrangement of this sort is found in rural families. The poor rural elderly usually live in those houses not full of adequate amenities and suitable for their congenial living. In the study, many elderly people were found not to have authority on houses due to psychosomatic debilities and economic dependency on family members. On the contrary, a number of the elderly having voice and command of economic properties lived in the houses where they wished to live or felt good. Owing to the dearth of sleeping room, they shared beds with other family members. Some houses the poor elderly lived in were found to be tremendously impoverished. In addition, most houses were built with mud and thatch while a few were made of tin and bricks by economically better-off elderly people. About 20 percent well-to-do elderly people were found to enjoy separate living rooms.

### *Health Care Condition*

Health care is one of the fundamental rights for better living of elderly people. In terms of health rights, a significant number of elderly people were found to experience a wide range of health problems. While collecting data, it was found that most of the elderly suffered from fever (50%) followed by digestive problems (38%), gastritis and hyperacidity (28%). In addition, cardiac problem, asthma, cough and cold, dental and eye sights problem, rheumatism and hyper tension were also found to some extent among elderly people. In the case of medical treatment, 36 percent of the rural elderly were used traditional treatment methods such as herbal or plant-based remedies, religion-based healings, homeopathic treatment and the like. The remaining 64 percent had to take treatment at local hospitals or clinics. But rural poor elderly who could not afford medical expenses were found to take financial help from relatives and neighbors. It was evidently found that the adult children who were not financially solvent could not afford caring and services for elderly parents. In addition, 60 percent elderly people were found to see or consult specialized medical doctors of city hospitals/clinics when treatment for serious physical illness was indispensable.

### *Leisure Time Recreation among the Elderly*

Traditionally, the elderly men as well as women spend their maximum leisure time by interacting with their grandchildren, and participating in simple household chores. In the study, limited opportunities of mental recreation or any other forms of amusement in the lives of the rural elderly were found. Actually the rural elderly had no available access to modern equipments of recreation. The majority of elderly people (90%) used their leisure time by participating in "ADDA", a local gathering and holding talks with neighbors, grandsons or daughters. Moreover, they were found to enjoy leisure time by listening to radio, folk songs and

participating in rural sports like Hadudu, Lathikhela, and football. A few well-off elderly people were found to enjoy watching television or participating in social and cultural functions or in organizing religious activities. In the case of women's recreation, study found that women elderly hardly participated recreational functions outside family. Apart from this, a very few educated elderly were found to resort some leisure time activities such as walking, reading the newspaper, listening to the radio, reading book and so on.

#### **Participation in Social and Cultural Functions**

Participation in socio-cultural and functions is a basic right of the rural elderly. Generally the elderly who are literate and financially well-off can enjoy participation in multiple socio-cultural and political activities. On the contrary, the elderly without education and wealth can enjoy limited privileges in social participation. In terms of participating in socio-cultural functions, 10 percent respondents were found to hold position in some managing committees of educational, cultural, and religious organizations. About 40 percent respondents took part in social service programs like family planning, expanded immunization program (EPI), rural development activities and also in "shalish" or tribunal to settle some local disputes. Seventy percent elderly reported that younger generation received advices from them because of their wisdom, experience and skill in dealing with social, economic and political problem issues. But participation of many poor elderly in family decision making process was found very insignificant.

#### **Elderly Abuses (Physical, Emotional, Verbal and Economic Abuse)**

The elderly are usually abused by intimate partners, children and other family members or close relatives who all are somehow caregivers, service providers, or financial providers. In Bangladesh, because of unequal rights to property and inheritance, huge numbers of women face economic abuse. [4] Elderly people who lived alone after death of spouse experienced negligence, economic and psychological abuse. Due to less power on properties, high dependency on children, the elderly people were subjects to economic rights abuse. The study revealed that 30 percent elderly people reported the incidence of physical torture perpetrated by sons as well as daughters-in-law with which hostile relationship and family discord were largely linked. In the study, a good number of women elderly were found to be neglected and deprived of enjoying fundamental rights that provided the tangible sign of gender discrimination. Furthermore, due to the absence of property rights or restricted access to privileges of life, older people experienced economic, emotional, social and even spiritual abuses in their lives. About 40 percent elderly people were found to forcibly surrender their property rights to children. Particularly, dependent elderly women were subjects to more economic and psychological abuses as compared to the aged men. In the event of illness, they had to bear hardship in terms of inadequate supply of foods, medical care and emotional support.

#### **Elderly Rights to Choice and Freedom**

The right to choice and freedom is fundamental to elderly people. Like everyone else, older people have the right to work which gives them the right to freely decide, choose and accept work and the right not to be unfairly deprived of it. However, with age, the economic opportunities available to the elderly get narrowed down, thus forcing them into jobs with irregular or low remuneration (Fanny Cheung). The study showed that 70 percent of the elderly had no freedom of choosing work. Due to financial hardship; they compelled to have works available in meeting their immediate needs such as food, cloths and care. With the pursuit of economic and social survival, many were bound to do hard and painstaking work for earning and biological survival. By custom, in Bangladesh a patriarchal social system exists and the life of a woman is dominated by this social system. Such a system upholds a rigid division of labor that controls women's mobility, roles and responsibility. Even though recently women's roles, responsibility, and mobility are increasingly changing due to persistent poverty and the gradual erosion of the familial umbrella of support, women elderly are still confined to domestic activities without enjoyment of free choice and freedom. This study found similar picture in the lives of rural elderly.

#### **Some Typical Problems the Elderly Faced**

With the decline of physical ability and mental faculty, the elderly has to face physical disabilities, morbidities and loss of employment, isolation from social functioning and so forth. Physical disability often in the aged gives rise to profound anxiety and a sense of apathy and helplessness. The study showed a wide range of problems the elderly encountered in their terminal stage of life. In terms of major problems the elderly experienced, light digestive disorder (78%), want for food (68%) and lack of adequate health care (66%) were found. Problem of accommodation and safe shelter (38%), sleeping in next-door resident's house (18%) were also found. Moreover, lack of suitable clothing (46%), mourning for the bereaved (70%), agony for far living children (36%), and depute with neighbors (22%) were observed in the study. In the study, massive relational problems among family members were found. Because of antagonizing relationship, adult sons and daughters-in-law did not take care of them properly even in the events of illness and other vulnerabilities of life.

### **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

The present study revealed that elderly people were within the age of 60-80 years. Most of the elderly (60%) were female. About 70 percent rural older people were found illiterate. Twenty percent elderly people completed 5<sup>th</sup> Grade or primary education and 10 percent completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade or SSC (Secondary School Certificate). Of the total elderly people, 50 percent were married and the rest were widowed as well as widower. About 70 percent elderly people were the members of nuclear family while 30 percent came from joint family. About 50 percent rural elderly were found to work in the houses of well-off families both in cash and in kind. The major occupations of the rural elderly were agriculture (30%), day labor (6%), business (4%), and housewife (10%). This finding is consistent with the study of Salam and Kabir (2001). Household headship was enjoyed by about half of the total respondents of whom the majority was male. The female headship was found in a few cases that were widowed and lived with younger children. The study showed that economic ability, gender and power played vital role in determining the household status of elderly than chronological age. This finding is a bit different from the study undertaken by Samad and Abedin (1998). Among the respondents, 34 percent had no income. About 30 percent had monthly income of BDT 4000 plus. The rest of the respondents were financially better off whose monthly income was closer to BDT 10,500. With meager amount of income, many of the elderly could not support their family well. In the case of rural women elderly, economic dependency or lack of access to regular income was vigorously observed as one of crucial concerns. This finding is consistent with other study of Kabir (1999). With regard to survival pattern, a large majority of the rural elderly were found very much dependent on adult children. Despite the fact, majority of the elderly had to do manual work to manage their livelihood. About 78 percent elderly people were engaged in a variety of economic activities, particularly in agricultural fields. Of the total respondents, 40 percent managed their livelihood by engaging in a wide variety of agricultural as well as non-agricultural works. In addition, 60 percent elderly people owned some pieces of cultivable land of approximately 30 decimals where they produced crops for economic survival. Apropos of food intake, the poor elderly used to take one or two meals a day, mostly comprising rice and vegetables. The study showed that most elderly people were found devoid of good conception as to the nutritional value of foods, rather they merely knew to have foods to fill in their stomach. About 16 percent elderly were found to manage fishes and meat as regularly as possible. A few poor elderly living in abject poverty line took fish and meat once or twice a month or sometimes on special occasions. Compatible results were found in the study of Islam (2001). It was observed that a good number of adult sons did not provide their responsible care for their aged parents. Basically they had to live distressful life without full complacency of fundamental needs. The majority of the elderly had no authority on houses and other properties due to physical disability, mental incapacity and powerlessness. But the elderly having command of economic properties and voice could live in houses where they felt comfort. In the case of room shortage, they shared rooms with other family members. Most of the houses they lived in were found to be impoverished. In addition, most houses were built with mud and thatch while a few ones were made of tin and bricks. In the study, 20 percent well-to-do elderly were found to enjoy separate living rooms. This finding is consistent with a study of Kabir and Salam (2001).

With regard to health problems, a good number of elderly people were found to experience fever (50%) followed by digestive problems (38%), and gastritis and hyperacidity (28%). In addition, cardiac problem, asthma, cough and cold, dental and eye sights problem, rheumatism and hypertension were also found. Consistent findings were found in the study of Rahman (2002). In the case of medical treatment, 36 percent of the rural elderly used traditional methods. The remaining 64 percent had to take treatment at local hospitals or clinics. But the poor elderly who could not afford medical expenses were found to seek financial help from relatives, neighbors. It was evidently found that the adult children who were in economic hardship could not afford care and services for the elderly parents. This finding is consistent with the study of Help Age International (2000). As regards leisure time enjoyed by the elderly, 90 percent rural elderly spent their spare time by gossiping with grandchildren and neighbors or participating in simple household chores. Moreover, many were found to enjoy a range of

leisure activities such as listening to radio, folk songs and participating in village sports such as Hadudu, Lathikhela, and football. A few well-off elderly were found to enjoy watching television, reading news paper and books. Similar result was found in the study of Uddin et al. (2010). In terms of participating in socio-cultural functions, 10 percent elderly people were found to hold positions in some committees of educational, cultural or religious organizations. About 40 percent of them took part in social service programs. Seventy percent (70%) elderly having wisdom, experience and skill rendered advices to the younger in the case of dealing with social, economic development problems. As to elderly mistreatment, 30 percent elderly people reported physical torture perpetrated by sons as well as daughters-in-law. In the study, a good number of women elderly were found to deeply suffer economic, physical, psychological, social and even spiritual abuses within family. Similar findings were found in the study of Azam (2006). Among the elderly, certain typical problems such as digestive disorder (78%), want of food (68%) and lack of health care (66%) were found. Safe accommodation problem (38%), sleeping in next-door neighbor's houses (18%), lack of suitable clothing (46%) mourning for the bereaved (70%) and distant living children (36%) were also remarkably observed in the study. Regarding rights to choice and freedom, 70 percent elderly people had no freedom of choosing work for livelihood. Due to financial hardship, they were tended to do any jobs available in meeting their immediate basic needs. For the cause of livelihood and biological survival, many of them were bound to do laborious jobs of various kinds.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study was designed to focus on the problems of the rural elderly in terms of human rights and basic needs fulfillment. The study revealed important as well as in-depth information as to human rights conditions affecting the lives of the rural elderly. The findings showed that a vast majority of elderly people in rural Bangladesh lived in poverty, and poverty is coupled with many factors including poor health and lack of employment opportunities, social security and the like. In fact, a significant number of the elderly faced health care, social security problems along with harsh experiences of material deprivation and human rights abuse. Human rights abuses in terms of physical assault, emotional and verbal abuse, and economic exploitation were tremendously observed among the elderly. Women elderly were found to suffer more deprivations and abuses compared to the men elderly. However, based on the study results, the issues for promoting the quality of elderly life need to be embedded in a comprehensive policy and program initiatives. In this respect, family and social support and government assistance will be given greater priority for bettering the condition of elderly life. In addition, constructive changes in the socio-economic and cultural environment, health care system, elderly employment and empowerment should be fostered in such a way that the rural elderly and their families, the media, community organizations, government and law enforcement agencies all can be involved in a wide range of welfare activities for elderly people. Given the multifarious vulnerabilities and social insecurities of the elderly, certain useful and productive programs should be taken for the rural aged especially in mitigating their economic hardships and other sufferings. Policy level initiatives and institutional arrangements to provide social security to the elderly outside the family system should be extended and also be accelerated at maximum level. In rural society, elderly population lack income earning opportunities because of physical limitations, cultural barriers and lack of micro credit. If they are given the training and micro credit, they can earn their livelihood. Instead of being dependent on the families and communities, older people may undertake activities like rearing livestock, small business and rearing poultry for maintaining their livelihood. So, Government should formulate policies and programs for providing extensive financial assistance for the elderly in order for surviving economically in their old age. However, with considerable attention on the welfare of the elderly people, some measures can also be more effective that are to: (a) actively support measures to provide food and social security and shelter for the disadvantaged elderly, (b) support poverty alleviating strategies and conducive environment for improved quality of life. (c) strengthen family support system through advocacy and counseling; (d) promote family responsibilities for elderly, and create awareness in the light of religious values. (e) increase existing old age allowance and expand its coverage, (f) ensure social security and free medical care for childless and helpless elderly couple; (g) ensure housing facilities for the elderly and their rights to property; (h) strengthen the status of the elderly family with normal empowerment; (i) promote the quality of the service delivery system for the elderly; (j) restore traditional joint family system in order that elderly people can live with all family members satisfactorily; (k) undertake comprehensive research studies on multidimensional issues of elderly problems in order to help developing more effective strategies in addressing elderly problems. However, despite institutional arrangement for providing support and care for the elderly in Bangladesh, there are still inadequate services for resolving the problems of the aged people. So the Government and Non-government organizations need to run special service institutions in order to ensure viable economic, social and health securities in the lives of the elderly. Along side, some special measures can be initiated for the welfare of the elderly population which may include medicines at reduced cost, free treatment, health care near the residence, and home care by health workers, increased old age allowance and shelter and food. If all the efforts are properly materialized, and elderly wellbeing is deservedly promoted, they can be able to live their simple lives with maximum satisfaction.

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