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Table of Content

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Full Length Research Paper

'Left-behind' women of migrant-men: Rethinking agency and autonomy of women in rural Bangladesh

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This paper details the changes in the agency and autonomy of left-behind women of international migrant-men exploring continuity and changes in the discourse and systems of traditional gender roles of a village in rural Bangladesh. It sheds light on the pattern of trans-border communication of the women and their mobility in the locality and subsequent changes in gender relations. Through ethnographic fieldwork, this paper examined how women rearrange their culturally constructed boundaries and meanings of their gender. This study also explored whether these changes are temporal for the migration period and what happens when husbands return permanently. The study followed the post-structural and intersectional feminist approaches and suggested that men's migration creates a situation where some women get the advantages of widening their room for manoeuvre, which may be sustained after the return of their spouse.

Key words: Agency, autonomy, mobility, migration, manoeuvre.

INTRODUCTION

The migration of men leaving their women is an increasingly common migration pattern in South Asia and other developing countries (Desai and Banerji, 2008, Gardner, 2009). The scholars of international migration studies have increasingly focused on gender issues over the past few decades (Lutz, 2002; Morokvasic, 2004; Shah, 2004). In the beginning, the focus was on female migration and its impact on the sending communities. Bulk of the literature discussed female migrants, ignoring the left-behind women of migrant-men (Hugo, 2000; De Haas and Rooij, 2010). However, the consequence of migration is also experienced very acutely by the left-behind women of migrant-men (Hugo, 2000; Gardner, 1995, 2006). This paper aims to address how women

conform, negotiate or resist dominant discourses and practices of gender relations, and express their agency and autonomy in a Muslim society following their husbands' migration abroad. In Bangladesh, migration is often used as an economic survival strategy, especially when life-course events have become unviable. Its members have to move to seek alternative livelihoods, either permanently or periodically (Gardner, 2009). The migration of men gives women a chance to play the role of their absent husbands (Gardner, 1995). This shift may enable these women to become more authoritative, positively influencing their property ownership, productive decision-making, household expenses, and personal freedom (Fakir and Abedin, 2020). While the previous

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discussions of gender studies focused on issues such as autonomy, empowerment, and emancipation in general, the outcome of recent studies have come to increasingly highlight individualism, multiplicity, and contradiction in the experiences of men and women (Rashid, 2013). Men as remittance providers and women as remittance managers cease to perform in many cases soon after the returns of the migrants, something which is also evident from other contexts (Mckay, 2015). These practices indicate the post-structural ideas to investigate the diversity and contradictions at the individual level. However, Bilge (2010; 23) argues that post-structural perspectives do not adequately pose individuals' agency within particular contexts as they avoid taking agency as a self-explanatory concept tied to a pre-discursive self. Consequently, the socio-historical processes of subjectification remain largely underspecified. Therefore, the proposed study has followed both post-structural and intersectional feminist approaches to identify the social and historical context of women's 'agency' and 'autonomy,' keeping the mobility level right during migration and maintaining the day-to-day life accordingly.

Left-behind wives of migrant-men in existing literature

De Haas and Rooij (2010), in their study in a rural area of Southern Morocco, show that the well-being of left-behind women depends on the economic success of male migrants and the degree of interference from the members of husbands' extended family. Their discussion suggests that although remittances give women more decision-making power, this is mainly temporary as the migrants take over their 'patriarch' as soon as they return. They argue that women feel more secure when they live with their husbands because the loneliness, seclusion, long absence of sexual relations, and over-dependence on remittance complicate their lives. The improvement that we see in their position, although accelerated by migration, is principally the result of general social and cultural change (p57-59). Likewise, Rashid (2013), in her ethnographic study in two gulf migrant villages in Cumilla, Bangladesh, argues that women do not necessarily enjoy their decision-making power, autonomy, and freedom in the absence of their spouses. Instead, they like to follow social norms and stay in male protection. Similarly, Seigmann (2010) study in Northwest Pakistan shows that women do not enjoy material rewards because their physical and mental health suffer in the absence of their husbands.

In contrast to the above discussions, Maharjan et al. (2012) in their study in rural Nepal show that migration of men enhances the involvement of women in the society through their involvement in household tasks, bargaining, and buying quality products, saving money and buying movable and immovable assets and investing in wise things that gradually empower them. Similarly, Gardner

(1995, 2009), in her ethnographic study in Sylhet, Bangladesh, argues that migration of men and financial improvement of the household upgrade women as they get chances to negotiate in the household decision-making process. However, her study does not show what happens to these practices when their men return home.

We understood many key issues of transformative impacts of temporary migration of men on the left-behind women for their economic security, self-esteem, and social status through these kinds of literature. However, by focusing on security and empowerment discourses in general, their agenda for analysing women's experience hides women's agency and autonomy at the individual level. Therefore, they are not sufficient to understand the variety of women's preferred way of life and their negotiations with or resistance against patriarchal norms and ideologies while their husbands are abroad (Rashid, 2013).

Practically, the impact of temporary male migration on their women is diversified and hence difficult to understand by one single discourse (McNay, 2016). Economic remittance contributes to reshaping the stay-behind women's financial condition and their households (Gardner, 1995). Male migration brings the sender view from abroad that positively changes women's position in the traditional community. This result in women's involvement in the outside job, enhanced mobility, access to a better health facility, higher participation in reproductive decisions, and reduced domestic violence (Hadi, 2001). Their negotiations in household decisions and interactions in the public sphere create scope for both resistance and alternative discourse of morality and identity in their favour (Dannecker, 2002, 202). A study conducted by Giri and Darnhofer (2010) shows that the women as left-behinds of out migrant-men have shown that they acquire more opportunities than non-left behind women.

This article examines left-behind women's experiences to explore the changes in their agency and autonomy and the sustainability of the practices after the migration period. My argument relies on a series of interrelated concepts: 'identity, 'self,' 'agency,' and 'autonomy' to understand the pattern of agency and autonomy in Bangladesh and South Asia. Sökefeld (1999) shows that identity and self are differently perceived in the traditional anthropological discourse, where the Western self is regarded as autonomous and egocentric, while the non-Western self is shared with others. Intersectionalism emerged as a particular approach in feminist theory to analyse the multiple sources of origin of women's suppression (Nash, 2008). Sökefeld (1999: 417-18) shows that the previous understanding of non-Western notions does not indicate individual features for which the recent anthropological discourse diverts attention following the post-structuralist approach. However, according to Cohen (1994), emphasizing the self's discussion does not mean indulging in individualism but exploring how the self is linked to groups, society,

community, or the shared identity. In this regard, Brah (1996) shows that separate identities and shared identities perform in the same field, staying connected. They are constantly changing and hence are different to different individuals at different times. There is intersectionality between different identities; no one identity is absolutely 'pure,' but one identity can overwhelm or make another less important.   However, each identity will reflect as a group identity when involving agency participation.

Agency and autonomy

Autonomy can be defined as the capacity to manipulate one's personal and social environment and the ability to obtain information and to use it for their personal and intimate concerns (Dyson and Moore, 1983: 45). Herr (2018: 197-78) considers that an autonomous person is an individual who can set goals for her/his life from a list of feasible options according to will and without external interference. On the other hand, the agency is 'the power within' or the ability to define one's goals and act upon them (Kabeer, 1999). Ortner (2006) also conceptualizes agency with the notion of power to analyse domination, resistance, and inequality. She argues that social actors are neither thoroughly determined beings nor free agents who act outside the social systems. Instead, they are individuals who are not only bound but also enabled by social orders to produce and reproduce social formations of power. Similarly, Tenhunen (2006: 129-130) argues that women's agency is not obtained from complete denial of, or escape from, cultural meaning. This indicates that culture not only restricts women's agency but also enables it.

Inter-connectivity of agency and autonomy

McNay (2016) focused on dynamism and multiplicity, while discussing the agency of individuals. She argues that individuals' agency and subjectivity are dynamic, multifaceted, fluid, yet unified in daily life. Based on the above discussion, I consider that the idea 'agency' and 'autonomy' are interconnected. The agency emphasizes the capacity of actions motivated by free will or social conditioning, while autonomy emphasizes reflexivity and self-governance. The study will not focus on the differentiation between agency and autonomy; instead, it will highlight how cultural practices enable women within codes and how they are conscious about their position while dealing with others in the household and the public sphere.

International migration from Bangladesh

The partition of India in 1947 and the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 resulted in the displacement and resettlement of millions of Hindus and Muslims causing a profound transformation in the region (Alexander et al 2015). One-third of this population took shelter across new borders of the Bengal delta. The other one-third was internally displaced while the rest migrated to the Middle East, Europe or North America (ibid). Therefore, the history of Bangladesh is a history of migration. According to a World Bank report in April 2019, Bangladesh has been recognized as the ninth largest remittance recipient globally and the third in South Asia as it received USD15.50 billion in 2018. The present contribution of remittance to national GDP is 5.4% (World Bank Group, April, 2019). The service sector's contribution to GDP has increased from one-third to two-thirds. Industrial production has increased from 7 to 15%, while agriculture's contribution to GDP has decreased from one-half to one-sixth over the last few decades (Lewis, 2011). The changes in these sectors deeply influenced the lives of the people of Bangladesh. Consequently, internal and international migration and mobility have increased in the country. Between 1975 and 2009, more than 3% of the total population migrated from rural to urban areas every year. This is one of the highest rates of urbanization in the world (Alexander et al., 2015, P. 2). Bangladesh is the fifth-largest migrant-sending country globally, as half a million people are joining the world labour market every year. About 10 million Bangladeshi people are working abroad where the top five destination countries are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Malaysia, and Singapore (World Migration Report, 2018). Although work visas are not available for Bangladeshi migrants to go to the West, they continue to migrate through various means such as students and later acquiring living residence permits, through the family's reunification, etc. Among the Western countries, the United Kingdom and the United States are the major destinations where approximately half a million Bangladeshis live each in the UK and the US. Other important destinations are Italy, France, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Japan (Sikder, 2008; Bal, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

Together with a research assistant, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork intermittently from January to December 2017 in Rashidpur (pseudonym), a migrant village in rural Bangladesh. We did the fieldwork applying participant observation as the main method of research with other anthropological techniques such as census, Key Informant Interview (KII), in-depth interview, life history interview and informal group discussion through our residence to get a complete idea about changing gender roles in the village. Initially, we conducted a census using a structured questionnaire to gather basic information- age, sex, education, marital status, occupation, monthly income, land and other asset holding, housing condition, residence and duration of migration- of all the villagers including migrant, non-migrant and aspirant migrant households. It was necessary for an overview that helped us assess the fundamental changes in the migrant households of the village. Subsequently, we collected data

and information through continuous observation and interaction, life history interviews, individual interviews, and group discussion throughout the period. Participant observation and 'hang out' helped us gain insights into peer relation and various aspects of village culture while life history interview was important to get personal experiences of the informants and individual interview was useful to avoid ideal answers, masked subtleties out of fear, shame or misuse of information (Berckmoes, 2013). Group discussions provided us with a general overview of different issues.

In the study, we investigated how the migrants' wives manage households in the absence of their husbands, how they interact with the public sphere, and how their interaction with men is guided and monitored by the norms and values of patriarchy. In this case, we attempted to systematically observe and participate in all aspects of their daily life events through normal patterns of interaction to internalize their everyday happenings from their point of view, their relation to life and vision of the world (Malinowski, 1922, p25). Particularly, we attempted to observe and participate in the festivals, ceremonies, and other events to understand the gender interaction of the villagers. We also observe a few village arbitrations to understand how the villagers deal with women's issues. We conducted interviews in the form of discussion at leisure time or convenient time of the villagers. In some cases, we interviewed the same person several times, depending on the situation and the depth of the information.

During the fieldwork, we talked to men and women of aspirant migrant, migrant and returned migrant households to assess their trans-border communication, gender-based spatial mobility, and the changes in the agency and autonomy of women. We also talked to the village leaders, religious leaders, entrepreneurs, primary school teachers, service holders, drivers, masons, rickshaw pullers, agricultural labourers, and the like to get a complete picture of the gender-based social change of the village. We talked to the villagers face to face sitting in their house, village mosque, village bazar, tea stalls, grocery stores individually or in groups. The entire fieldwork consisted of approximately 200 discussions and group discussions ranging from half an hour to several hours, depending on the situation.

Ethical issues

We tried to maintain the ethical issues of the field. To do so, we did not use camera without the permission of the villagers to show respect for their privacy. In addition, we did not record our conversations during the interviews and discussions because we found that people speak ideally and become formal in front of the recorder. We used only field diaries to note down on important information during the interviews and wrote observation notes on 'social spaces.' Before talking to the informants, we clearly stated the purpose of the study and sought their consent to collect information with a trustworthy rapport. The discussion was informal and open-ended. After the fieldwork, the scattered interviews and observation notes were read several times and coded according to the purpose of this research. After that, the author expanded the codes and categorized them for drafting the report according to the central theme of the study. Absolute anonymity is significant to guarantee the well-being of the informants (Wilson, 2019). Therefore, pseudonyms of all informants and the village were used in the field notes and the publications when referring to people and places.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The village

Rashidpur is a village under Rashunia Union Parishad in Sirajdikhan *Upazila* of Munshiganj district, Bangladesh. It is one hour away by bus to the south from the capital city

Dhaka. The physical setting of Rashidpur is different from the surrounding villages. The village is situated in a low land area where communication to and from is very difficult as it does not have road connection with the adjacent villages from three directions. A cement road reached the south side of the village. This is the main path of the villagers to communicate with the surrounding villages and outside. Again, there are very few or no built road for communication within the village; there are only unpaved paths to go from one homestead to another. As a result, during the rainy season, the homesteads become separated from each other like islands scattered in water. Therefore, boats are the only means of their communication during monsoon (Uddin, 2018). Since the village is located in a low-lying area and it sinks in the rainy season every year, working as agricultural labourers, cultivating paddy and jute in the land and fishing in the water has been the main occupation of the villagers for many generations. However, the cost of cultivation has become more expensive than the price of crops for which many villagers have lost interest in cultivation. Moreover, as they did not have enough land and their education was low, they were looking for an alternative way of survival. However, due to corruption and nepotism in the recruitment process, it is difficult for these low income people to manage good jobs or run a profitable business in Bangladesh. So, migration has been considered as their best option. Thus, they started going abroad since the early eighties (Uddin, 2018). On the other hand, Mahama (2013) considers excessive poverty, unemployment, natural disasters like severe cyclone, riverbank erosion, poor crop yield, religious conflicts (minority conflict), and political instability as the major factors that caused migration in the 1980s.

Nowadays, migration has become the main source of income for many villagers in Rashidpur. There are many households which are so dependent on remittances that they are unable to manage three square meals without it. Remittances have also transformed the physical structure of the village from thatched to corrugated tin or brick buildings. According to census data, the village has 1404 people who are divided into 307 households, of which 110 are the migrant households. There are 133 (127 men and 6 women) migrants who have migrated to different countries, particularly to the Middle East, Southeast, and East Asian countries. The village also has 55 returned migrants in 48 households. Most of the villagers are Muslims. There are only six Hindu households, four of which have migrant-men (Uddin, 2018). This study was conducted in two categories of households' *eklodge* or extended household where women live with their in-laws and *bhinno* or nuclear households where the left-behind wives of the migrant-men live alone with their children. This article will briefly outline the experiences of women from both categories of the households to understand the continuity and changes in the discourse and practices of traditional gender roles and gender relations in rural

Bangladesh.

Agency and autonomy of the wives of *Ekloge* (extended) households

Marriage brings fundamental changes in women's lives in South Asia, as they are transferred from their natal homes to that of their in-laws (Rashid, 2013). After marriage, they realize that they are in new places where everybody is unknown, sometimes including their husbands. For this reason, they frequently visit their natal homes and want to stay there more time until they become mothers. When they become mothers, slowly, they begin to think of their husbands' households as their own. The ethnographic data of Rashidpur village show that the wives who live in extended households are usually young whilst, in most cases, the wives of nuclear households have adolescent or grown-up children. Remittance of *ekloge* households is received by the father or brother or, in some exceptional cases, by the mother or sister of the migrants. Decisions are taken by mutual sharing between the recipients, older household members, and the migrants over the phone from abroad. New wives do not actively take part in household decisions. Sometimes, they cannot take independent decisions, even on their issues. In an individual discussion with Laila (research assistant), Taslima (23), a young wife of an *ekloge* household, shared her feelings that her husband, who lives in Kuwait, sends remittance to her father-in-law. She is aware that her husband sends the remittance and informs her in-laws over the phone. However, the husband does not feel the need to inform her although they have passed five years after marriage. The case represents the situation of the majority of young wives of *ekloge* households where women are not involved in the household decision-making process and dealing with money. The young women are mainly responsible for taking care of their children and elderly sick members and performing household duties supervised by their mothers-in-law or other older male and female members of the households.

Young wives of *ekloge* and rich households visit markets with household men during *Eid* or other big festivals to buy clothes, shoes, ornaments, or cosmetics as people consider these as occasional and higher status. However, they are not seen to go to the daily bazaar to buy necessary commodities from grocers or fish sellers, or vegetable vendors. Women's bargaining with these men is undermined by the norms and values of their household men. One afternoon, Karima (22), whose husband (35) has been living in Saudi Arabia for 15 years, told Laila that her husband's household is a traditional one where the members like to live in an extended arrangement for generations. Her father-in-law has four brothers. The brothers got divided from extended arrangements eight years ago when the household turned

very big with four brothers' household members. While talking about the monetary dealings of the women in her household, she said, "No woman of my husband's homestead has a personal bank account."

The findings of the study reveal that in some cases financially rich and traditionally extended household men treat their migrant son's young daughters-in-law very politely. The men in this upper-class society take their women out and get them rich dresses, ornamentals, quality food items, etc. They expect their women to go outside the home wearing *burqa* to maintain *pardah.* They consider it gives more protection and security to their young women. The women also respect the feelings of the household men in many cases and behave accordingly to maintain the household tradition. In another private conversation with Laila, a wife in an *ekloge* household revealed that she had lost freedom of mobility after marriage. She enjoyed the freedom of moving around thoroughly when she was in school. After marriage, her movement got restricted. In this regard, Gardner (2009) argues that women from affluent households have to strictly follow the rules of patriarchal society. For many wealthy men, women's mobility out the homestead is not regarded as higher status for them. Although the women of these households are willing to go outside, they do not do so violating their household tradition.

Rashid (2013) revealed that women's power and agency should be evaluated within the discourses or structures of gender relations in rural Bangladeshi society, which expects women to be 'good daughters-in-law,' 'good mothers' or 'good wives. She mentions that the 'good daughters-in-law' of extended households are judged by their 'modesty,' 'responsibility' and 'care attitude' to their in-laws. On the other hand, women of nuclear households are judged by their efficiency, intelligence, and ability to manage them. However, her study shows that women are physically safe, socially cared and economically secured when they live in extended households. Therefore, she suggests that women like to follow social norms and stay in male protection instead of enjoying decision making power, autonomy, and freedom in the absence of men (Mahmood, 2005; De Haas and Rooij, 2010; Sinha et al., 2012). McNay (2016) argues that by overemphasizing religion in Muslim women's lives, the scholars tended to minimize other forms of agency in investigating multiple social structures, expectations, and pressures in their daily lives. Therefore, she suggests a dynamic, multifaceted, yet unified subjectivity to investigate more realistic formulation of agency. McNay's theoretical ideas are applicable in the ethnographic accounts of the women in Rashidpur village. Close observation of the activity and mobility of the members of migrant households and their intra and inter-household relations shows that the impact of male migration is diversified on the members of migrant households and their living arrangements. This idea indicates conflicts, arguments, and counter-arguments in the household and society that Rashid, Mahmood, and De

Haas and Rooij overlooked. In this regard, Akram and Karim (2005) show that although male migration ensures women's economic security and social status, it contributes to increased control by their in-laws. Therefore, although there are good relations in some exceptional cases, in most cases, interpersonal conflict arises between daughters-in-law and other members, which ultimately contributes to the breakup of the households after migration.

Agency and autonomy of the wives of *Bhinno* (nuclear) households

The women's experience of their husband's migration varies from household to household depending on their age, educational background, personality, amount of remittance they receive, and above all, their relationships with their husbands (White, 1992). We found that in most cases, they receive remittances to their account for regular household expenses and other development activities while in some other cases, they receive a portion of the earning their husbands, who save the rest in their account. Decisions of these households are taken by mutual sharing between husband and wife by phone. In some cases, they have relative freedom to take independent decisions for everyday happenings whilst they receive instructions from husbands in other cases. Kusum (42) lives in a *bhinno* household with her son Suman (22) and two daughters Anwara (17) and Rahima (14), in the absence of her husband, who has been living in Malaysia for 15 years. One afternoon, while talking about her role in the household, she smilingly said to Laila and me,

"My husband believes that I understand better than him. So, he allows me to make household decisions and go to bazaar, bank, or other public places."

She further informed us that she goes to Sirajdikhan bazaar, 5 km away from Rashidpur, to buy rice, grocery items, spices, fish, meat, vegetables, etc., from wholesale shops. She goes to Sirajdikhan bazaar twice or thrice a month. She also buys a small number of retail commodities from the village bazaar, which sits every morning and afternoon.

However, Rashid (2013) argues that 'husband is away' does not always mean that husband transfers his full power to his wife. Instead, he is constantly engaged in the process of household decisions through phone conversation. She further mentions that women do not necessarily enjoy their decision-making 'power,' 'autonomy,' and 'freedom', while their husbands are abroad. But in the case of Rashidpur village, we found that, in previous times, although women would seek support from male relatives and neighbours to buy their commodities, the practice is gradually decreasing because the young generation wives consider themselves capable of managing the household keeping regular

phone contact with their migrant husbands. They do not like commodities when other people buy them. They also do not know the actual price if somebody else brings their goods. Again, in many cases, migrants also do not want their wives to take support from neighbours. The migrants fear that if their wives frequently ask neighbours for help, people may spread a rumour of extramarital relations. Therefore, the wives consider it safer for them to move and purchase commodities by themselves.

However, we also found that although women manage everyday happenings by sharing with their migrant husbands without help from others, they maintain regular contact with their natal homes to seek help from parents or siblings when they need to. If necessary, they also ask for support from their husbands' father, brother, uncle or neighbours at different times. Through these male supports, they negotiate to create their position in patriarchal society. Roshna (45), the wife of a migrant to Singapore, said to Laila and me that she has three daughters and one son (14). While talking about her role in household management, she shared with me that:

"I married our eldest daughter to a man of a nearby village by taking support from my brother, husband's brother, and husband's sister's husband. They played the role of guardians who dealt with the groom's party when they discussed marriage transactions, ornaments, and other arrangements. Now, the eldest son-in-law contributes as our son. Similarly, I married our second daughter in the same village, Rashidpur, with these male relatives' help. My husband provided financial support and necessary suggestions from abroad."

The quote indicates that Roshna negotiates with trustworthy men to accomplish her purpose in the absence of her husband. She, further, said that when the proposal came for the marriage of the first daughter, she, along with her elder sister, secretly went to the groom's village as strangers and saw him and his housing condition from distance. Male relatives also looked for the necessary information. She shared everything with her migrant husband by phone. The husband was not very willing initially as he did not see the groom by himself. Together with other relatives, she convinced him. But during the second daughter's marriage, he was convinced since the groom was from the same village, and he knew the family well. The husband also increased his reliability as the first son-in-law was a nice selection. Later, she requested her husband to bring the second son-in-law to Singapore. Their third daughter was married when her husband visited home for a few months. The eldest son-in-law runs a clothing store in Dhaka, while the other two live in Singapore near their father-in-law. The first son-in-law also supports her household work as her son in the village. Roshna represents many wives who actively take part in big household issues in the absence of their husbands.

When exploring women's property ownership, we found

that many women try to save some amount from personal expenses. In some cases, young wives of *ekloge* households buy cow, goat, chicken, or duck with their savings to secretly rear in natal homes. They may also mortgage-in land in their father's village and cultivate by the supervision of their father or and brother. Likewise, some women secretly open insurance accounts and once, considering the situation, share with their husbands. However, they stop saving in natal home when their children grow up. The savings in natal homes are temporary as they bring it back in cash when the households split or when the husbands need it.

The new wives' secret savings indicate that although they live in extended arrangements and conform to the household norms, they wait for their position. After the birth of children and with the growth of their age when they are confirmed about their position, they begin to concentrate on their husbands' households and decrease or stop saving in natal homes. These are their strategies to establish their strong feet in the households of their husbands.

Gardner (1995) argues that in rural Bangladesh, women's power depends on the ownership of resources. But, in my fieldwork experience, they have very little or no property ownership. They inherit a little property primarily from their fathers and secondly from their husbands. However, the findings of Rashidpur demonstrate that if they have a trustworthy conjugal relationship, they may achieve property from husbands as gifts. Rafida (34), for instance, informed that her husband, Nakib (45), was in Bahrain for six years and in the village for two years before he migrated to Malaysia four years ago. She lives in a *bhinno* household with her son (17) and daughter (14). Although her mother-in-law (65) and brothers-in-law live in separate households in the same homestead, she has a good relationship with them. She asks for their suggestions before making important decisions. Initially, her husband used to remit to her younger brother-in-law, Anik (35), the most educated household member. She opened her bank account after the brother-in-law got married two years ago. As she maintains good relations with everybody, she has a very good reputation in the household. As a result, nobody protested when her migrant husband bought .30 acre of cultivable land for her as a reward for her contribution to the household and as the security of her old age. Rather the brothers-in-law negotiated when they settled the price with the landowner, who is their next-door cousin. Rafida's case illustrates that a good relationship with the husband and other household members is an effective strategy that acts as social capital for women to acquire land (Bourdieu, 1986). It helps acquire property and creates an image in their favour to establish agency (White, 1992). Ortner (2006) argues that women's social relations and personality are the most important to establish their agency in the household and society. White (1992) supports this view that women who maintain good relation with their husbands and other members of the

household may be rewarded with expensive gifts, jewellery, land property, or home.

The experiences of the women of *bhinno* households show how the absence of the migrant creates space for women to negotiate in the household decisions and move in the public sphere within the existing system. In many cases, the husbands also consider their wives' contribution as a big support to manage the household in their absence. Tenhunen (1999; 2006) in her studies on home-based wage work of women in Calcutta shows that culture not only restricts the agency of women but also creates space to enable it. She explains that when the husbands are engaged in white-collar jobs at the office, the wives secretly get involved in various wage works at home through intermediaries who sell the products in the market. These hidden works transform the women's cultural boundaries as they create social networks with their employer and the wider public sphere (Dannecker, 2002; Maharjan et al., 2012). Many husbands do not initially like the idea that their wives are earning, but slowly accept as the wives work at home without threatening their position in the household and society. Therefore, she argues that women's agency is not obtained from complete denial of cultural norms but the creation of strategic spaces within existing gender codes (2006, p129-30). Sen (2018) also supports the creation of strategic spaces and shows in her study in two slum areas in India that although criticized for falling in love with Muslim men, Hindu women get the opportunity to express their agency by joining religious organizations in public domain and maintaining strong social network with others. Similarly, the wives of the migrant households of Rashidpur create their spaces through various activities without violating the norms and values of patriarchal society.

Women of the newly rich *Bhinno* households

The women of rich and middle-class households, usually, stay in homestead areas whilst the poor women are compelled to sell their labour and work in public places (Gardner, 1995; Tenhunen, 1999, 2006). Many women of poor households are unable to use *burqa* and live religious lives. Their men allow them to move and work in public spheres. This practice remains effective even after the changes in their economic condition. Therefore, the study's findings show that the migrants who were poor before migration and now are prosperous because of remittance allow their women more to move in public places than the migrant-men from traditionally rich households. The findings also demonstrate that the women who were poor before migration and now are wealthy can reshape and redefine their social roles in their favour. These women have better negotiation and decision-making power in the household and in public sphere than the women from traditionally wealthy households. Contrarily, Rashid (2009) shows that the left-behind wives of the migrant households remain stressed

as they face the loaners and lenders every month in the absence of the migrants. However, in the case of Rashidpur village, although the poor women of many migrants, who went abroad taking loan or borrowing from others, remain stressed until repaying the loaned or borrowed money, enjoy dealing with cash and negotiation in household decisions when they do not owe to anybody. Their experience of dealing with loaners and lenders, despite stressful for a certain period, creates space to negotiate with outsider men and makes them proactive to some extent. On the other hand, the women of traditionally rich *ekloge* households have strong male support; but they reside under stricter norms and values, which keep them submissive (Uddin, 2018). In this respect, several women of *bhinno* households informed us that the women who have access to negotiation in household decisions and permission to move in the public places undermine the women of the traditionally rich *ekloge* households as they cannot move outside and depend upon their men even for their personal issues. They also informed us that the villagers respect the women of *ekloge* households because of their men's power and influence in the village. Similarly, they enjoy more public prestige because of their men; but as individuals, they cannot lead independent lives (Gardner, 1995). One afternoon in December 2017, Nazma (45), the wife of a newly moneyed migrant to Kuwait, said to Laila and me:

"The women of rich and traditional households are unable to move alone. They cannot do anything without men. So**,** many women who can move in public places and make household decisions do not admire them."

In another discussion, Bilkis (42), the wife of another migrant, said to us: "The men of traditionally rich households lead the village arbitration. But their women are restricted within the four walls of the households."

Similarly, we found that many women of *bhinno* and newly prosperous households consider the covered life of the women of traditional households as ignorant and backward. So, they do not follow the women of rich and extended households as individual entities. On the contrary, they feel proud of their positions as they can support and contribute to household decisions or take many decisions alone. Since they are efficient in managing households, their husbands also rely on them. One evening, while hanging out in front of a tea shop, a returned migrant, Rashed (42), said to me, "Husband can increase their earnings staying stress-free abroad if the wife can manage the household alone." In another case, Rozina (35), the wife of a migrant to Qatar for 12 years, informed Laila that she had lived in a small corrugated tin house before her husband migrated abroad. They built a building two years ago, at the cost of approximately 30 lac BDT (35,000 US dollars). In the beginning, she was

afraid and confused about how to accomplish such a big task. However, she engaged masons, carpenters, and labourers taking support from her brother. She regularly updated and consulted her migrant husband about the work through video calls and took suggestions. She gained confidence when the building was successfully completed. Now, her husband relies on her more with confidence. This woman is a representative case of how women of the newly rich household negotiate with men to manage the households, increasing their capacity to express agency.

Sustainability of agency and autonomy of women

We have found in Rashidpur village that *bhinno* households are managed by women by mutual sharing with migrant husbands and sometimes by taking help from close and reliable relatives. A few studies show that despite the material reward from their husbands' migration, women remain stressful as they play multiple roles in the household and in the public spheres (Seigmann, 2010). However, in the case of Rashidpur village, women are concerned about the food, cloth, and education of their children and the overall financial well-being of the household. Many men and women informed us that in most cases, women go back to their household duties when their husbands permanently return. Nonetheless, when their husbands are busy or when the husbands go to urban areas for a few days, they can use the experiences of going to bazaar, bank, or other public places. When the husbands are busy with regular earning activity like running grocery stores, clothes shops, tea stalls, etc., in the locality or work in urban areas, women go to public places to perform outside works like before while their husbands were abroad. In some cases, where women are employed to earn a living such as teaching or small businesses, they do not fully go back to household chores. Instead, they perform both in the household and in public places. Whether the women go back or not depends on the occupation of their husbands after migration.

Saleha (35), the wife of a returned migrant from Abu Dhabi, informed that she works as a representative of an insurance company where she has to move from door to door and convince migrants' wives to open insurance accounts. She has a very good reputation among the villagers. She is continuing her work as her husband supports her. She also informed that she was not always dependent on remittance to manage the household and her children's educational expenses when her husband was abroad. While talking about Saleha, a grocer (man) in the village bazaar said to me:

"Housewives like Saleha are the assets for any household. They can support their family if the husbands

are unsuccessful abroad or unemployed after returning."

This comment indicates that many husbands expect support from wives when they are abroad or when return home. Similarly, in many other cases, it is not a matter of whether women go back to household duties or not; their experiences of managing the household in men's absence bring significant changes in their personality. As a result, they can actively participate in household decisions. In this respect, Rahela (38), the wife of a returned migrant from Saudi Arabia, said to Laila and me:

"My husband lived abroad for a long time. Now, he runs a cloth shop in Sirajdikhan bazaar. As he spends the whole day in the shop, he does not have free time to buy retail commodities for daily needs. So, he likes to handover the responsibilities of household management to me."

In another case, Mohibur (50) permanently returned from Oman, keeping his eldest son there. Now, he takes care of cultivation and fishing and stays almost the whole day at home. However, he makes household decisions sharing with his wife, Kabita (42). The wife said to me:

"I managed the household for 10 years when my children were little, and my husband was abroad. I know what is necessary for the household and how to spend money effectively."

She again said that her contribution is also not less to the improvement of the household. Her husband sent money, but she managed the household by applying her wisdom. If she could not manage properly, their financial condition would not be improved.

   The experience that women gather in the absence of their husbands has a practical impact in the long run as it sustains after the migration period in many cases. Data show that women usually perform in the household and the public spheres to maintain constant contact with their husbands without support from relatives or neighbours. However, they take support male relatives and neighbours for big decisions such as marriage of daughters, buying land or building houses, etc. Thus, their husbands' absence creates a situation where they get rooms to negotiate and manoeuvre, which eventually help establish their agency and autonomy within gender codes (Jacobsen, 2011). Following Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001), we consider that women's decision-making power, mobility in public places, engagement with economic activity, property ownership, collection of information, and knowledge acquisition are the indicators of autonomy. However, they are not autonomous agents in the Western sense. Their positions are linked to various intersectional identities such as lineage, gender, class, and status in society when they deal with others (Cohen 1994; Brah 1996). Yet, they are conscious agents who can distinguish themselves from everyone else by expressing their

opinions and applying different strategies (Sökefeld, 1999). Therefore, migration has a lasting effect in shaping and reshaping the agency and autonomy of the women in Rashidpur.

Conclusion

The study has explored the diversity of the agency and autonomy of the left-behind women of overseas migrant-men. It has highlighted the continuity and changes in the discourse and practices of dominant gender roles in Rashidpur village, Bangladesh. It has revealed that women's experience of managing households, trans-border communication, and spatial mobility in the locality have created a situation where many women get rooms to manoeuvre within cultural codes. The study has shown that many new wives of *ekloge* households secretly save a portion of their personal expenses in their natal home whilst the wives of *bhinno* households maintain good relations with their husbands to create a position in the household. Many young wives of *ekloge* households do not take part in household decisions and rarely go to the public spheres, while the wives of *bhinno* households negotiate in household decisions and move in public places taking permission from their migrant husbands. The study also has unfolded that among all the compositions, women of newly rich *bhinno* households, who were poor before migration and now are prosperous, are the ablest to negotiate, reshape and rearrange their boundaries and express their agency and autonomy within cultural codes. These women feel proud of their position as they can negotiate and move in the public spheres. The findings regarding the sustainability of the practices show whether the women will go back to their household duties or continue to perform both in private and public places depends on their husbands' occupation after return and their conjugal relationships. If the returned husbands are regularly busy with their occupation in the locality or urban areas, women need to perform in the public spheres like before. Similarly, if the women themselves are employed in earning activities, they do not fully go back to household chores; instead, they perform both in the household and the public places. The women who go back to household duties also can negotiate household decisions better than before migration. The study has followed the post-structural and intersectional feminist ideas and suggested that the agency and autonomy of the left-behind women and the system of their social relations are variously affected by the migration of men at individual levels. However, although they are conscious about themselves, they are not autonomous in the Western sense; rather, when they deal with others, their self and agency are connected to different intersectional identities. They negotiate, resist, or reinterpret their position to transform patriarchy and create spaces within the patriarchal system. Therefore,

the managing experiences of women have huge social and cultural implications in the long run. In short, men's migration is instrumental in transforming gender relations in which women continuously strategize their positions as conscious agents.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interest.

NOTES

It is the lowest administrative unit of local government. Each union is made up of nine wards. Each ward consists of one or more villages. A Union Parishad consists of a chairman, nine members for nine wards, and three reserved women members who are responsible for supervising three wards by each. The chairman and the members are elected by direct election. Union Parishad is responsible for overseeing law and order and the government's development activities at the local level.

It is a local government unit in the middle of Union Parishad and district.

It is an ideology that secludes Muslim women from the public sphere. It is a set of inner feelings and identity and a relationship between men and women. It emphasizes both the physical separation of women and also their need for male shelter (Papanek 1973). In Bangladesh, it is mainly maintained by burqa or veil.

According to Muslim inheritance law, the land property is transferred through the male line. Daughters inherit half of their brothers. Usually, they claim this property after the death of both parents and the father. In practice, in many cases, they do not claim this property as they have to take shelter of brothers if the breakup of their marriages occurs (Khan et al. 2016).

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Full Length Research Paper

Perceptions and management of vulnerabilities in daily medical work. West-African situations, Global perspective

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This paper explores the interactions between structural poverty and production of medical care in Burkina Faso. This country represents other African countries with the same structural poverty. These interactions are examined based on healthcare professionals' perceptions as well as the factors responsible for the vulnerabilities affecting their medical work. A qualitative approach is used to analyze the materials using two temporalities set thirty years apart (1990-1994 and 2020-2021), based on long-term ethnographies on public health care institutions, opinion of care-giver relationships, semi-structured interviews, and physicians' life histories. The results focus on the vulnerabilities affecting physicians' work consisting of patients' social characteristics, shaping their capacities and disabilities to support caregivers in implementing care. Interpreting the individualized dimensions of vulnerabilities makes it difficult to use learned knowledge and care for patients. This goes beyond the recurrent lack of technical and financial support to provide care; it is a systematically vulnerability but so common that it becomes a minor issue in way caregivers deal with the difficulties to be overcome in caring. These results and their permanence at a thirty-year interval suggest that these ways of thinking about vulnerabilities prevent caregivers from seeing them as part of a common condition shared with the patients and their relatives , affecting them in a common way in implementing care. This research underlines that these "pejorative" conceptions prevent the emergence of a victim figure that patients and caregivers could share, since they commonly suffer from poor working and care conditions that are acceptable in many of the world's poorest countries.

Key words: Health professional, poverty, Africa, care, vulnerability, poverty.

INTRODUCTION

Among the factors structuring medical practice in the majority of low-resource African countries is the structural poverty impacting the organization and performance of national health systems. They are structurally underfunded, with an impact on public health infrastructures that must regularly deal with the lack of equipment and technical resources (Forster et al., 2020). They suffer from lack of maintenance of current resources, they have no or too

few pharmaceuticals at affordable costs for the populations, and human resources are scarce. However, health personals are confronted with a double burden: the need to manage infectious and parasitic diseases still present in these contexts of poverty (Martini et al., 2011), and at the same time to respond to the challenges of managing chronic non-communicable diseases such as diabetes (King et al., 1998; Motala, 2002; Kengne et al., 2013), cardiovascular pathologies and cancers, the prevalence of which is increasing throughout the world and which entail high management costs. The medical needs are huge, linked in particular to environmental changes, including ways of life in urban and peri-urban areas with uncontrolled growth, more frequent and destructive natural disasters as well as demographic changes in contexts where the population is largely very young but where the proportion of elderly people is growing.

Financial supports is provided by private funds or partnerships established within the framework of bilateral or international cooperation, both in and outside the traditional system of international solidarity. For example, chemotherapy costs are covered for children in several African countries. Nevertheless, the financial costs of sustaining health systems and infrastructures remain one of the challenges for health policies in low-resource countries.

Numerous studies have long quantified these links between structural poverty, fragility of sustainable resources and the performance of health systems (Dussault, 2008; Harper, 2010). A set of indicators are classically produced in particular by the WHO and the World Bank, such as life expectancy, mortality and morbidity rates, the number of general practitioners and specialists per capita, the number of hospital beds available. These data expose some realities while reminding us that this mass poverty operates at all levels of the functioning of these societies, from the most political to the most intimate, at the heart of the experiences of patients and their families who need care and who suffer from these conditions.

These situations are also exposed in more qualitative ways. This is particularly the case with recent ethnographies of care in non-Western hospitals, recounting with rigor and sensitivity of the painful experiences of patients and caregivers who struggle amid severe resource shortages in Africa (Mulemi, 2010; Livingston, 2012; Wendland, 2012), in Oceania (Street, 2014), in Asia (Banerjee, 2020), in South America (Worthington, 2015). Others examine these links through the lens of the differentiated and unequal management of specific pathologies such as HIV/AIDS (Farmer, 1999; Nguyen, 2011).

It is well established in the literature on health care systems in low-income countries, including those in Africa, that this structural poverty and these lacks in terms of techno-scientific and biomedical supports involve both local and global histories and politics in relation to one another. It can also been know that, the composition of care is impacted and that patients and their relatives, facing their own financial precariousness, are exposed to care trajectories characterized by strong inequalities. This context produces what Fassin has theorized as the inequality of lives (Fassin, 2018), in other words incorporated inequalities. But this phenomenon also confronts caregivers with immeasurable material, medical, moral and at the same time emotional uncertainties while they must strive to make biomedicine work under such conditions. In this perspective, this paper focuses on the subjective experience of doctors in one of these mundane places of poverty (Street, 2014) and high pressure in which caregivers work: that of Burkina Faso, a francophone West African country. The aim is to show how the massive poverty impacts on the reasoning that doctors use in their daily work to provide care. More precisely, the paper aims to portray their perceptions of the vulnerabilities to which these contexts of poverty expose their work, their attempts and the care they can provide to patients. A central argument is that once we take these perceptions as our field of enquiry, we have a better chance of understanding why doctors do not do what people expect of them. And we are most likely to gain insight into the effects of these severe resource shortages on the ordinary violence to which both caregivers and patients are exposed.

Structural poverty and perceptions of vulnerabilities

It is necessary to clarify what is meant by vulnerability, a polysemic concept yet useful for the production of scientific knowledge. It includes both:1) the damage produced by a context that exposes people to risks: for example, under-equipped infrastructures that create vulnerable care contexts because they cannot accommodate all the patients who need them, 2) the propensity to suffer these damages: we will consider the degree of exposure of individuals to this context of disturbance, and to the dysfunctions that it may induce, 3) the capacity to respond: we will consider vulnerability due to a lack of adaptation or insufficient capacity to cope with this context (Timmerman, 1981). These three dimensions are constitutive of vulnerability understood both in its material and contextual aspects that escape the actors who are exposed to it, in the forms and degrees of exposure, and in the connections that these actors construct with the damage that potentially affects them. This concept can be applied to physical spaces (the vulnerability of territories, buildings or infrastructures exposed to environmental dangers will be studied), to social spaces or groups (individual and collective vulnerabilities in relation to lifestyles and social relations will be studied). Its interest is to underline that situations

of vulnerability are as much the product of exposure to risks or harmful factors as the product of the ways in which each person represents these factors and reacts to them.

Research questions

It is therefore fundamental to explore how daily medical work combines these material dimensions and their effects on the everyday relationships between doctors and patients. In doing so, doctor's conceptions of what they experience, on one hand, and the ways in which they think about the situations in which they are engaged on the other hand are being revealed. This article therefore answers the following questions:

1) What are physicians' perceptions of the vulnerabilities that affect and weaken their work and, consequently, the effectiveness of the care they can provide in a context of structural poverty?
2) What are their interpretations of the causes and actors responsible for these vulnerabilities?
3) What are the implications for care situations when doctors must strive to make biomedicine work?

Justification of the study and theoretical framework

This paper takes its cue from an epistemological approach of contemporary biomedical practices but not limited to pragmatic as well as moral, affective and ethical issues. The purpose is to question the adaptations that shape the ways of conceiving, practicing medicine and investing one's role. These are processes classically linked to the functioning of professions, including the health professions whatever the territories of practice (Lindenbaum and Lock, 1993; Gawande, 2003; Lock and Nguyen, 2010), long theorized in the sociology of professions (Hughes, 1958; Freidson, 1973; Berg and Mol, 1998). Everywhere, doctors share the same theoretical role: delivering care, which is what people expect of them. But they are involved in this role by dealing with their environment, their history and its reminiscences, such as that of racism which sometimes continues to affect relations between health professionals (Digby, 2013; McIsaac, 2019), or patients' fears (Sams et al., 2020). They deal with the material and social resources available, which influence their decisions (Berg, 1997), the meanings and affects involved. Institutional poverty and resource shortages encountered in Burkina Faso are heuristic, this paper argues, for exploring how local logics resulting from these work contexts influence the ways in which physicians imagine themselves and their work. Reasoning and correlatively medical knowledge born in the process of action, also referred to as experiential knowledge, are made and spread at this local scale. Their effects in terms of the

production of vulnerabilities and violence that cross the worlds of care must be documented by anthropology. This is crucial for understanding the different faces of contemporary biomedicine, as expressed through the work of health professionals.

METHODS AND CONTEXT

The following is based on two temporalities of inquiry:

1) Two years of field research in Burkina Faso (September 1990 to July 1991, April to December 1992, September 1993 to January 1994). Throughout this period the author made observations of ordinary work situations, medical activities, care relationships and practices in urban and peri-urban areas. The sample included hospitals in the country's two main cities, Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso, and a medical center on the outskirts of the capital. In addition to informal discussions, 91 semi-structured interviews were conducted with general practitioners and specialists. The topics covered during the interviews included their professional culture, the relationships with other health care actors (paramedical staff and traditional practitioners) and with patients, the adjustments made in health care practices in relation to the lack of resource and the economic precariousness of patients, and in relation to their culture.
2. At an interval of 30 years, these data were reconsidered on the basis of two biographical narratives that took up these themes while expanding them; these biographical narratives were based on a series of interviews that were conducted between June 2020 and August 2021 with a pediatrician and a general practitioner, one practicing in the capital, Ouagadougou, the other in a suburban city.

The materials were collected in Burkina Faso. This West African country is still classified in 2021 as one of the 46 poorest countries in the world, according to United Nations criteria. The World Bank estimates that in 2015, 20.7% of the population was undernourished. Life expectancy has increased: it was estimated at 47 years in 1995 (WHO, 1996), at 61.2 years in 2018 (WHO, 2020). Yet nearly one child in 10 dies before the age of 5. According to UNCF (2021), the infant mortality rate is 88°/00, and the maternal mortality rate remains high: 341 per 100,000 live births. The share of the population under 15 years old represents on average 45% of the population, just over 3% is over 65 years old. The Burkinabe government invests little in health infrastructure and welfare, except for primary health care. The ratio of doctors per capita is 1 per 15,350 inhabitants in 2016, while the standard defined by the WHO is a minimum of 1/10,000.

A universal health insurance scheme was passed in 2015 but its implementation has stalled. Since then, a system of prepayment has forced patients to pay for care in order to be covered. Only children under 5 years of age receive free health care.

A comprehensive method research

The study was based on a qualitative research approach and, in particular, the medium of « thick description » (Geertz, 1973), the only one able to investigate, in a comprehensive way, aspects of medical work whose meaning cannot be grasped by quantitative measurement. The approach used a range of methods describe above to focus on the subjective meanings through which health practitioners interpret their working conditions and their effects. In this paper, the situations are described and analyzed from the perspectives of the actors. This is to reach the subjective meanings and the representations attached to medical work.

RESULTS

All the factors mentioned below are those discussed by all the doctors interviewed in the two periods. Three registers of vulnerability are highlighted: they integrate the responsibilities of patients in the daily difficulties in providing care, in several forms.

Vulnerability due to lack of resources

The doctors interviewed highlight the difficulty of building up their daily work in public health infrastructures where the resources for working are reduced to a minimum. Often, even the essentials are missing to perform basic procedures during consultations, such as stethoscopes that doctors have to buy themselves. Therefore, from the diagnostic phase onwards, the immediate concern is whether examinations are necessary to confirm a diagnostic and move forward with a treatment proposal. A general practitioner said:

In my medical center, the only tests available are blood tests! There are no X-rays available. And let's not talk about scanners! Even in the university hospitals centers, sometimes there is only one machine and it has been broken down for months. So either we do nothing or we send the patients to the private sector, but a scanner is a month's salary! Who can afford that?

When patients have to be hospitalized, another problem arises: the availability of beds in public health centers. It is common for patients to wait on the floor for a bed to become available; sometimes they have to be asked to go home without any care because there is no room to admit them, which is terrible human situation as this doctor summarizes:

Imagine getting them to the hospital and telling them to go home! It's terrible for everyone.

The gap between the theoretical training received and the reality of practice conditions does not allow doctors to practice their profession in the manner they have been trained. A pediatrician explained her experience as follows:

We are trained as if we were going to work without any constraints. We learn technical gestures that we will never do because we don't have the right equipment. We learn that we have to ask for certain tests and we will never see the results because they cannot be done here.

In this context, failures are frequent; they are measured by the death of patients or by the interruption of hospital care at the request of the relatives. This work situation is unrelated to any intention of the patients. However, their responsibility is represented as engaged when some of their attitudes add, according to the doctors, to the difficulties and harshness of these care conditions, or even produce them. The comments point to forms of unwillingness that combine a lack of resources and a passive attitude. A doctor described his experience in the following manner:

They lack money, that's for sure. But even someone who cannot afford it can come to a health center first because he does not know in advance how much the care will cost. And if they can't pay because they are poor, then their responsibility is limited. But sometimes they don't even come, they just sit at home! And when they do come, it's too late, there's not much you can do.

This passivity turns against these doctors because they are being asked to act without having the means to do so. The same professional continues:

There are patients to whom you ask to go for tests and they say no. I do not have the money; manage to treat me like this.

Medical practice is therefore made up of trial and error, of late treatment, of choices made under restrictions, of breaks in the care trajectories. And when situations of death arise, doctors systematically ask themselves whether, under better conditions, they could have gone beyond what they did.

Vulnerability linked to patients' cultural references

A second register of vulnerability reinforces the first: that of the cultural representations with which sick people think about illnesses and interpret their causes. The doctors' point out that for most of the population, illness always refers to a supernatural cause; there is always something or someone responsible. The consequences for their work are multiple and multifaceted. First, this leads to late recourse to biomedicine, which is regularly used after the recourse to traditional healers. This is despite the circulation of knowledge that concerns African societies involved in the changing processes of the 21st century. Traditional healers may also prescribe treatments that complicate biomedical care and sometimes lead to death. A doctor described this situation in the following way:

The mothers have to wash the children with decoctions. But sometimes they also give it to drink, and it paralyses the intestines. Until the child dies. But the doctor cannot tell the mother that she is responsible for this death that would be accusing her, with serious consequences for them and for us.

These cultural references may also lead to the refusal to

follow medical recommendations. Doctor R. gave the following example:

The Fulani are often anemic because of their diet. But they refuse to give blood for transfusions because they think they have little blood in them because they are thin. But that's their body type! So when a child needs blood and the family is asked, they would rather see the child die than give blood.

These cultural identities are therefore presented in turn from the point of view of the complications they cause in care. Sometimes the comments are more accusatory; they refer to some cultural norms whose effects are criticized in terms of the way in which the value of life is considered. This is particularly present in the comments on fathers' relationship to their children's health. That pediatrician suggested:

Is this someone who really wants his child to get well and is going to pay for it? If he dies, he has others since he is a polygamist.

Vulnerability due to lack of public support

A third modality of this vulnerability suffered at work concerns the lack of support received by doctors in their struggle to improve health care standards. All of them mention the strikes and collective mobilizations they initiate to obtain better working and care conditions. The population is accused of not supporting them while they struggle amid severe resource shortage. A pediatrician said that:

It's the population that is blamed. We tell them that when we go on strike, they are there to complain whereas we are doing this for them. But instead of supporting us, they criticize us, they resent us. When the politicians criticize us, the population follows: we are the bad guys!

Similarly, the doctors regret that the population does not understand the delays in treatment, one of the difficulties of everyday work, and they are frustrated by this "inability":

They say that we make them wait in public hospitals, whereas in the private sector it goes faster. Of course, it's quicker when the infrastructure is working. But in a public hospital, when only one surgical block is in working order for traumatology, for neurosurgery, we can only be delayed for months.

These results underline that for doctors, the challenge of providing quality care and the vulnerabilities that weaken the efficacy of their work are therefore linked to the lack of resources that the state provides for their work, but also to the attitudes of patients and more widely of the population. Their ability to provide care is considered in terms of what they feel they have lost in terms of the conditions and quality of their work, in relation to what they have learned and what is being done elsewhere. The quality of interactions between careers and patients is therefore perceived as disturbed by the latter. Patients are seen as agents who reinforce the difficult conditions of care for these careers. As a result, for doctors interviewed, successful caregiving is an extraordinary situation, not an ordinary one.

The importance of sick people and their relatives is thus recognized in the construction of medical practices, but in ways that would disrupt the care relationship.

DISCUSSION

These results highlight several elements of the relationship between the production of care and the structural poverty. They are related to this specific context but refer to dimensions that are more general.

Vulnerabilities suffered and in the meantime constructed

Vulnerabilities that weaken medical practices and care relationships are partly material, as the doctors pointed out. Nevertheless, they are also the result of caregivers' perceptions of them, through their ways of thinking and prioritizing the reasons why they cannot practice as they have been trained to do. These perceptions take part in the production of the strengths and weaknesses of daily medical work because it relies on them. It is fundamentally shaped by these perceptions, which have concrete implications. This is crucial for understanding the nature of medical practices and care relationships, and the ways in which doctors engage with biomedical practices. I will highlight two of these implications.

First, it is noted that these perceptions incorporate the material conditions in which they are embedded. But they are also based on implicit assumptions that go beyond the situations of daily action. Thus, in this African country, as in Europe or in North America, doctors expect care relationships to be based on people who hold full responsibility for their choices, which refers to the Euro-American model of the person and personhood. These conceptions are those with which they are socialized (Freidson, 1970; Delvecchio-Good, 1995; Agrawal, 2002). However, in the context of Burkina Faso, these conceptions produce a disqualifying knowledge about patients based on a reified culturalism, a flaw that has shaped the history of public health in South countries. An ambivalent relationship emerges between health workers and the responsibility of the sick and, more broadly, of the Burkinabe population for the vulnerabilities that weaken the medical practice.

The danger is that, in places like Burkina Faso where access to medical services remain expensive and sometimes impossible to afford, patients are sometimes situated as victims of their social condition, of economic insecurity that complicates care and delays treatment, and sometimes as responsible for disruptions in care trajectories, failure to comply with medical requests. Doctors' point out the problems linked to the consultation of traditional practitioners and the lack of interest in children in polygamous families. This is, according to them, because of the culture they choose to follow, as "children of tradition", rather than subscribing to the biomedical knowledge. This interpretation is part of a very individualistic perception of people and their choice.

Secondly, in a related way, practitioners generate a form of unmitigated otherness between themselves and their patients. This partition prevents them from seeing the vulnerabilities described as constitutive of a condition they share with their patients. Because they also undergo these vulnerabilities being unable to care as they have learned and without the possibility of resisting to produce sustainable change. This distinction between « them » and « us » then prevents the emergence of a victim figure that could be shared between caregivers and patients, and which could support common collective mobilizations. This ambivalence at the heart of conceptions of patients' responsibilities in this complicated context of care leads doctors to shift onto each individual, each family, and the pressure of structural constraints (Quesada et al., 2011) that they are nevertheless subject to in common. They are confronted with the need to provide care for some and to be cared for others, without having the means to do so and by deviating from the biomedical model. Responsibilities are performed at a collective level, involving states, national and international public policies, without making them the alpha and omega of all analyses.

Therefore, the adjustments made under duress by the caregivers in their daily work are the counterpart of a structural violence (Aijmer and Abbink, 2000; Farmer, 2004) that limits their capabilities to act. Part of the migration of African doctors to Northern countries is related to this (Blacklock et al., 2013).

From structural violence to ordinary violence

These experiences invite anthropology to discuss how to move from an analysis in terms of structural violence to an analysis in terms of ordinary violence. I suggest that this approach is appropriated to express the painful experiences of patients and caregivers in the terms of those who are caught up in them, in different ways but at the same time with common sufferings experienced in the ordinary care relationships. The WHO has also identified the difficulties linked to the functioning of health systems, such as the lack of equipment for treatment mentioned by the Burkinabe doctors, as one of the seven categories of abuse that health systems suffer in low-resource countries. This is an interesting position taken by this international organisation, as many phenomena of violence are not always identified as such for the people who experience them, as well as for those who participate in producing them (Scheper-Hughes, 1992). Moreover, at no time was the term "violence" used by either the cared-for or the carers interviewed. Should the same restriction be applied to researchers who analyse these phenomena?

Studying everyday experiences in relation to care is precisely the appropriate place for an ethnography that leads to an understanding of how social forces - which imply a macro logical reading of structural violence - articulate with micro-contexts of action to shape perceptions and interpretations of lived situations that potentially produce social suffering and daily violence. It can be hypothesised that these situations of structural poverty produce ordinary violence through the ways in which they shape carers' perceptions of the responsibilities of patients in their difficulties in delivering care as others may do in other contexts. Structural poverty therefore occurs without the caregivers, in their working environment, but it is at the same time embodied through their perceptions of the situations they experience. This is undoubtedly a contemporary expression of the social drama of work, a concept theorised by Hughes (1976), From this perspective, we can suggest that doctors take part, obviously without intention to harm, in these offences against human dignity that patients and their relatives suffer in their difficulties to obtain care, with implications directly inscribed in the bodies amputated from care and years of life. These are all traces of this ordinary violence incorporated.

These care situations and the medical work that takes place in them should undeniably be included in the phenomena that can be described as violence (Farmer, 2004; Das et al., 2001; De Verteuil, 2015). For people can speak of a toxic environment, that has become ordinary. Toxic is not understood in the usual sense of the term (exposure to environmental risks that affect health), but with regard to the impossibility for doctors to consider the part they play in these deleterious vulnerabilities and in the production of a medicine of the poor, some of the causes of which they situate in the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of patients. This does not prevent many doctors from showing empathy and concern for others, which takes several forms in their daily work. The most frequent is their participation in the costs of treatment. However, these attitudes remain occasional and do not call into question what is more collectively and daily lacking in quality and humanity in the medicine they are led to practice under constraint.

From African situations to an anthropology of care between North and South

These situations described from a West African context expand the knowledge of the variety of contemporary ways of experiencing care, both for the people being cared for and for the caregivers. These experiences, both of cure and care in low-resource countries, appear at first sight to be very different from those most commonly experienced and analysed in Western contexts. However, as long as they do not make an arbitrary distinction between the societies of the North and the South when thinking about issues of health vulnerability, the case of Burkina Faso reminds people that therapeutic realities and the vulnerabilities that run through them are jointly political, medical, ideological; they are first crystallised in everyday social relations before being related in care relationships. They are therefore produced with the cooperation, sometimes deliberate, sometimes undergone, sometimes thought and sometimes ignored, of people involved, in the South as in the North.

Bringing this process into light through ethnographic descriptions and with the participation of those among whom we came to work has a considerable implication. Because taking into consideration the multiple ways of practising medicine in the North and the South, of constructing skills and abilities, of thinking about responsibilities means taking part in populating our daily lives with other histories, other ways of inventing one's profession, and sometimes of undergoing it; other policies of life and other ethics are also exposed and confronted. Knowing this diversity is a necessary support to be able to imagine and produce new conditions of care defined as acceptable on the basis of deterritorialised and globalised references and models. It is also a condition to imagine new capacities to deviate from routine experiences in order to reduce inequalities in production and, jointly, in the use of care in the poorest countries.

Conclusion

In the tradition of medical humanities, but also of science studies, one of the functions that anthropology can fulfil with its specific tools (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Fassin, 2013) is to reveal how this eminently political register of structural poverty shapes doctors' conceptions of their profession and extends into care practices. The intention is to break down the self-evident and neutral character of these conceptions, which still seem to take the place of a shared culture within the health professions. The aim is not to judge them. On the contrary, it is to give an account of their conditions of production, of their ramifications in lived experiences, and to suggest some of their extensions, which are still not very visible. We can then identify the problems that they generate or lead to, such as the inability to think about shared vulnerabilities,

to retain a perspective that goes beyond the classic division of the status of health professionals and patients to place carers and cared-for in a symmetrical position. In these south societies, where becoming a doctor leads to a strong social ascension, this prevents assertive forms of collective mobilization and struggle for dignified conditions of care. What would this conversion of the gaze make doctors and patients commonly capable of?

In a reflection that includes questions of global health and the circulation of knowledge, this West African situation reminds them that the training of doctors follows protocols and includes unified knowledge beyond the socio-cultural contexts in which it will be mobilised, as the doctors interviewed in Burkina Faso and elsewhere point out (Wendland, 2004). However, this single biomedical model, structured around theoretical knowledge, can only produce its effects through the work of individuals who endeavour to inscribe it in care situations that are sometimes very distant, both materially and ideally, from those that have shape this model, its history and its ethical benchmarks. This makes the practice of biomedicine and its effectiveness always in tension between the collective and the singular, despite a universe of common references and knowledge.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Youths' vulnerability to social and economic risky activities in Osun State, Nigeria

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The involvements of youths in various risky activities across social and economic spheres of life are alarming and have exposed them to various risks of different magnitudes. This has invariably increased their vulnerability, taking toll on the social, economic, health and environmental lifecycle of the affected group of individuals. This study therefore investigates the vulnerability of youths to social and economic risky activities in Osun-State, Nigeria. The study was carried out in two Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state. Simple random sampling was used to select urban, peri-urban and rural communities in the two LGAs. A total number of 167 respondents were sampled. Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data for the study. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean age of the respondents was 14.5±1.35 years, with 53.9% males and 46.1% females; many (93.4%) were singles and only 6.6% were married. More than half (67.1%) of the respondents have secondary school education. Economic activities engaged in by the respondents include roadside hawking, farm hired labour and riding of motorbike for commercial purpose, and bus conductor among others. While social risky activities engaged in by the respondents include sexual acts (mostly unprotected sexual acts), gambling, smoking and alcoholism among others. Self-sponsor in school, parents' poverty situation, peer pressure and meeting personal needs were reasons given by respondents for engaging in these activities. Significant relationship existed between sex (x^2=0.254), age (r=0.265; p<0.05), family size (r=0.265; p<0.05) and level of vulnerability of the respondents, while significant difference existed in the level of vulnerability of male and female respondents (t=1.26; p<0.05). The youths should therefore be properly educated and enlightened on the danger of getting involved in risky economic and social activities and the negative impact of such activities could make on them in the long run.

Key words: Vulnerability, youths, social, economic risky activities.

INTRODUCTION

Young people represent a deep pool of talent and energy that countries can draw from to attain national developmental goals in sustainable agriculture, food security, health and nutrition (Food and Agricultural Organization, 2002, 2003). The role of youths in agricultural and community development is increasingly

becoming an important subject in the context of sustainable development. Motivating youths to contribute significantly in development process and play active roles in sustainable development set goals is now a matter of concern to many governmental and non-governmental organizations. Thus various youth entrepreneurial and skill acquisition programmes are being embarked upon across different nations of the world, Nigeria inclusive.

Youth has been defined by many individuals, groups, association and co-operate bodies based on their perception of the concept in relation to the reality and/or situation that prevail. For instance, the United Nations (UN) and World Health Organization (WHO)'s definition of youths includes people who are 15 to 24 years old. Youths are very optimistic and versatile in many activities. They are swift in reacting to issues, are malleable having unbounded energy and intrepidity. These attributes if not properly guided expose youths to various risks which could increase their vulnerability. Vulnerability starts with the notion of risk, which is characterized by a probability distribution over events (Alwang et al., 2001). The concept of vulnerability, according to Cannon (2008), needs to be understood as a set of socioeconomic conditions identifiable in relation to particular hazard risks. Therefore, vulnerability can be seen as the term that encompasses all levels of exposure in social and economic terms, to risks at different levels. According to Thywissen (2006), vulnerability is the susceptibility to being poor. It is generally perceived to be a function of two components: the effects that an event may have on humans, referred to as capacity or social vulnerability; and the risk that such an event may occur, often referred to as exposure (World Bank, 2003; Cannon, 2008). The relationship between vulnerability and poverty depends on the nature and severity of the risks being faced and on what assets are available to the household and individual for use as insurance against the risk or in coping with the shock (World Bank, 2003).

In Nigeria, this group of individuals has been found to be exposed to various economic and social risks of different magnitude factored by different events, situations and circumstances in the recent times. Consequential effects of the youths' exposure to these risks are taking toll on the social, economic, health and environmental lifecycle of the affected group of individuals, thereby plunging them into cycle of poverty in a way. The affected youths are debarred from making considerable contribution to the development process in their communities and nation as a whole. As a way of responding to the effects of the risk factors mentioned, youths are engaged in various activities and employed different strategies to either mitigate and/or cope with ensued risks that could increase their vulnerability. This study therefore investigated the vulnerability of youths to social and economic risky activities in the study area.

The general objective of the study is to examine youths' vulnerability to social and economic risky activities in Osun-State, Nigeria.

(1) Determine the personal characteristics of the respondents in the study area.
(2) Identify risky social and economic activities engaged in by the respondents in the study area.
(3) Examine reasons for engaging in social and economic risky activities in the study area.
(4) Determine the difference in the level of vulnerability of male and female respondents.

The following stated hypothesis were tested;

Ho$_1$. There is no significant relationship between the personal characteristics of the respondents and their involvement in social and economic risky activities.
Ho$_2$. There is no significant difference in the level of vulnerability of male and female respondents.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in two Local Government Areas of Osun-State, Nigeria which are Ife–East and Ife-Central Local Government areas with their headquarters located at Oke-Ogbo and Enuwa at Ile-Ife environs respectively in Osun-State, Nigeria.

Farming is a major livelihood activity of the people in the two Local Government Areas of the study; though considerable number of the people in the area also engaged in other livelihood activities, while some people in the area were absorbed as workers in formal institutions located in the study area.

Ife-east LGA is more of peri-urban and rural communities, while Ife-central LGA is an urban area with rural communities in the suburbs that serve as farm centers for natives of the LGA. Respondents for the study were youths that were residing in rural, peri-urban and urban areas. The population of the study comprised youths between the ages of 10 to 18, which can as well be regarded as the adolescent youths.

Communities that were randomly selected in each of the two LGAs cut across the urban, peri-urban and rural areas. A total number of 167 respondents were sampled, with 76 and 91 respondents from Ife-East and Ife-Central Local Government Area respectively. Primary data were collected for the study with the use of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics; Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Chi square and t-test

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age distribution of respondents

The result in Table 1 shows that 46.7% of the respondents were between the ages of 16 and 18 years, with mean age of 14.5 and standard deviation of 13.5. More than half (51.6%) of the respondents in Ife-central were 16 years and above, while 48.7% of the respondents in Ife-East were between the ages of 13 to 15 years. It could be explained that there is outflow of youths especially at their late adolescent stage (between 16 and 18 years) from rural and peri-urban communities

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by personal characteristics.

Household size	Ife-east			Ife-central Ife-central			Total
	Male	**Female**	**LGA Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**LGA Total**	**Freq (%)**
Age (years)							
10 - 12	4 (5.3)	1 (1.3)	5 (6.6)	2 (2.2)	2 (2.2)	4 (4.4)	9 (5.4)
13 - 15	16 (21.2)	21 (27.6)	37 (48.7)	15 (16.5)	17 (18.7)	32 (35.2)	69 (41.3)
16 - 18	12 (15.8)	19 (25.0)	31 (40.8)	32 (35.2)	15 (16.5)	47 (51.6)	78 (46.7)
Above 18	3 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	3 (3.9)	6 (6.6)	2 (2.2)	8 (8.8)	11 (6.6)
Total	35 (46.1)	41 (53.6)	76 (100.0)	55 (60.4)	36 (39.6)	91 (100.0)	167 (100.0)
Sex							
Male	-	-	35 (46.1)	-	-	55 (60.4)	90 (53.9)
Female	-	-	41 (53.9)	-	-	36 (39.6)	77 (46.1)
Total	-	-	76 (100.0)	-	-	91 (100.0)	167 (100.0)
Marital status							
Single	33 (43.4)	35 (46.1)	68 (89.5)	55 (60.4)	33 (36.3)	88 (96.7)	156 (93.4)
Married	2 (2.6)	6 (7.8)	8 (10.5)	0 (0.0)	3 (3.3)	3 (3.3)	11 (6.6)
Educational attainment							
Primary school	4 (5.3)	14 (18.4)	18 (23.7)	6 (6.6)	8 (8.8)	14 (15.4)	32 (19.2)
Secondary school	25 (32.9)	21 (27.6)	46 (60.5)	42 (46.2)	24 (26.4)	66 (72.5)	112 (67.1)
Technical school	2 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.6)	3 (3.3)	1 (1.1)	4 (4.4)	6 (3.6)
Vocational training	4 (5.3)	6 (7.8)	10 (13.2)	4 (4.4)	3 (3.3)	7 (7.7)	17 (10.1)

to urban areas. The reason for this could be as a result of lack of social amenities that could make life more interesting in the rural areas, while opportunities in terms of economic and social activities could be the reason for the movement of late adolescent from rural to urban areas. As asserted by Yohanna (2014) lack of social infrastructural facilities and other social and economic opportunities in rural communities among others are factors for rural-urban migration of youth.

Sex distribution of respondents

The result in Table 1 shows that 53.9% of the respondents in the two LGAs were males, while 46.1% were females. Meanwhile, there are more female respondents (53.9%) in Ife-east LGA than the male respondents (46.1%). Conversely, larger proportion (60.4%) of the respondents in Ife-central was male as compared to 39.6% that were female. The obvious gender disparity between the two LGAs confirms the movement of male youth especially from rural and peri-urban areas to urban centres where they engaged in various social, economic and educational activities compared to their female counterparts. The reason for less migration of rural female youths in relative to their male counterparts could probably be as a result of early marriage, teenage pregnancy and/or educational disadvantage on the part of the female youths. On the

other hand, male youths were said to be vulnerable to being used as warriors during crises such as communal conflict by mobilizing them from rural to urban areas. This could invariably precipitate many social vices among the youths, which expose them to various risks that could have long term negative consequences on their lives. Corroborating this finding, Gruber (2001) asserts that youths engaging in risky behaviors have important implications for both their wellbeing and their life prospects.

Marital status of respondents

As shown in Table 1, majority (93.4%) of the respondents in the two LGAs were singles, while only 6.6% indicated that they were married. In Ife-east LGA and Ife-central, 10.8 and 3.3% of the respondents were married. Meanwhile, among the respondents that were single were those that have had a child through unwanted pregnancy. Reason for relative high percentage of married youth in Ife-east as compared to that of Ife-central could be as a result of poverty situation in the rural areas, where some parents could not afford to send their children to secondary school after their primary school education. This invariably makes such youths especially the females prone to early marriage or unwanted pregnancy. It was found that in a situation

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to household size.

Household size	Ife-east			Ife-central			Total
	Male	Female	LGA total	Male	Female	LGA Total	Freq (%)
1 - 4	6 (7.8)	4 (5.3)	10 (13.2)	5 (5.5)	7 (7.7)	12 (13.2)	22 (13.2)
5 - 8	7 (9.2)	6 (7.8)	13 (17.1)	24 (26.4)	15 (16.2)	39 (42.8)	52 (31.1)
9 - 12	15 (19.7)	21 (27.6)	36 (47.4)	16 (17.6)	8 (8.8)	24 (26.4)	60 (35.9)
13 -16	6 (7.7)	8 (10.5)	14 (18.4)	7 (7.7)	5 (5.5)	12 (13.2)	26 (15.6)
Above 16	1 (1.3)	2 (2.6)	3 (3.9)	3 (3.3)	1 (1.1)	4 (4.4)	7 (4.2)
Total	35 (46.1)	41 (53.9)	76 (100.0)	55 (60.4)	36 (39.6)	91 (100.0)	167 (100.0)

whereby a male youth impregnates another female youth in a community, the concerned male youth can still migrate to urban centers to either engage in livelihood activities or to pursue educational career; while the female youth in question remains in the rural area to nurse her baby. This occurrence in most cases could hinder the education pursuit of youths most especially in rural areas.

Educational attainment of respondents

The findings in Table 1 show that majority (67.1%) of the total respondents have secondary school education. Among this category of respondents were those that have finished secondary school education and those that were still in secondary school as at the time of the study. This was reflected in the two LGAs; Ife-east and Ife-central LGAs, where majority (60.5%) and 72.5% of the respondents have secondary school education respectively. However, in Ife-east LGA 23.7% of the respondents were at primary school level compared to 15.4% in Ife-central. This implies that there were more adolescent youths at primary school level in rural/peri-urban communities than what is obtainable in urban areas. It could further be explained that adolescent youths attain higher education standard earlier in urban areas than in rural/peri-urban areas. Some factors that could be responsible for this disparity include youths' (adolescent) involvement in farming activities which compete with their full concentration on educational pursuit and lack of adequate educational and infrastructural facilities in the rural areas.

Respondents' household size

More than half (51.5%) of the respondents across the two LGAs have household size of between 9 and 16 members are shown in Table 2. In Ife-east larger (65.8%) proportion of respondents have between 9 and 16 household members, while in Ife-central only 39.6% have between 9 and 16 household members. A larger proportion (42.8%) of respondents in Ife-central have between 5 and 8 household size. The implication of this is that there were more children per household in

rural/peri-urban areas than it was found in urban areas. The large household size in rural areas serves as sources of family labour in carrying out farming activities; however this could have implication in the ability of parents to afford quality education for their children. As asserted by Olawuyi and Adetunji (2013), poverty is high among rural households with relatively large household size and they are more likely to be poorer than households with small size, resulting in the inability of such household to give quality education to their children.

Economic activities engaged in by respondents

The result in Table 3 shows the economic activities of the respondents. The distribution of respondents according to economic activities engaged in from both LGAs revealed that 35.3, 19.6 and 18.0% of the respondents engaged in roadside hawking, farm hired labour and ridding of motorbike for commercial purpose respectively. Other activities engaged in by respondents include; restaurant maid/cook (11.4%), bus conductor (9.6%), factory worker/labour (13.8), picking of materials at refuse dump for sale (5.4%) and street begging (4.8%) which is associated with filling of pot holes on the road with the aim of collecting money from motorist. The distribution, however, does not follow the same trend in the two LGAs. The disparities can be linked to the differences in the level of urbanization of the study areas in which some of the activities are more prevalent in urban areas than rural areas. For instance, as shown in Table 3, in Ife-east LGA which is a more of rural and peri-urban in nature 6.6 and 19.7% of the respondents are bus conductors and roadside hawkers respectively; while in Ife-central LGA 12.1 and 59.3% are bus conductor and roadside hawkers respectively. This contrast is reflected in other activities as well. The result also revealed that some economic activities are gender specific. Bus conductor and riding of motorbike for commercial purpose is peculiar to male respondents, while larger proportion of female respondents were found to engage in restaurant work and street hawking than their male counterparts. As asserted by Ojo and Raji (2013) female youths are more involved in street hawking than male youths. Meanwhile, considering the age range of the respondents, engaging in such activities

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to economic activities engaged in.

Activities	Ife-east			Ife-central			Total
	Male	Female	LGA Total	Male	Female	LGA Total	
Bus Conductor	5 (6.6)	0 (0.0)	5 (6.6)	11(12.1)	0 (0.0)	11 (12.1)	16 (9.6)
Roadside hawking	6 (7.8)	9 (11.8)	15 (19.7)	18 (19.8)	26 (28.6)	44 (59.3)	59 (35.3)
Farm hired labour	17 (22.4)	6 (7.9)	23 (30.3)	8 (8.8)	2 (2.2)	10 (11.0)	33(19.8)
Factory worker/labour	7 (9.2)	1 (1.3)	8 (10.5)	12(13.2)	3 (3.3)	15 (16.5)	23 (13.8)
Riding motorbike for commercial	10(13.2)	0 (0.0)	10 (13.2)	20(22.0)	0 (0.0)	20 (22.0)	30 (18.0)
Working in restaurant as maid/cook	0 (0.0)	1 (1.3)	1 (1.3)	3 (3.3)	15 (16.2)	18 (19.8)	19 (11.4)
Street begging	-	-	-	6 (6.6)	2 (2.2)	8 (8.8)	8 (4.8)
Picking metals/plastic/cans at refuse dump for money	2(2.6)	0 (0.0)	2(2.6)	6(6.6)	1 (1.1)	7 (7.7)	9 (5.4)

*Multiple Responses.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to reasons for engaging in economic activities.

Reason for engaging economic activities	Ife-east			Ife-central			Total
	Male	Female	LGA Total	Male	Female	LGA Total	
To sponsor my education	6 (7.9)	2 (2.6)	8 (10.5)	17 (18.7)	10 (11.0)	27 (28.7)	35 (21.0)
To meet my personal needs	22 (28.9)	15 (19.7)	37 (48.7)	9 (9.9)	8 (8.8)	17 (18.7)	54 (32.3)
No body to help me	3 (3.9)	2 (2.6)	5 (6.6)	9 (9.9)	6 (6.6)	15 (16.5)	20 (12.0)
My parents are poor	20 (26.3)	14 (18.4)	34 (44.7)	13 (14.3)	17 (18.7)	25 (27.5)	59 (35.3)
To assist my parents in meeting their financial responsibility at home	7 (9.2)	13 (17.1)	20 (26.2)	15 (19.5)	18 (19.8)	33 (36.3)	53 (31.7)
Peer pressure/influence	4 (5.3)	1 (1.3)	5 (6.6)	9 (9.9)	5 (5.5)	14 (15.4)	19 (11.4

*Multiple Responses.

can be regarded as an illegitimate act, which World Bank (2003) considered as child labour. Also, engaging in such economic activities could be considered as risky activities with respect to the age of the group of people carrying out such activities. Invariably, the youths of this age grade could be exposed to various forms of risks such as sexual harassment, especially the females that are engaging in street hawking; while males could be exposed to social vices such as smoking, alcoholism and drug addicts among others

through peer influence. It was found that many of the respondents got involved in the economic activities virtually on daily basis. This implies that the respondents that are attending schools have little or no time for their studies which could result in such youths abandoning their studies due to lack of concentration on academic activities. Also, the possibility of the youths dropping out of school due to attraction from the income earned from such economic activities could be high which in the long run could result in vicious circle of

illiteracy and poverty among people in the area. Nishara (2003) opined that low literacy level is one of the indicators of household vulnerability index and poverty (Table 4).

Respondents' reason for engaging in the risky economic activities

As indicated by 35.3, 32.3 and 31.7% respondent across the two LGAs, parents' poverty situation,

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to social activities engaged in.

Activities	Ife-east			Ife-central			Total
	Male	Female	LGA Total	Male	Female	LGA Total	
Attending parties (especially night parties)	8 (10.5)	2 (2.6)	10 (13.2)	27 (29.7)	9 (9.9)	36 (39.6)	46 (27.5)
Member of social groups	9 (11.8)	4 (5.3)	13 (17.1)	17 (18.7)	10 (11.0)	27 (29.7)	40 (24.0)
Alcoholism (drinking of alcohol)	14 (18.4)	0 (0.0)	14 (18.4)	19 (20.9)	3 (3.3)	22 (24.2)	36 (21.6)
Smoking of cigarette and marijuana use	7 (9.2)	0 (0.0)	7 (9.2)	18 (19.7)	0 (0.0)	18 (19.7)	25 (15.0)
Member of youth gangs (such as secret groups/cultism)	2 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.6)	11 (12.1)	1 (1.1)	12 (13.2)	14 (8.4)
Involved in sexual acts	12 (15.8)	18 (23.7)	30 (39.5)	14 (15.4)	24 (26.4)	38 (41.8)	68 (40.7)
Gambling/Betting	4 (5.3)	0 (0.0)	4 (5.3)	22 (24.2)	1 (1.1)	23 (25.3)	27 (16.2)

*Multiple Responses.

meeting personal needs and assisting parents in meeting financial responsibilities were among the reasons why respondents engaged in the risky economic activities respectively. In Ife-east the reasons behind the involvement of relatively large proportion of the respondents (48.7 and 44.7%) in such economic activities were among others, meeting personal needs and poverty situation of their parents respectively. In Ife-central as indicated by 36.3 and 28.7% of the respondents, they ventured into the economic activities to assist their parents to meet financial responsibilities and for self-sponsorship in education pursuit respectively. Some of the reasons for engaging in the economic activities could be said to be considered reasonable, but the consequential effects on the youths are matters of concern with respect to the age of the respondents.

Risky social activities engaged in by respondents

The result in Table 5 shows the involvement of the respondents in some social risky activities in the study area. Across the two LGAs, 40.7% of the respondents engaged in sexual acts, while 27.5,

24.0 and 21.6% engage in attending parties, participate in community social groups activities and alcoholism respectively. In Ife-east and Ife-central, a larger proportion of the respondents engage in risky sexual acts as indicated by 39.5 and 41.7% of the respondents, respectively. Female respondents were found to be involved in sexual acts than their male counterparts, which invariably make them more vulnerable to risks associated to sexual acts. Alcoholism which is more prevalent among male respondents is also a practice among the youths in the study area as indicated by 18.4 and 24.2% in Ife-east and Ife-central respectively. Involvement in these social practices invariably exposes youths to various risks that could increase their vulnerability. Youths' sexual behaviour increases the likelihood of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, while being involved in smoking and drinking of alcohol could increase their risk of having diseases related to such behaviours. These negative consequences could have serious implications on the physical, social and psychological health and well-being of youths as corroborated by Abebe and Fekadu (2000). According to Muloiwa (2016), being a member of social groups where youthful exuberant behaviours

are not under control could increase youths' involvement in risky behaviours, which invariably increase their vulnerability.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Test of relationship between the personal characteristic of respondents and their vulnerability in the study area.

The result of the test of relationship between the respondents' personal characteristics and level of vulnerability in Tables 6 and 7 shows that significant relationship exists between sex (x^2=0.254), age (r = 0.265; p<0.05), family size (r= 0.265; p<0.05) and level of vulnerability of the respondents, while educational attainment ($x^2 = 3.86; p < 0.05$) has no relationship with the level of vulnerability of respondents. This implies that sex, age and family size of respondents inform their level of involvement in the risky economic and social activities. For example, the likelihood of male's involvement in most of the economic activities and some of the social activities could be high compared to that of the female respondents. This could probably have

Table 6. Chi-square test of relationship between selected personal characteristics and level of vulnerability.

Personal characteristics	df	χ^2	p-value	Decision
Sex	1	0.254	0.007	Significant
Educational attainment	3	3.86	0.277	Not significant

Table 7. PPMC Chi-square test of relationship between selected personal characteristics and level of vulnerability.

Personal characteristics	r-value	p-value	Decision
Age	0.268	0.001	Significant
Family size	0.234	0.017	Significant

Table 8. t-test analysis of the difference in the vulnerability of male and female respondents.

Sex	Number	Df	Std error	Mean difference	t	P-value	Decision
Male vulnerability	90	16.3	53.35	67.37	1.20	0.009	Significant
Female vulnerability	77	-	53.31	-	-	-	-

effects on the level of vulnerability of male and female youths in the study area. As stated by Stephenson (2009), educational attainment is one of the factors that influence youths' sexual risky behaviour

Hypothesis 2

Analysis of the difference in the vulnerability of male and female respondents.

The result of the analysis shows that there is significant difference in the level of vulnerability of male and female respondents (t = 1.26; p<0.05). This implies that the vulnerability of male and female respondents to the risks associated with the risky economic and social activities is different. One of the major factors that could be responsible for the disparity in the level of vulnerability of male and female respondents is the level of involvement of the male and female respondents in the risky activities. Also, this may be due to the fact that some of the strategies employed by the respondents to manage the ensued risks were gender inclined. Corroborating this finding, Stephenson (2009) asserts that there is difference in the prevalence of male and female youths in risky behaviour such as risky sexual acts due to some socio-economic factors like level of education, cultural and ethnic background among others (Table 8).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents in the study area comprise male and female youths of between 10 and 18 years old, many of which are in secondary schools and mostly single with an average household size of between 9 and 12. Risky economic activities engaged in by respondents in the study area include roadside hawking, farm hired labour and ridding of motorbike for commercial purpose, while alcoholism, unprotected sexual acts and gambling were among the risky social activities engaged in by the respondents. Engaging in these activities invariably exposes the respondents to various risks which consequently increase their vulnerability. Among the reasons for engaging in the social and economic risky activities include inability of parents to meet the needs of their children due to the poverty situation of the parents, self-sponsor of education pursuit, desire to meet personal needs and peer pressure influence among others. Involvement of male and female youths in the social and economic risky activities has caused some of the youths to abandon their primary and secondary school education; this invariably could have negative implications in their ability to cope with future challenges.

It is therefore recommended that youths should be properly educated and enlightened on the danger of getting involved in risky economic and social activities, which invariably could have long term negative effects in their life. Profitable entrepreneurial programme targeted at youths especially of 15 and 18 age bracket should be developed and implemented for both rural and urban youths in addition to the existing formal educational structures. This will enable the youths to develop themselves in profitable activities that would have positive impacts on their lives and make meaningful contribution to their community.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Review

Impact of culture on economic development and resistance of marginalized people

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Understanding the factors responsible for low socio-economic condition and political status of a marginalized community is imperative to comprehend their culture of resistance. The major focus of this study was to become aware of the resistance of marginalized communities in their cultural milieu. A review of literature is made to establish the fact that cultural resistance plays an important role in a community towards development and progress. The author studies how culture impacts among marginalized people in various communities affects the growth of economic development both positively as well as negatively. The findings are applied to the marginalized communities (Dalits and Tribals) in India which is not part of this paper. Yet, the paper also reveals the cultural resistance of the Savara tribe in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Key words: Culture, resistance, development, culture of poverty, culture of silence

INTRODUCTION

Anthropologists and sociologists perceive the development, progress and growth of a human community in an evolutionary point of view. From savagery to civilization, the human community has passed through various stages of progress. The growth of a community is assessed within a particular time and space. History evolves and within the history the human community also evolves. Change is brought about in response to the environmental conditions during the particular period of time in a particular environment. Economic development happens when there is interaction between human beings and nature. Resistance to change is a part and parcel of human interaction in a prevailing environmental condition within their culture. Hence, an attempt is made to study the impact of culture on economic development of people and resistance of marginalized people in particular.

Environmental impact on economic development

According to Thomas Malthus (2008), population growth in the world doomed people to a declining standard of living. He believed that the total wealth available on this earth is constant. Malthus perceived that land and the available natural resources are strictly limited. As the population increases, certainly in future, most of the world's population will engage themselves in fighting over the available limited natural resources. If we do not take care of the sustainability of nature now, the nature also will not take care of us in future. Efforts to safeguard the

sustainability of the nature with all its richness at present only will ensure the sustainable livelihood of the humanity in future. Since human culture and nature are interlinked, we cannot avoid the study of nature vis-a-vis its impact on human culture when we deal with the study of change and development of marginalized community in their environment.

Pope Francis writes in his encyclical *Laudato Si,* "the human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together: we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation" (Francis, 2015).

'Social capital' impact on economic development

Guiso et al. (2006) identified as to which values are more important when economic development faced hazard. Like Banfield (1958), he proposed a cultural explanation for underdevelopment. Banfield considered the slow economic growth in southern Italy because the people had narrow self-interest. They could not trust anyone outside their family. Similarly, Robert (2000a, b) also observed that certain areas in Italy which enjoyed free city states (Civic institutions) centuries earlier had much better track record regarding development than those places in southern Italy which did not have such civic institutions. Those civic institutions enhanced a 'sense of trust' among people. People were prepared to invest in social capital, where these civic institutions were effective. Over the years people developed mutual trust with one another beyond their own extended family. Social capital is defined as "the institutions, relationships, attitudes, and values govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development" (Grootaert and Van Bastelaer, 2002). Efforts to strengthen the social capital among the marginalized communities wherever they are will certainly enable them to prosper gradually.

Cultural factors impact on economic development

David (1999) is of the opinion that the cultural factors play very important role in the progress of national economies more than any other factors. He suggests that human values such as thrift, hard work, tenacity, honesty and tolerance in a community make all the differences. Talking about the impact of culture on economic development Tabellini (2010) proposed a set of four values namely trust in one another, a strong belief in individual effort, generalized morality and autonomy. He concluded that in all those regions in Europe where these four cultural values were so strong and visible, there the yearly economic growth and per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) were high. Such values may not be fully

present in marginalized communities especially in India. This is because the marginalized communities in India are economically impoverished, socially discriminated, politically subdued and culturally looked down upon by others.

By giving this example Guido Tabellini emphasizes that the following attitudes and values held by people in Micronesia are paramount for any community which is on the road to growth and development.

Trust in one another

This may differ in societies depending on how broad and concise the supra-familial institutions are present there. In the islands of Pohnpei, Yap and Palau in the Micronesian country in Western Pacific ocean, socio-political institutions were relatively well developed in ancient times. Whereas such socio-political institutions were absent in Atolls of the central Carolines or Chuuk which were smaller, un-stratified societies. There, they may not have developed trust in broader institutions.

Strong belief in individual effort

People living in Island societies have never been identified for their individualism rather they had collectivism in all their dealings. They had communal identity and individuals were known for their subordination to group interests. Where there is collective consciousness leading to collective effort and performance by the people there actual growth and development were found.

Generalized morality

They had ethical standards common to all. This may vary from each place. This standard generalized morality was a specific contribution of Christianity in every continent. Sometimes, believing God with generalized morality brings people together for a common cause. The Biblical understanding of "*Thorah*" the sacred book of the Israelite community brought together the twelve tribes of the Jewish community and gave them a generalized morality.

Autonomy

Autonomy was not a characteristic of an island society. In fact, island societies are known for conformity. It is very much needed as a strategy to survive in a small community which is isolated from the rest. In fact, like the rest of the Pacific, Micronesia did not have such cultural

values and attitudes that are more conducive in promoting economic development.

Tabellini further says that at present in Micronesia, money is considered as a means to gain more meaningful ends than increasing one's financial wealth. The island culture people do not multiply their money as it is done in any market oriented economy. Theirs is subsistent economy. Their economic considerations are very much limited by various other considerations than hoarding money. They strive for their own personal advantages and prefer more of their own security, status and solidarity.

The Islanders land holding provides more security, which is considered as the most valuable currency of wealth. Selling their own land for a business venture or for any other purpose will trap them into a very serious problem. They have to preserve their land at all cost. This same condition applies well to any marginalized community and especially the tribal community in India. People in tribal community are very much closely associated with land and other natural resources. Devoid of land and other natural resources they have no existence further.

Preserving status is a strong motivational factor for the Islanders. They prefer even to give up a business opportunity for the sake of giving contribution for Church's activities or community events such as social gatherings and religious celebrations. This gives them prestige or a higher position or recognition in such society. To maintain their status they will go to any extent to spend lavishly. Similarly preserving status is very important in any Indian tribal or marginalized society. The elders enjoy such status and power in their village communities.

Solidarity or a sense of belonging to the community is very important for any marginalized community in India like that of the Micronecia islanders. At times, they are ready even to forego a portion of one's earnings to a relative for the sake of strengthening the family bond existing between them. Even among the tribal communities in India people find their identity and strength in their solidarity and togetherness.

According to Amy (2004) and Gregory Clark (2009), we cannot simply conclude that the modern technology alone can boost the economy and elevate the living standard of the people. The formation of people's mindset with values and habits are even more essential for any community on its way to development, growth and progress.

Culture can have hidden effects in business, agriculture, industry, trade and development in a country. As we all know today, China has emerged now as a major power hub in the world; but it was not during the middle-ages. The economic condition of China during middle ages remained stagnated and went backwards. Pride and a feeling of self-sufficiency that led to closing of China's borders and the country remained insulated for many years. Adam (1776) observed that a country which neglected or despised foreign commerce cannot transact the same quantity of business which it might do with different laws and institutions.

Sometimes in the past, economists considered that sufficient capital and large investments through national savings are the ones that would improve the economic growth in a country. Later on, they have understood that only stable political and economic institutions would ensure economic growth. Institutions are needed yet development of right attitudes and values among people are more urgent and necessary. In this context, when we deal with economic development of the poor and the marginalized community, we cannot but study about the culture of poverty reflected in their lives.

Impact of 'culture of poverty' on economic development

The 'Culture of Poverty' speaks about the idea of a cycle of poverty. It explains why poverty exists despite introducing number of anti-poverty programs. The American anthropologist Oscar Lewis (1961) coined this concept "Culture of Poverty" by doing his ethnographic studies of small Mexican communities. He defined 'Culture of Poverty' as a set of norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors that are unique and basically not the same of the mainstream middle class people. He perceived that this culture of poverty is transmitted from one generation to another and perpetuated the condition of misery despite all changing circumstances. A low self-image, inferiority complex, total dependency, a sense of resignation, belief in fatalism and lack of future vision and many other human characteristics constitute culture of poverty. These characteristics do not allow the people to move forward. This set of characteristics, values, attitudes and behaviors are adopted generation after generation in reaction to the prevailing conditions that deter the poor to be incorporated into the mainstream society. The term 'Culture of Poverty' was primarily applicable in Third World and developing countries. It suggests that almost 20% of poor people are trapped in this cycle of self-perpetuating behavior or character that caused perpetual poverty.

In the 1960s in the United States, the favor enjoyed by the Blacks was very much related to the disorientation of their lives. The "Culture of Poverty" was very conspicuous among Black families as it was noticed in the disorganization of family set-up, increase in the number of illegitimate children and number of single unwed mothers and their complete dependency on social assistance etc. It was the total disorganization of the families and community that was considered responsible for poverty. However, the real problems encountered by Blacks were denial of access to opportunities for them to

be integrated into the mainstream society. A fact that cannot be denied or fully digested is that the poor Blacks lived a life of perennial insecurity, victimized by economic transition and discrimination by the whites. The situation of oppression and discrimination by the whites were the main cause for their perpetual abject poverty. They were victims of a context where they were denied of developing values convergent with those of the rest of the population in the United States (Clark, 2009). A similar situation exists in India too in the context of prevailing 'Caste System' and 'Patriarchy'. The hierarchy of caste system suppresses and alienates a section of poor people (Dalits and *Adivasis*) and keeps them permanently as victims of oppression by the people belong to dominant caste (Selvin, 2020).

In course of time in the US the 'Culture of Poverty' was understood as the 'Culture of Welfare' in as much as the latter was thoroughly criticized. Having lost their sense of social responsibility, the poor Blacks demanded welfare as their due. Social security and welfare measures to the poor Blacks encouraged them not to work and earn their living. They lavishly spent money on drugs and sex.

Daniel (1965), a renowned Sociologist, was in favor of Oscar Lewis. He made a comprehensive study on Black families in New York City and presented a report known as Moynihan Report in 1965. Many youth had children outside marriage. Family values became absurd and social norms were relegated. He stated that the primary reason for them not able to come out of the poverty trap is certain not-so-good values they held close to their hearts (Daniel, 1965).

Poverty has become systemic because it is deeply rooted in economic disparity, party politics, gender discrimination and social oppression. Some people languish in poverty by debt or chronic illness or lack of job opportunities. However, many others continue to live in a seemingly endless cycle of poverty generation after generations. The poor have fewer opportunities to climb on the socio-economic ladder. Their resources are limited and source of income is very minimal which they get through human labor.

Poverty was perceived as the absence (or loss) of mainstream values (family values and the work ethic). Those people purposefully excluded themselves from hard work. They become lazy and they are totally dependent on welfare measures which included subsidies and freebies extended to the poor. They have low level of hope and aspirations. Poverty has become part and parcel of their culture. Anyone who recognized poverty with culture of people and blamed the victims of poverty is likely to dismiss any social policy that is an absolute necessity to end the cycle of poverty and prove the living standard of the poor marginalized people.

It is very difficult to determine any particular behavior, attitude, characteristic and value as specific to the poor marginalized people. It is even more difficult for progressive intellectuals to accept the conclusion that poverty is culture specific and ignoring the real fact that it is due to lack of opportunities. If this understanding holds truth, then, even an improvement in the institutional and organizational set up happens, the situation of the poor marginalized people will not be improved. No doubt, culture of poverty leads them to fatalism. At the same time, anti-poor policies of the government and willful neglect to improve the conditions of the poor marginalized people cannot be ignored by justifying the culture of poverty.

Impact of case poverty and insular poverty on economic development

John (1958), an economist made in-depth study on poverty. He found the reason for poverty being transmitted from one generation to next. He classified poverty under two types, namely 'Case poverty' and 'insular poverty'. He considers 'Case Poverty' as some people face discrimination or certain limitations in their family situation, like a family member becoming alcohol and drug addict or prone to gambling which eventually led the family to poverty. This type of poverty is unique to some families and may not be the case considering the whole community. Here poverty is not a collective phenomenon. Whereas, according to Kenneth (1958), 'insular poverty' is a type of poverty in which the whole community is poor, unproductive and deprived of their basic rights. If we look at the people living in slums of Mumbai where the whole group is below the poverty line, we can understand this fact. In India, due to caste practices and gender bias, a vast section of people are discriminated because of their Dalit, tribal and gender identity. They are totally denied of work opportunities in par with the other members of the dominant caste community.

Considering the specific culture of the poor marginalized people, David et al. (2010) says that it is a defense mechanism against the domination being imposed on them. The poor marginalized group actively participates in the production of its own insularity with all the counter-productive effects of such an attitude of resisting.

Resistance to development has to be studied from culture perspective. There are some ethnic groups that do so well in business, even though these groups are minorities in other cultures. The Chinese in Philippines, who are less than two percent of the total population, hold 60% of the nation's private economy in their hands (Amy, 2004). It is very surprising to know that the four popular airlines, many hotels, shopping malls and almost all the banks are owned by these Chinese minorities in Philippines. The Chinese ethnic minorities have not only made their mark in the Philippines but also they dominate

business in many other parts of Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Thailand, Burma and Malaysia (Amy, 2004).

Chinese are known for achieving success with their hard and consistent work culture. As Amy (2004) points out, where ever we see, we find examples of "dominant minorities" who have remarkable ability to compete with others. She observed that the Croats enjoyed a much higher standard of living than the majority Serbs in Yugoslavia. Similarly in South America, she observed that the European descent succeeded overtaking darker-skinned compatriots in grabbing the economic power. Here in India, we find the Marwari community even though small in number has monopolized the trade and commerce in all the southern states of India.

Modern business, trade and many other economic and developmental activities require a constellation of cultural values suited for our daily life. Yet, no one has identified such values with precision and no one has come out with a strategy for inculcating such values among the people especially among the poor marginalized ones. It is highly necessary not to be insensitive to certain cultural aspects, especially the 'resistance' that is deeply rooted in their cultural milieu. Through participant observation, it is possible to understand the signs of resistance in the culture of the marginalized people in a community.

Impact of religious sentiments on economic development

Adam (1776) known as the founder of modern economics, said that every person, motivated by his/her pursuit of own interests, contributes to the public interest in a system that is self-regulating. Adam Smith recognized that the "pursuit of personal interests" is very important than just acquiring more and more money. Hence, through his well-known "Theory of Moral Sentiments", he speaks about what we would call 'cultural values'. In the same wave length, John (1858) also made the point that cultural constraints (cultural values) on persons have strong impact on economy than the pursuit of monetary gain that seems to lead towards development.

Max Weber (1864-1920) the German social scientist gave more specific insights into how cultural and religious values can impact on economic output. He was right in saying how social attitudes and religious values in a community determine what economies will succeed and which will fail. He emphasized the reformation teachings of the protestant work ethic, which supported the pursuit of wealth as a duty. This sense of duty enabled people to strive for maximum economic gain. Protestants understood that salvation is 'a gift of God'. They viewed wealth and prosperity as blessings from God. Hence, they emphasized hard work with duty bound. It was a fact; throughout Europe the Protestants especially in Germany and Great Britain were more productive than

the Catholics in Ireland, Spain, Portugal and Italy in the past (Amy, 2004).

In the Indian context considering economic prosperity, religious sentiments also play a very important role. Economic prosperity in terms of wealth, knowledge and strength is very much connected to people's profound belief in the blessings of Goddess *Lakshmi*, Goddess *Sarasvati* and Goddess *Parvati*. They offer a special prayer (*pooj*) on tools and implements used by the workers both in the agriculture industrial sectors. This day is celebrated as *Ayuda pooja* in many parts of India to pay homage to work and labor force. They give thanks to gods and goddesses for all the blessings received.

In the process of enhancing the economic prosperity of the people, resistance to new proposals are bound to arise on account of differences in culture, values and belief system. The different environmental conditions also influence people's response to change, growth and development. Though the conditions are more favorable, yet some people do resist and we need to understand their resistance from the perspective of their culture.

RESISTANCE THEORY

Scott (1985) introduced this elusive concept of "Resistant Theory" in 1985. This concept is applicable in marginalized, subaltern, feminist, cultural, peasant and post-structural studies. Resistance is an oppositional act. Like all acts. Resistance is situated in certain time, space and relations. It deals with different types of actors, techniques and discourses. Peasants, serfs, untouchables, slaves, dalits, tribal, labourers, and prisoners are not free to speak their minds in the presence of power. These subordinate groups create a secret discourse that represents a critique of power spoken behind the backs of the dominant. At the same time, the powerful also develop a private dialogue about practices and goals of their rule that cannot be openly avowed (Scott, 2008). Everyday resistance not only undermines power acted upon them but also becomes an impediment to realize one's own power within.

'Overt rebellions' are actually rather uncommon among the peasant. They do not occur normally, and often do not have much impact. Rather than seeing 'resistance as organization', Scott looks at less visible. He finds these particularly among rural people who are physically dispersed and less politically organized than urban populations (Scott, 1985). With his idea of 'transcripts', Scott recognizes that the dominant as well as the weak are often caught within the same web of socialized roles and behavior often expressed without any explicit or conscious intent (Scott, 1992).

He says, "most of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in the overt collective defiance of power holders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar

opposites" (Scott, 1985, p.136). There is a connection between resistance and the idea of hidden and invisible power. Just as hidden forms of power can be used by the powerful to keep certain issues and voices off of the agenda, similarly the powerless groups can employ strategies of resistance which 'hide' their actions from the powerful. In reality everyday resistance is integrated into their social life. Resistance is a recurrent social phenomenon that has often been ignored, feared, spiritualized, demonized or romanticized. It could be merely for their survival amidst domination, discrimination and subjugation.

Reasons for resistance

The reasons for resistance among the poor marginalized communities often are hidden. The more we force things, the more people resist. Only by entering into their culture (that shaped their minds), one can understand the reasons for resistance. A real *emic* approach is needed to understand the resistance of the poor marginalized people when changes are introduced towards development. The following aspects are culled out by the in-depth study carried out among the poor marginalized community in India (Selvin, 2020), which could be considered as possible reasons for their resistance.

Misconception towards the process of change

We can expect resistance from people if they fail to understand the need for change or not clear about such need. People strongly believe that the present way of doing things works well. Ambiguous language and inappropriate manner of communication might as well create misunderstanding and ambiguity. As a result, they lack clarity of vision and carried away by misconception of ideas towards the process of change (Selvin, 2020).

World view and uncertainty

"Fear of the unknown" is one of the most common reasons for resistance. People can take bold and active steps to face the unknown if only they sincerely believe and feel deeply the urgent need for change. They must realize that risk of moving forward in a new change direction is lesser than standing still (Selvin, 2020). Future promises will not help, but presently one has to walk his/her talk. If our world view is camouflaged by uncertainty, then there is no hope in every initiative we take towards change, development, progress and growth.

Lack of competence

Infused by fear, people normally do not accept their lack of competence. Hence, periodical training will enable them to discover their hidden potentials and capabilities. They also should know the process of change. Some people would not be able to make the needed change even after undergoing a long training, because, their self-assessment is very low. There is a tendency to pass the bug on others. It is very important to identify the ones who are capable of performing well and they have to be encouraged in a community. Identifying the capacities, recognizing the talents and affirming the uniqueness of the poor marginalized people are absolute necessities when they are led on their way to progress.

Connected to traditions

Doing things in a new way, even though it seems very rational, sometimes people will resist, because they are emotionally connected to the old ways. To detach them from their emotional attachment to their old ways is really a herculean task. Young people who are flexible to take up leadership role should move forward in the new direction and the elders should play an advisory role in a community. The principle of subsidiary has to be respected by the elders of the community when they create space for the youth to play their rightful role in community development. Freedom of thought and expression has to be fully utilized in order to reap maximum output.

Lack of trust in others

If people do not trust the one who introduces change and the way to do it, then their cooperation in all change initiatives is very minimal. Trust in oneself as well as trust in others is significant for a steady and gradual growth. Sometimes, people do not trust the one who introduces change. Only by developing familiarity with the people one can win over their trust gradually. Building mutual trust among people is very essential for a change leader to be effective and to be successful. Lack of trust often leads to resistance.

Perceiving change as just momentary

If people perceive that the change initiative is just a momentary and it will not last long or if they believe the change will fail, then they show less interest to cooperate with the change proposal. Moreover, if they feel that the change is contradictory or inconsistent to their values, they are likely to show resistance. Creating a long term vision for the future is essential on the road to change and development. A hope filled vision of the future will certainly minimize the resistance of the people.

Not being consulted

In the process of any change initiative people would like to know what's going on. They like to be consulted and want to share their views and opinions in the process. If people are prevented from participation and not sufficiently consulted, then their resistance will grow much stronger day after day. Recognizing the importance of every individual in a group and giving them due opportunity to express their opinion in the process of decision making will enable the change leader to be more effective. People will be alienated in the process if they are not consulted.

Reduced hope

People's compliance should not be understood as acceptance. People who are facing continuous and frequent change resign themselves and just keep quiet. They simply go along with the flow. They may be present in body, but their hearts are far away. They are already exhausted and do not possess any forward thinking. Their motivation and enthusiasm begin to ebb away. Their creativity is blocked. In such situation they show their resistance in a very subtle ways. Setting a high hope among the people would energize them to move forward.

Existing status quo is beneficial

People's resistance can also shoot from their perceptions of change that is introduced. If they perceive that they will be worse off at the end of the change, then they are unlikely to give their full support and instantaneously they resist. If they perceive that status quo is beneficial to them, then they show resistance to the change initiative. They are more comfortable to remain where they are. Sometimes change involves momentary sacrifice from people, for which they may not be ready unless they are able to see lasting benefit in future for the sacrifice they made at present.

Benefits and rewards not adequate

People will surely resist change when the benefits and rewards for making the change are not seen as adequate for the trouble involved. They would feel that the change is going to make their life harder. They might perceive that meeting their needs and taking the risks seem to outweigh the benefits they get. Similarly, if people conceive that the change favors another group of people and not favors them, then there might be (unexpressed) anger and resentment towards change leader and change proposals. In such situation they show more indifference,

non- cooperation and resistance.

Measures to reduce resistance

As far as there is resistance in a community, no change effort could be made possible. People need to know each other well and be ready to trust one another. The matrix is 'United they stand, divided they fall apart'. From the study of action research conducted among the *Savara* tribe in India regarding their cultural resistance, the following measures are suggested to reduce the resistance found among the poor marginalized communities when they are led to change, development and growth (Selvin, 2020).

By promoting a culture of trust

A community constituted by culture of trust, clear and frank communication network, collective participation and cordial interpersonal relationships among people, there resistance is easily noticed and hardly is there occurrence of resistance. Detecting the sources of resistance is the first step toward arriving at good diagnosis and solutions. It is necessary to develop among them a "culture of trust" and hold people accountable and responsible for what they decide to do. The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown. So, all of them need to be provided every bit of information that binds them in mutual trust and confidence.

By setting high expectations

The success of any community where a change or a development project is implemented comes down to one thing, namely setting a high expectation. It is very essential to organize its members to focus on, and work toward the same purpose with high expectation. The people should know what is expected of them before they can be held responsible and accountable for anything. If the expectations and goals are made very clear, less time will be spent later clarifying what was really expected of them. Setting a high expectation and leading people towards it, indeed motivates them extremely to achieve the set purpose.

By instilling profound commitment

Just because people know what to do, does not mean they will do it. Their commitment is paramount. They need to understand how the goals will benefit them

personally and move the community forward in development and progress. They should be led to integrate the achievement of the goal and their interpersonal relationship in working together. Once this connection is made strong then they are more likely to buy into the goals by strengthening their mutual relationship with one another and show deeper commitment.

By enabling self- assessment

Provide sufficient information clearly time to time. Information is needed to hold people accountable for their participation. Their involvement in the developmental project depends on the needed information they receive. Measure their ongoing performance. It is highly necessary to gauge whether or not they meet the goals and expectations to which they had previously committed. Goals are only measureable when they are quantified. Calculate and analyze the results. If need be compare them to their goals. In this way, their commitment could be strengthened and their involvement could be intensified.

By feedback and further follow-ups

Feedback would not solve any problem by itself, but it will open the door for deeper study, reflection, analysis, discussions, clarification and follow-up actions. Create an ambiance where everyone speaks freely without any hesitation. Giving correction and confrontation/care-frontation in a group is an art that everyone learns in the process. People need feedback time to time to improve their performance in areas where they fall short of expectations. Setting expectations high followed by authentic and genuine feedback hold everyone accountable. Appraise and evaluate how the process has been handled over a period of time. Take stock of the impact on the people. Make sure that the project implemented really benefits the target people. Demand responsibility, transparency and accountability from all. Weigh up pros and cons in implementing the development projects. Previous feedback, review and evaluation are highly necessary to move forward in future with effective plans and accurate strategies. Plans and decisions taken are not just reports that find its place in the files but they are put into practice with follow up action.

By linking goals, commitment and performance

Sometimes people do need incentives and external motivation to live up to their commitments. In their continuous struggle to reach their goals, they need help and assistance. Profit or loss, success or failure –people should bear the consequences collectively. It is the responsibility of all. Relationship, goals, commitment and performance are equally linked. Goals must be tied to greater cause and ambitions that make a person committed to his/her role. As a result, the performance will be very high. People, who do not comprehend the roles they play, are more likely to be disconnected. People should be made aware that they are responsible for what they do in their community.

DEALING WITH RESISTANCE

The only possible way to deal with resistance is to identify the root cause of resistance, which is "Fear". The psychoanalytic theory calls it as phobias and it is relatively more applicable with poor, subjugated, subaltern, marginalized and displaced communities. It is believed that phobias are the product of unresolved conflicts between the id and the superego. We need to understand how 'fear' has been transmitted from one person to other and how fear works in a community. Ultimately we need to understand how fear operates as collective resistance of the poor marginalized people.

Conflicting perception creates 'fear'

Fear operates in a person through 'conflicting perception'. How one looks at this world and interprets it, differs from another. This is based on one's experience, memory and history. So, when people experience change, the way they perceive and interpret its result influence, whether they involve in an action or reaction or a positive move forward or a knee-jerk type of resistance. Suppose between two persons, each one profoundly believes that one's own perception is the only "accurate" perception of reality, then there is a disagreement between them. This causes conflict and leads to resistance. To understand fear in a person requires understanding how he/she perceives and interprets the reality. An *emic* approach is very much needed here to understand the cause of one's fear. Perception determines the experience and how it is interpreted what is being experienced. So, resistance to change happens because his/her experience actually runs "counter" to his/her perception. The antidote to deal with resistance is basically not the perception or experience but we need to counter the root cause – fear.

Threat to basic needs creates 'fear'

According to Maslow (1943) fear is caused, when people's greatest needs are threatened. Maslow explained this in his "Theory of hierarchy of needs". He

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

pointed out that people are motivated to attain certain needs in their life. Some needs have priority over other needs. Physical survival is the most basic need, and this will be the first thing that motivates people's behavior. Once that level is fulfilled automatically people move forward to fulfill their other needs on the hierarchy level up as Maslow mentioned. The fulfillment of every need up in the hierarchy leads to change and development. The poor marginalized people hardly find opportunities to satisfy even their most fundamental physiological needs. It is very hard to imagine how they will move up on the ladder of hierarchy of needs (Figure 1).

Physiological needs

These needs are biological necessity of survival, such as air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, warmth, sleep, sex. These are very fundamental and basic needs. If these needs are not fulfilled one cannot function optimally. Maslow considered physiological needs are the most important needs among all other needs.

Safety needs

Everybody wants to live in 'safety' and 'security'. Threat to safety and security of life in any situation makes one's life miserable. Everyone seeks protections and wants

freedom from fear. No innovative and creative action will flow when people are under constant threat. Freedom and security are more essential for a person to grow and mature in all aspects of life. In a caste ridden Indian society the Dalits live in fear of the dominant community. Their safety and security are always under threat.

Love and belongingness needs (Social)

Love and belongingness are the next level of human need. According to Aristotle, human beings are 'social animals'. They are interrelated beings and they are more interdependent beings as well. The need for interpersonal relationship motivates their behavior. Hence, everyone looks for friendship, intimacy, trust, acceptance, mutual love and affection. They are nothing but social capital that enriches their life in a community. Everyone wants to be affiliated to a group, family, friends and work environment. Every person wants to love and be loved. Love and belongingness characterize their identity and well- being.

Esteem needs

The fourth level of human need constitutes two categories: Self Esteem– this consists of self-worth, achievement, mastery, independence; and Desire for reputation – expecting respect, human dignity and

recognition of their status and prestige from others. Maslow observed that the children and adults need respect and reputation to form their own identity. When one's identity is under threat then there is a fear which results in resistance. Every person wants to get recognition in life and wants to have security in life. When these needs are threatened, people resist.

Self-actualization needs

The fifth level of human need according to Maslow is, "realizing one's own personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. It is a desire to become everything one is capable of becoming" (Maslow, 1987, p.64). This makes one's life contented. Opportunities are given to people to use their creative potentials. Attending to the need of what they are and capable of contributing to the growth and welfare of the society, will certainly enhance their growth and development. In a nut shell, every person wants to take control of his/her life. They cannot easily give up controlling others. The perception of loss of control, recognition and security are also reasons for resistance. Though the fact remains the same, people will go to any extent to rationalize and justify themselves to support their resistance. They easily point out others as the reason for their resistance. The external symptoms may trigger resistance a bit but the real cause is the internal disposition - 'fear' factor only. This fear factor could be well understood from the prism of people's psychology, cognition and ideology imbedded precisely in their culture.

RATIONALIZATION AND JUSTIFICATION OF RESISTANCE

Fear is a hidden factor and people normally do not accept it as a cause for their resistance. They always rationalize and justify their resistance. The narrative analysis brought out from a marginalized community gives the clarity about their cognition towards change and the following interpretations were drawn.

I want to stay where I am

People who remain continuously in the same place for a long period of time are usually in a state of comfort. They do not feel comfortable any more to the new proposal or suggestion towards change. To live blissfully in their 'comfort zone' gives meaning to their lives. Sometimes, even though they are not fully happy where they are, still they are not ready to move forward accepting the change proposals.

My needs are already fulfilled

Needs are fundamental basic stimulus of any action. If all their needs are fulfilled and the current situation is relatively comfortable (particularly in comparison with the proposed change) then they are happy to stay where they are. When their needs are already met here, they hardly cooperate with any change effort.

I have invested heavily

When people have invested lot of time, money and energy, in building up their social and organizational positions, any change proposal may appear to them as bad news. A sense of identity, security and belongingness are derived from their social investment. Organizational investment gives them control. They do not want to give up their status and position in their social arena. They do not want to be controlled by adapting to change initiatives.

I hardly understand what is proposed

We cannot simply assume that everybody understands all the changes that are proposed. Until people, 'get' the rationale for change, they are less likely to go along with it. It takes time for people to figure out what it really means. Less clarity and more ambiguity in change proposal will be resisted naturally by them. Such people often say, "We do not understand what is being proposed".

The goal looks worse compared to the beginning where I am now

Although people want to move towards the goal, they show resistance because the final resting place of the change looks significantly worse for them when compared to the current situation of their beginning. It should never be like jumping out of the frying pan and falling into the fire. They cannot make such mistake in life. Thus, they resist and justify their resistance.

There is nothing to attract them to move forward

If the change perceived by people has nothing to do with them and if they perceive the benefits for others only, then resistance is spontaneous. If they do not get the same 'vision' of the one who introduces change, then there is neither a pull nor a push factor towards the intended change. When there is nothing to attract them to move forward, normally they will show indifferent attitude

to change proposals resulting in resistance.

My journey there looks painful or bad or wrong

The final goal may be great, but when the process to reach their goal looks very hard, challenging, tedious and not comfortable, then resistance is bound to happen. The imminent pain of the change is more instantaneous than the joy of the remote and muddled future. Certainly a person responds more to the present than to any inspiring vision of future. If the change or the final destination contravenes existing norms and values, then people will consider it to be bad or wrong. At this juncture, they will be very reluctant and show more resistance.

Lack of trust on those who propose change

If the people's experience of the change leader has not been trustworthy in the past, then they will not buy the vision of the future proposed by the change leader. If the people continue to perceive it as a dangerous journey, then they will not trust the leader. The integrity of the leader is an important attribute. If the change leader wants people to follow, then a good reason must be given to trust them.

CONCLUSION

Break the silence and understand the power structure

Resistance also stems from 'culture of silence'. Observing the poor marginalized people in India, particularly the study carried out among the *Savara* tribe in Andhra Pradesh by Selvin (2020), it is revealed that the people who have internalized the 'culture of silence' over a period of long time have personalized submissiveness and passivity in their life. As a result, they are neither expressive nor vocal. They are not ready for any open clarification, confrontation or rebellion. They silently suffer bearing everything happening to them. They are reluctant to express their resistance for the fear of losing the patronage of the dominant and powerful people in a caste ridden society. According to Scott (1992), resistance depends on the form of power. Michel Foucault claims "Where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978). Abu-Lughod observed, "Where there is resistance, there is power" (Abu-Lughod, 1990, p. 42). The important characteristic of everyday resistance is the 'pervasive use of disguise', through either the concealment of anonymity of the resister, in which the personal identity of the protesters is kept secret, or concealment of the act itself.

Scott said, "Instead of a clear message delivered by a disguised messenger, an ambiguous message is delivered by clearly identified messengers" (Scott, 1989). So, to understand the resistance of the poor marginalized people we need to understand the operation of power in the hand of the one who initiate changing measures as well as within the power structure where he/she functions. Resistance of the poor marginalized community could not be fully understood without taking note of how power is in operation. Thus, any economic development initiated among the poor marginalized community should seriously consider their inherent resistance in their cultural milieu and the ambiance of the power structure where a poor marginalized community is identified.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interest.

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