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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to assess the poverty likelihood of Garo ethnic community in Sherpur, Bangladesh. Scorecs® Simple Poverty Scorecard® was used to estimate the scorecard values from 70 respondents. Estimated average value of Simple Poverty Scorecard® was 43.47 which imply that the community had 76.4% (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$1.90) and 96.5% (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$3.10) chance of living below the poverty line. The result is far away from the national current poverty level which is a warning for sustainable economic development.

Although the planet is living in the fastest era of globalization with much more technology, improved infrastructure and maximum agricultural production, still we have about 1 billion people who are poor. Generally, poor is someone who has not enough money to meet basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. There are hundreds of definitions of poor and poverty from different point of view but everyone has a similarity that poor haven't access to basics needs. And, day by day poverty is becoming a complex global and societal issue. In 2015, 10 per cent of the world's population lived on less than US\$1.90 a day, compared to 11 per cent in 2013 that down from nearly 36 per cent in 1990 (World Bank, 2018). Now, more than half of the people of the world live on less than 2.5\$ a day, and 80% lives less than 10\$ a day (Shah, 2013). Poverty rate declining globally gradually but the progress seems uneven. More than 40% of poorest people earn only 5% global income. World Bank statistics showed that more than half of the extremely poor live in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. In Bangladesh currently, 8.5% of peoples are live on under 1.5\$ a day according to the data 2018 which is 12.9% was 2016. Though poverty rate improves steadily Bangladesh achieves remarkable progress than other South Asian countries. Bangladesh's achievement reducing extreme poverty is much notable. More than half of our population lived below the national poverty

line on 2000 and the rate of extreme poverty is a decline at 12.9%, and poverty is at 24.3% in according to the World Bank (World Bank, 2018b). Though Bangladesh Government target to reduce poverty rate 18.6% by 2020 which is declared by 7th Five year planning (2016-2020), it is still questionable because to what extent it is possible to do that uniformly when some areas are social, culturally, geographically and economically far different from the others (GOB, 2017). The aim of this study is the explore how far the ethnic community especially the Garo are far from the national poverty level and what are their tendency of being poor.

The study was conducted in Garo Para and Baromari Mission of Nalitabari Upazila in Sherpur district where about 20,000 Garo people are living along with other 40,000 ethnic communities in Sherpur. A total of 70 households and 20 key informants were interviewed conveniently as the area was hilly and it was difficult to reach all the people. Scorocs® Simple Poverty Scorecard® was used to assess the Poverty likelihood (%) of the Garo people.

Table 1: Poverty likelihood (%) of the Garo community

Score	The frequency of the respondents	Intl. 2011 PPP	
		\$1.90	\$3.10
10-14	2	97.6	100.0
15-19	2	96.2	99.8
20-24	10	96.1	99.7
25-29	5	89.0	99.2
30-34	3	84.4	98.8
35-39	10	80.9	97.8
40-44	5	76.4	96.5
45-49	3	66.3	94.1
50-54	7	55.6	92.2
55-59	5	43.5	88.4
60-64	9	35.9	78.6
65-69	3	35.9	71.0
70-74	6	35.9	68.9
Average Score		43.47	

Source: Authors estimation, 2019

According to the latest survey conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics(BBS) between April 2016 and March 2017 it was observed that in a rural and urban area the poverty rate was 26.4 and 18.6 per cent respectively where the extreme poverty rate was 12.9 per cent compared to 4.7 per cent lower than 2010. The average poverty rate was 24.3 per cent in 2016 which was two times more in 2000.

Although Bangladesh is performing excellent in poverty reduction along with other development, the ethnic community especially the Garo people in Sherpur district are still underprivileged in case of poverty reduction.

The table shows that the average Simple poverty card score for the Garo people is 43.47 which lies between the range 40-44. That means the households have a 76.4% (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$1.90) and 96.5% (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$3.10) chance of living below the poverty line. More specifically, the result indicates that 764 (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$1.90) and 965 (Intl. 2011 PPP, \$3.10) out of 1000 households scored themselves as poor which is far away from the national poverty level.

The result of the study is a warning for the steady development of Bangladesh though we have an elegant figure in case of poverty reduction. So, Policymaker should polish the poverty reduction policies so that the overall poverty reduction should be uniform irrespective of geographical, religion and other factors.

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