

THEORY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING ON EMPOWERMENT OF PEOPLE: CONCEPT BUILDING AND TESTING AT TWO VILLAGES IN BANGLADESH**Muhammad Mahboob ALI***Dhaka School of Economics, Bangladesh
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alexandrun@seap.usv.ro***Abstract**

This study attempts to develop a theory on how social networking facilitates to empower people. Muhammad Mahboob Ali, the corresponding author developed the social networking model in 2016. The study extensively tries to display a comparative picture regarding different dimensions of empowerment before engaging in social networking and after involving in social capital, social business and social investment along with social intelligence, social enterprises. A concept was tried to build on social networking and then for this applicability of the concept testing along with two co-authors. Two villages at Khulna District of Bangladesh were chosen to collect data and build a social networking model. Data for this study was collected through direct interview method, following an interview schedule during February to April 2016. The result from the study described that woman empowerment is directly related with Social Networking, Social intelligence and social entrepreneurship along with social capital and social investment. Women's socio-economic conditions are not good before getting involved in social networking. After social networking, the socio-economic conditions of the women and empowerment through an increase in income of the family had improved, as they started to participate in different income generating activities and had control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. Women could then participate in household decision-making process, more than before. It was found that in dimensions the women started to become more empowered due to social networking.

Keywords: *Social networking, Social Intelligence, Social Entrepreneurship, women, income generating, empowerment*

JEL Classification: *L26, L31*

I. INTRODUCTION

Social networking is the exercise of intensifying the quantity of one's business and/or social contacts by constructing acquaintances from side to side entities, often through social media along with social capital, social business and social investment. Social entrepreneurs are the people most able to deliver that innovation (Leadbeater,1997).This is a social structure entailing of persons or collections who are associated to each other, for example through relationships. When these networks are characterized in a database and with a web interface, it is frequently mentioned to as a "social network service". However, in traditional system there is no web interface or social media but social capital, social business and social investment works simultaneously. Riggio (2014) described that Social intelligence (SI), is mostly learned. SI develops from experience with people and learning from success and failures in social settings. It is more commonly referred to as "tact," "common sense," or "street smarts."Lake and Huckfeldt (1998) argued that politically relevant social capital is generated in personal networks, that it is a by-product of the social interactions with a citizen's discussants, and that increasing levels of politically relevant social capital enhance the likelihood that a citizen will be engaged in politics. Further, the production of politically relevant social capital is a function of the political expertise within an individual's network of relations, the frequency of political interaction within the network, and the size or extensiveness of the network. The consequences of social relations within networks are not readily explained away on the basis of either human capital effects or the effects of organizational engagement. Actually social relations are very important. As such social intelligence and social entrepreneurship works with social networking.

In Figure:1 we have seen a model as concept developed by Ali (2016) how social networking is working:

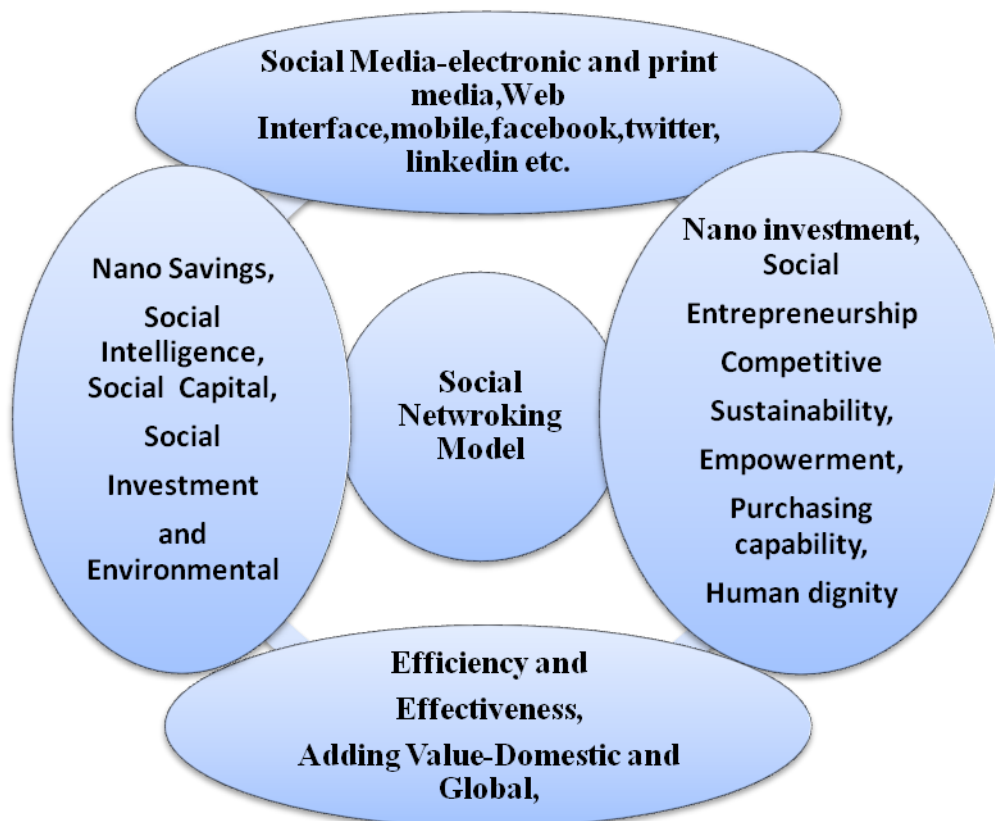


Figure:1 Social Networking Model

Source: Concept of a model built by Muhammad Mahboob Ali, 2016

For the study we choose two villages i.e. *Hatbati and Hatalbunia* where primitive nature and social media is not working. As such here we consider Social media as constant and try to choose other factors of the fig:1 is working in aforesaid villages including social entrepreneurship and social intelligence.

Table:1 Comparative Demographic profile of two villages

Types	<i>Hatalbunia</i>	<i>.Hatbati</i>
Area	120 km ²	75 km ²
Total Population:	5,176	2,670
Male	56.81%	51.07%
Female	43.19%	48.93%
Religion		
Sanatan- Islam-	55%	65%
Christian-	35%	25%
	10%	10%
Total Household	2,876	1,268
Literacy Rate:	50.25%	53.35%

Note: Demographic profile of these two villages have been collected from Jalma Union Parishad, year- 2012

The goal of the network was to create village-like structures, connect local initiatives and citizens, and support them in utilizing the concept of Social Networking as a means to solve social problems. Social Networking is driven to bring about change while pursuing sustainability. Although from a strictly profit-maximizing perspective it seems inappropriate to pursue a goal other than profit, Social Networking’s aim is to achieve certain social and environmental goals. In this perspective, a Social Networking can also be understood as a business-pursuing NGO which is (eventually) financially self-sufficient (Jager, 2010). The situation for rural women is miserable and their sufferings know no bound despite present govt.’s positive role to improve women’s condition and for last seven years mostly succeeded. However, most women have no independent income source because they have low education levels, few marketable skills, marry at an early age, and maximum case do not own land or property. Women of rural areas of Bangladesh are given equal access to rural

credit and using this credit in productive activities they have raised their status, lessened their dependency on social capital, social business and social investment and improved their homes and nutritional standards of their children. 90% of women who were housewives and used to begging as a means of survival now have roof over their heads and can support themselves. The study has undertaken with following reasons:

- To analyze the role of Social Networking in empowering the rural people i.e. male and female.
- To know the present status of rural credit ,social intelligence, social entrepreneurship and Social Networking ;
- To evaluate the increased performance of women in socio-economic context of Bangladesh;
- To provide some implications of the study.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leadbeater (1997) argues that social entrepreneurs need to lead the way with schemes for self-help, particularly by promoting local, national and international twinning arrangements between projects to share ideas, contacts and staff. For liberal feminists, the optimum level of gender arrangement is one that facilitates the individuals to adopt the life style that suits him or her and also accepted or respected (Ritzer, 2001) by the society at large. However, liberal feminists are not in favor of structural change to a great extent. Furthermore, some of liberal feminists think that individual woman cannot make change; therefore, state intervention is prerequisite. BarNir and Smith (2002) argued that the social networks of senior executives account for 11–22 percent of the variance in the degree to which firms engage in alliances, depending on the type of alliance. Results also show that the number of inter firm alliances is positively related to several networking properties (propensity to network, strength of ties, and network prestige. Hunt and Kasynathan(2002) pointed out that only a few number of women receiving credit had the ability to control their loans. Many women received loan by their own name and passed on the full amount of their loans directly to their husbands, sons or sons-in-law. Swain (2006) conducted a study following experimental research design in rural India and assessed the potential impacts of a microfinance institution named Self Help Group (SHG). The concept of women empowerment was defined as the process in which the women challenge the existing norms and culture to effectively improve their well-being. Williams & Durrance(2008) found that across a number of instances of community technology, technology use is directly influenced of social networks, and social networks are directly influenced by technology use. Micro-savings were recognized as key pillars of financial inclusion in the global development agenda. And, Nick Kristof recently described micro-savings as the “Next Big Thing”. The practice of saving among the poor is not new, especially in Africa, which has a long history of informal savings. People are saving through a range of tools—community savings groups in Mali and Rwanda and cell phones in Kenya. What’s still missing is the provision of large-scale access to secure and regulated savings accounts in an affordable and accessible manner. This is especially true for youth in developing countries, who seek access to formal savings accounts but face additional barriers due to regulatory requirements such as age limits and credit history.(Roy,2010).Perron (2011)examined case by case the various approaches from companies, public sector entities, philanthropy, etc, and also institutional and private investors in their availability as well as their specific legal capacities and limitations to deliver the funding required supporting the growth. Such initiatives are vital in the fight against poverty and income inequalities. Riggio (2014) argued that networking organizations, or speaking groups are good at helping develop basic communication skills. Work on becoming a more effective listener, through what is called “active listening” where you reflect back what you believe the speaker said in order to ensure clear understanding. Most importantly, study social situations and your own behavior. Learn from your social successes and failures. Ali(2016) suggested that establishment of integration fund to encourage creative entrepreneurship so that poor downtrodden people can come out with innovative business process through financial inclusion process, to remove poverty. Jahan and Ullah(2016) described that social entrepreneurship represents both a growing field of hybrid action and a catalyst for wider recalibrations of the roles and boundaries of the market, the state and civil society. Rattanawiboonsom and Ali(2016)more intensive and pragmatic policy should be developed for the development of the social enterprises particularly for self-motivated entrepreneurs. Experiences from the research work, they observed that the rural poor are mobilized and working together in self-controlled community based organizations which ensures social welfare and Pareto optimality. Not only small and medium enterprises but also micro enterprises should get special priority and inclusion through financial organizations are being required for developing proper steps to poverty alleviation, public-private and foreign strategic alliances are required in the small and medium enterprise sector with special emphasis on micro enterprises of the country. Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina said the government introduced micro-saving project instead of microcredit to make the marginal people self-reliant and free them from high interest rate of microcredit (2017) .

III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A concept was tried to build on social networking and then for testing its applicability of the concept we choose *Hatbati and Hatalbuniavillages of BatiaghataUpozila* under Khulna District of Bangladesh purposively as the study area. Data were collected to explore whether Social Networking promotes men and women empowerment or not, and if does in what scale? Unit of analysis was selected among women who were involved in Social Networking mainly rural credit program of *Hetalbunia and Hatbativillages* under *BatiaghataThana* of Khulna district for more than one year.All the women receiving Grameen-credit of the *Hetalbunia and Hatbativillages of Batiaghata Thana* under Khulna district was considered as the population of the study. According to the unit of analysis 312 women population were enlisted from the various NGOs as the study population. Random sampling technique was applied to collect data from those women who were receiving rural credit in *Hetalbunia and Hatbativillages*.Then 350 women were selected from the villages following simple random sampling procedure out of which we received duly filled up 312 questionnaires returned back. Survey method as well as case study and focus group discussion methods were used as the methods of the study.

Dependent Variable: Social Networking

Independent Variables:

Social Media-electronic and print media, Web Interface, mobile, Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn etc.

Social Intelligence , Environment

Social Capital ,Social Investment and Social business

Nano Savings converted to Nano Investment

Social Entrepreneurship

Competitive sustainability Efficiency and Effectiveness

Purchasing power and human dignity

Adding value-domestically and Globally

Data were collected through direct interview following an interview schedule during February to April, 2016. Tabulated data will be processed by computerizing and using computer software's like SPSS 20 version.

Hypothesis Testing:

Ha1: Before involving in social capital, social business ,social investment, social intelligence and social entrepreneurship -the women had very low participation in income generating activities.

Ha2: Involving in Social Networking program leads the rate of participation in social and political activities among the women are rising .

Ha3: Nano savings work for nano investment which lead to Social entrepreneurship.

Ha4: Dimensions of empowerment the women are now staying in higher position than before involving in Social Networking.

Estimated Results:

Social Networking has created a new dimension in the traditional business system but most of the people of our country do not still know about the term.

Table:1 Status of Women Rights and Education

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
31.203	6	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 31.203, Df =6, Significant at.000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's status of education with women rights.

Table-2 Participation in Household Decision Making and Educational Status

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
20.110	6	.003

In the table, Chi Square Value = 20.110, Df =6, Significant at .003 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's status of education with participation in household decision making.

Table-3 Control over Income, Expenditure, Credit and Savings with Occupation

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
16.310	6	.012

In the table, Chi Square Value = 16.310, Df = 6, Significant at .012 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's occupational status with control over income, expenditure, credit and savings.

Table 4 Participation in Household Decision Making Process with Occupation

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
15.009	6	.020

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 15.009, Df =6, Significant at .020 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's occupational status with participation in household decision making.

Table-5 Income and Women Empowerment Index

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
41.712	6	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 41.712, Df =6, Significant at 1% level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence.

Table-6: Women Empowerment Index with Participation in Income Generating Activities Having Social Networking

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
27.733	4	.000

In the table, Chi Square Value = 27.733, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's participation in income generating activities with women empowerment index.

Table-7: Women Empowerment Index with Control over Income, Expenditure, Credit and Savings

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
31.087	4	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 31.087, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of control over income, expenditure, credit and savings with women empowerment index.

Table-8: Women Empowerment Index with Mobility of Women

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
58.093	4	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 31.087, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of control over income, expenditure, credit and savings with women empowerment index.

Table-9: Women Empowerment Index and Participation in Social and Political Activities

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
44.360	4	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 44.360, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject's participation in social and political activities with women empowerment index.

Table-10 : Women Empowerment Index with Exposure to Media

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
39.508	4	.000

In the table, Chi Square Value = 39.508, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s exposure to media with women empowerment index.

Table-11 Women Empowerment Index with Participation in Household Decision Making

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
14.216	4	.000

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 14.216, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s participation in household decision making and women empowerment index.

Table-12 Women Empowerment Index with Perception Regarding Women Rights

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
14.222	4	.007

In the table, Chi Square Value = 14.222, Df =4, Significant at .000 level. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s perception regarding women rights with women empowerment index.

Table-13: Women Empowerment Index with Control over Income, Expenditure, Credit and savings

Chi Square Value	Df	Significance Level
8.787	2	.012

In the above table, Chi Square Value = 8.787, Df =2, Significance Level =.012. Here, Chi Square Value indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s control over income, expenditure, credit and savings with women empowerment index.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

Women empowerment is closely related with Social Networking because Social Networking has created a new dimension toward women empowerment by opening the door of income generating activities. In the study chi square test had been done to find out relationship between various aspects of Social Networking and women empowerment. In case of hypothesis testing, chi square value 16.310, df 6 and significance level .012 reveals that there is a significant influence of subject’s occupational status with control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. There is a significant influence of subject’s occupational status with participation in household decision making with chi square value 15.009, df 6 and significance level .020. Chi square value 41.712, df 6 and significance level exposed that there is a significant influence of subject’s occupational status with women empowerment index. Chi Square Value (27.733) indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s participation in income generating activities with women empowerment index. Chi square value indicates (31.087) that there is a significant influence of control over income, expenditure, credit and savings with women empowerment index. Control over income, expenditure, credit and savings results high women empowerment index. Chi square value 44.360, df 4 and significance level .000 indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s participation in social and political activities with women empowerment index. Chi square value (39.508) indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s exposure to media with women empowerment index. Chi Square Value (14.216) indicates that high influence of subject’s participation in household decision making results high women empowerment index. Chi square value 14.222, df 4, significance level .000 exposes that there is a significant influence of subject’s perception regarding women rights with women empowerment index. Chi square value (8.787) indicates that there is a significant influence of subject’s control over income, expenditure, credit and savings with women empowerment index.

Over all findings exposes that women who were involved in Social Networking had got better socio-economic condition than before. Furthermore, they were rushing towards women empowerment as their tendency to become self-sufficient had grown. But women empowerment depends highly on occupation, participation in household decision and perception about women rights and so on. From case study and FGD it had been found that though all the women were related with Rural credit and other types of Social Networking, they had low control over credit as most of the respondents social capital, social business and social investment and used to control that credit. Moreover, in case of women empowerment they had low access to various sectors of income generating activities, household decision making, social and political activities and mobility but they got relative access to control over credit, expenditure, income and savings with high access to group discussion. Social Networking had given these women access to credit but lack of monitoring their empowerment had not been ensure yet. Roy,2010 rightly observed that micro savings has a greater role to play.

The study also found that Nano savings work for nano investment which leads to Social entrepreneurship. Marginal Social benefit is higher than marginal social cost.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study extensively displays a comparative picture regarding the stipulation of women in the different dimensions of empowerment before involving in Social Networking and after involving in Social Networking. Before participating in social capital, social business and social investment, the controlling power of the family was typically restricted by their social capital, social business and social investments. Before involving in social capital, social business and social investment, the women had very low participation in income generating activities. Most of them had very low control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. When they could neither participate in household decision making nor participate in social and political activities. Mobility to outside home *i. e.* mobility to market, relative's/parents' house, hospital/clinic, office of the NGO etc. were very low among them. Their exposure to media and communication was also low. But after practicing of social capital, social business and social investment, the people started to participate in different income generating activities *which includes* small business, buying cattle, fish cultivation, poultry rearing, handicrafts and non – farm activities etc. As a result their income level was also rising gradually. Then, they also started to control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. They could then participate in household decision making more than before. Because of involving in Social Networking program the rate of participating in social and political activities among the women also increased. Their mobility outside home and exposure to media and communication was increased after involving in Social Networking. Bangladesh govt. is correctly putting emphasis on micro savings. Nano savings ought to work for nano investment which leads to Social entrepreneurship. From the study, it was found the in dimensions of empowerment the people especially women group are now staying in higher position than before involving in Social Networking. And thus, Social Networking is playing a vital role for empowering women in rural Bangladesh for which social intelligence and social entrepreneurship plays vital role. Proper utilization of social networking leads to raise human dignity.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Exposure to media and communication of rural women are low which need to be increased by print, electronic media and Facebook, twitter .

But after involving in social capital, social business , social investment, social intelligence and social entrepreneurship- women started to participate in different income generating activities *i. e.*, business, small business, buying cattle, fish cultivation, poultry rearing, handicrafts etc. As a result their income level was also rising gradually.

Through participating in social networking- started to control over income, expenditure, credit and savings. They could then participate in household decision making more than before.

Involving in Social Networking program causes the rate of participating in social and political activities among the women also increased.

Mobility outside home and exposure to media and communication was increased after involving in Social Networking along with social intelligence and social entrepreneurship.

Dimensions of empowerment the women are now staying in higher position than before involving in Social Networking.

Social Networking is playing a vital role for empowering women in rural Bangladesh.

More emphasis should be given for nano savings and there must be a channel between nano savings and nano investment which lead to social entrepreneurship.

In the Business and Economic syllabus at least 40% should be based on lab based so that entrepreneurial spirit among future leaders to grow.

PKSF,BNF etc. may play vital role to increase social networking among rural people. Social networking may be included in the process of SDG which should be practiced by both the Govt. and private sector with foreign collaboration.

To arrange community bank at the grass root level so that informal sector can come under formal sector and financial inclusion can be raised and channelized saving –investment in the e main stream. It will be alternative to our current banking system so that pauper and low income group can get the banking services at least cost. However, in case of financial inclusion, Bangladesh’s progress is remarkable as it increases eight steps.

Corruptions, nepotism etc.in the banking and other financial organizations including NGOs of the country should be strictly handled.

VII. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

A separate study may be conducted among representatives of villages increasing sample size of both villages and no. of respondents since nos. of villages are approximately 68,000 and total population of the country is around 168 Million. Moreover, the theory which is in a process of development by Muhammad Mahboob Ali may be tested in other countries of the world by various researchers to give a structural formation,validation and reliability of the theory in the real life scenario both global and domestic perspectives.

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