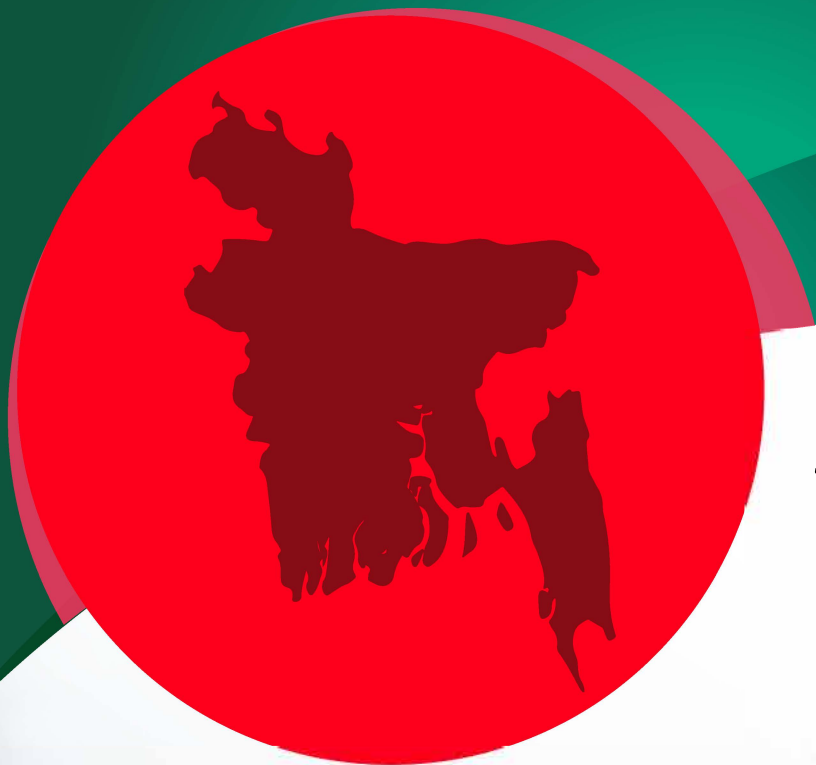


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# Socio-cultural Environment for Entrepreneurship Development in Bangladesh

Tahlil Azim

## Abstract

It is widely believed that some society/culture is more conducive to entrepreneurship than others. In line with this belief this paper explores and assesses the potential of Bangladesh as a springboard for entrepreneurship in terms of its socio-cultural setting. It offers a sketch of the socio-cultural environment of Bangladesh in terms of labor supply and labor quality, cultural milieu, religion, prevalence of security, social marginality and entrepreneurship education and training. It is observed that Bangladesh seems to be placed at the juxtaposition of both positive and negative socio-cultural forces for the development of entrepreneurship.

## Introduction

Entrepreneurs are recognized as central to the process of mobilizing capital, adding value to natural resources, producing necessary goods and services, creating employment and developing the means by which trade is carried on. Thus entrepreneurs are viewed as the most critical factors for economic development of a country (Schumpeter 1934) and the supply of entrepreneurs in an economy is believed to be the prerequisite for development. However, the growth of entrepreneurship results from certain environmental conditions and some socio-economic factor inputs.

Entrepreneurs are creations of the environment. If favorable environment prevails entrepreneurship will emerge and vice versa. The non emergence of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh at a desired level might be attributed to the adverse environmental factors. However, the study of environment for entrepreneurship faces the perennial question of what constitutes the environment. In fact, there is no consensus among the researchers in this regard. A number of authors and researchers have approached this topic by identifying a set of elements to be the constituents of the business environment of entrepreneurship development.

Naumes (1978) states that factors like external support for financing, technology, management and productive capacity are largely responsible for the success of many new ventures. Vesper and Albaum (1979) emphasize that the presence of local market conditions, existence of incubator industries, technical manpower, universities with doctoral programs and affiliated laboratories, research laboratories of major companies and governments, sources of venture capital and favorable government policies largely govern the decision of entrepreneurs in setting up a project. Cooper (1970) lists a number of environmental factors as important in entrepreneurial decisions: example of entrepreneurial

action, knowledge about entrepreneurship, attitude of the society toward entrepreneurship, salary and taxation, availability of venture capital, availability of personnel and support services, access to customers, access to universities, opportunities for interim consulting and general economic conditions. Shapero (1972) approaches this topic a bit differently and distinguishes the initial company formation from later startups and states that the former is dependent upon the ability of the founder to get financial support, to obtain technically skilled workers and to provide services not available in the area while the later startups are the result of spin-offs from existing companies and, therefore, mostly technology driven.

Bruno and Tyebjee (1982) identified availability of venture capital, skilled labor force, land facilities, access to transport, presence of experienced entrepreneurs, favorable tax and licensing policies, encouraging loan and financial policies, availability of support services, cultural and living conditions, government financial assistance and contracts, etc., as important environmental forces affecting the development of entrepreneurship. Ali and Alam (1997) identified easy loan, availability of skilled manpower, bureaucratic redtapism, political stability, smooth supply of infrastructural facilities, superior law and order situation, government support, liberal industrial policy, and education and training facilities as the influential factors in order of importance for the development of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh.

Roni (2003), in his study on "Environmental issues of Entrepreneurship Development: Bangladesh Scenario," included political, legal, and socio-cultural aspects as well as the role of state as the major elements of entrepreneurial environment. He also considered capital, labor, raw materials, technology, and market size and composition as the opportunity conditions for the entrepreneurs. He postulated that the economic opportunity condition in Bangladesh is reasonably favorable. But entrepreneurship has not stepped forward to take advantage of such favorable

conditions. In this regard he identified the unfavorable non-economic factors, like political, legal and socio-cultural factors that impede the growth of entrepreneurship in the country.

Considering the aspects important for entrepreneurship development in a country traced by the researchers as well as the peculiarities of Bangladesh, a host of factors like political system, political philosophy, governance, government incentives, corruption, rule of law, infrastructure, finance, market size, unemployment, raw materials, technology, labor supply and labor quality, cultural environment, prevalence of security, social marginality, entrepreneurship education and training, etc., may be pointed out as part of the business environment. However, the present paper has been dedicated to focus on the socio-cultural aspects of the environment only. The study is solely based on data and information collected from secondary sources. Relevant books, documents, government policies, web sites, articles and news items are the major sources of information and data used in the study.

### **Socio-cultural Environment for Entrepreneurship Development**

Socio-cultural factors are deeply rooted elements of a particular society and encompass the values, attitudes, norms, practices, institutions, stratifications, and related ways of a society. Socio-cultural events either force a person or make it desirable to choose entrepreneurship as a career option. From a sociological perspective, a factor such as societal upheaval is considered to have extensive impact on the making of new entrepreneurs. Societal disruptions which affect family life may influence the choice of non-traditional career paths (Hagen 1962). If the family of the entrepreneur does not seem to 'fit in' society or is seen to be different, then their children may feel the need to create a new niche for themselves (Kets de Vries 1996). Some studies indicate that entrepreneurs are more likely to come from ethnic, religious or minority groups (Weber 1958; Hirschmeyer 1964). It is widely believed that some society/culture is more conducive to entrepreneurship than others.

A recent exploratory study by Mueller and Thomas (2001) found support for the proposition that some cultures are more conducive to entrepreneurship than others. Individualistic cultures, for example, seem to foster an internal locus of control. These authors have concluded tentatively, that a 'supportive national culture will, *ceteris paribus*, increase the entrepreneurial potential of a country'. The corollary

is presented by Lee and Tsang (2001) who describe how a government report on Entrepreneurship Development in Singapore (published in 1985), revealed that there was a low tolerance of failure in that society. Indeed, the report outlined a prevalent view that failure in the job or in business would mean castigation and ruin – a mindset not conducive to risk-taking. Since then, of course, the government of Singapore has tried hard to promote a spirit of entrepreneurship in the city-state. Lee and Tsang (2001) also make an important point in relation to this discussion. They assert that other studies of entrepreneurial characteristics associated with venture performance have been based on Western countries, in particular the United States. Lee and Tsang assert that entrepreneurship is a culturally embedded phenomenon and that cross-cultural or cross-national generalization, unaccompanied by empirical support, lack substance.

Religion and its impact on entrepreneurial culture were also studied. Max Weber believed that "Protestant ethic" is conducive to the development of "spirit of capitalism" which is instrumental for entrepreneurship. On the same notion, he believes that "spirit of capitalism" is absent in religious belief system of Hinduism. However, many Indian scholars (Pandey 1970; Tripathi 1971) refuted the proposition and showed that Hindu belief system is very much related to individuals rather than the society as a whole.

Morrison (2000), seeks to answer the key question "what triggers the release of the invaluable enterprising spirit in a country?" by focusing on the relationship of certain cultural and societal factors and entrepreneurship. The study involved a cross-country study in Australia, Slovenia, Mexico, North America, Finland, Scotland, South Africa and Kenya. From this investigation, it appears that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurship and cultural specificity, combined with an intuitive response by individual members of society, albeit part innate and part cultural conditioning. Certainly, the cultural context in which persons are rooted and socially developed plays an influencing role in shaping and making entrepreneurs, and the degree to which they consider entrepreneurial behavior to be desirable.

Hagen (1962), while describing the process of change in any society, suggests that growth in a society has been led not by individuals randomly distributed throughout a society but disproportionately by individuals from some distinctive group. He identifies "creative innovation" or "change" as the

fundamental characteristic of economic growth and believes that such innovation or change requires creative individuals. Hagen's principal theme is that such creative personalities or groups emerge when the members of some social group experience, what he calls, "The withdrawal of status respect". This "withdrawal" may occur when a traditionally alike group is displaced by force from its previous status by another traditional group, or when a superior group changes its attitude toward a subordinate group or on migration to a new society. However, Hagen's analysis fails to give policy measures for backward countries which are striving for economic development as he is identifying "Status withdrawal" as the causal factor in emergence of creative personality and status withdrawal by force cannot be contemplated in a democratic setup.

In consonance with Hagen's concern, some researchers have found that entrepreneurs often come from ethnic, religious or other type of minority group (Kets de Vries 1970; Roberts and Wainer 1996). Exposure to discrimination may restrict minority groups in their choice of employment and social status, and thus they are sometimes forced into self-employment when no employment option is open to them. Furthermore, according to Kets de Vries (1997), the process of social deterioration and the experience of religious oppression, can give rise to creative, innovative entrepreneurial activity.

Kets de Vries (1977) stresses that closer analysis of the entrepreneur often reveals an individual who has suffered hardship, has had an unhappy family upbringing and who feels displaced or even a 'misfit' in his own environment. His concept of the social misfit, the reject or marginal human being, is presented in his 1977 paper, aptly entitled 'The Entrepreneurial Personality: Person at the 'crossroads'. Thus, as already stated, the entrepreneur is for Kets de Vries a loner, a reject or a marginal individual (p. 35). He/she is inconsistent and confused about what they want, often acting irrationally, and is frequently impulsive. The entrepreneur is a 'reactive' individual who uses his/her rebellious nature to facilitate adaptation to changing situations. Tension and anxiety exists within such an individual as any potential success is viewed only as a prelude to failure.

"Rejection, dissatisfaction and a sense of failure follow the entrepreneur like an inseparable shadow (Kets de Vries 1977, p. 51)."

Thus the socio-cultural approach postulates that desirability of entrepreneurship as a career choice is,

to some extent, culture bound. Some cultures, particularly individualist cultures encourage entrepreneurship while the collectivist cultures work as a negative force for such option. Religious belief system also has its bearing on entrepreneurial desirability. However, there are individuals who are prone to overthrow cultural mask and emerge as "deviants". These deviant people are more likely to opt for entrepreneurship. Tayeb (1988) and Van der Horst (1996) emphasize that not all individual members of a society need necessarily be assumed to follow all the dimensions of their cultures in every aspect of their lives. None of us is a slave to the culture in which we live. There will be those who deviate from the cultural norm. Thus, Hofstede (1994) proposes that a person's behavior be only partially predetermined by their mental programmes. He/she has a basic ability to deviate from them, and to react in ways that are new, creative, destructive, or unexpected, e.g. entrepreneurially. Moreover, due to various social, political or economic reasons many people feel deprived and put up with the sense of dissatisfaction. These people, also may appear as entrepreneurs in an attempt to get rid of their depression.

The above discussion points to the fact that economic opportunities are not sufficient conditions for entrepreneurship to flourish development; it also requires some favorable socio-cultural factors for entrepreneurship to flourish in a country. Keeping this reality in mind the following sections offer a sketch of the socio-cultural environment of Bangladesh in terms of labor supply and labor quality, cultural milieu, religion, prevalence of security, social marginality and entrepreneurship education and training.

### ***Labor Supply and Labor Quality***

Bangladesh is well known for its large pool of cheap labor. The degree to which population size can be directly translated into labor supply is determined by the size of the adult population of a society and by the degree of labor mobility within a society (Gould 1982). If there are restrictions which hinder labor from entering industrial employment or prevent geographical movement within a society, labor will be more costly. These restrictions are absent in Bangladesh. Thus, Bangladesh has a large labor force which is increasing at a fast pace without having any major deterrent in the way of labor mobility; thus cost of labor is certainly low and cheap (Roni 2003). Foreign managers report that Bangladeshi workers generally respond well to training (Government of United States 2006).

However, the shortage of skilled workers in Bangladesh is a matter of concern. Business executives asked to rate the availability of scientists and engineers in their country in the survey for Global competitiveness report 2001-02, ranked Bangladesh 58 among the 75 countries in the survey. The relatively low ranking might reflect in part the relatively low tertiary enrolment ratio (about 5 percent) in Bangladesh (World Economic Forum 2002). It might also reflect a “Brain Drain” of skilled workers, a typical problem of most low-income countries.

### Cultural Milieu

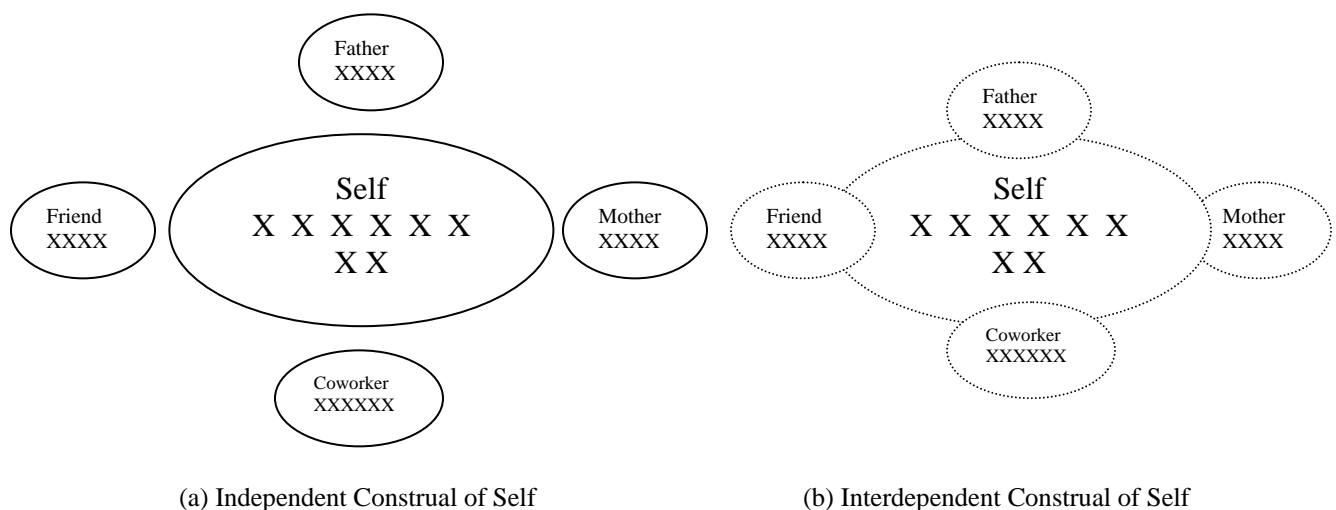
Cultural environment has a far-reaching effect upon the entrepreneurs. Tayeb (1998) defined culture and its scope as, “A set of historically evolved learned values, attitudes, and meanings shared by the members of a given community that influence the material and non-material way of life. Members of the community learn these shared characteristics through different stages of the socialization process of their lives in institutions, such as family, religion, formal education and society as a whole.”

Dutch Researcher Geert Hofstede (1994) attributes culture as “the collective programming of the mind,

which distinguishes the members of one human group from another.” A society’s culture determines the rules of how a person should behave in society. Hofstede (1980) conducted a very influential study on 1,16,000 respondents working in different IBM subsidiaries in 70 different countries and developed the typology consisting of four national and cultural dimensions: Individualism vs. collectivism, Uncertainty avoidance vs. Uncertainty acceptance, Power distance vs. Power respect and Masculinity vs. Femininity. In terms of Hofstede’s dimensions of culture, Bangladesh may be perceived to have the following characteristics:

- i. Collectivism: Bangladesh can be considered as a more traditional collectivist society. Here the interest of family and society is given preference over individual interest. In terms of typology of *self*, identified by Markus and Kitayama (1991), most of the Bangladeshi individuals maintain *interdependent construal of selves* as opposed to *independent construal of selves* where the self is unbounded, flexible and inseparable from social context. An individual in this society is not free to choose his career on his own. Rather the choice of his family is found to be more important of a determinant in this respect.

**Figure 1: Constructs of self**



Consequently, the good students are found to pursue the traditional subjects like medicine, engineering, law and recently business administration in their studies, and in their career, they choose either government or private job rather than independent entrepreneurial career. This collectivist characteristic also affects the saving and spending behavior of the people. Usually, people in such a culture accept more family responsibilities. The earners in the family spend their income for the maintenance of a large extended family which sometimes, even includes cousins, nephews etc. As a result, creating a handsome saving for investment purposes does not take place in such a culture. Moreover, there are mutual expectations in this culture that encourage people to borrow and lend to relatives if any need arises, which on the other hand, hampers the development of capital market/formal money market in the country. This can be evidenced from the findings of most studies on entrepreneurship that showed that entrepreneurs collected their initial seed capital either from their own source or from their friends and relatives (Begum 2002; Abdullah 1996; Ahmed and Sikder 1997).

- ii. **Uncertainty avoidance:** Because of uncertainty avoidance culture, most of the people in the country are more concerned about security and a constant source of income. This characteristic is against the very nature of risk taking which is the cornerstone of entrepreneurship. As a result, the people, in general, prefer salaried employment over initiating entrepreneurial ventures as their career option. Moreover, the inclination of people in the country to invest in land, smuggling and trading rather than in manufacturing may be attributed to this very cultural characteristic. This is also evidenced from the gradual development of entrepreneurship in the country. Most of the indigenous entrepreneurs are found to step into industrial ventures through accumulating capital either from trading or real estate business (Farouk 1983) or receiving unusual favor from the government in terms of financing (Kochanek 1993).
- iii. **Power respect:** In the power respect society, people give preference to the views of the elders and maintain difference among the

social classes. This feature is contrary to the spirit of entrepreneurship as it restricts individual choice and innovation. Rather it encourages duplication and preservation of tradition. This concept of culture justifies the attribution of status within the society. As mentioned by Roni (2003), the social setting of Bangladesh is still semi feudalistic in nature. Consequently a role that is consistent with such a setting will naturally seek high status. Thus government jobs which match such types of role are given high status value and it is found that the most brilliant students vie for government jobs rather than pursue entrepreneurial roles in the county. However, there are other contradictory views about status and prestige in the society. As Rahman (1981) argued; in Bangladesh higher prestige is attached to industrial profession as compared to other profession which has motivated farmers to adopt this profession. There was widespread antagonism among the people in general and in intellectuals, in particular, about the industrialists during the Pakistan period and in the early years of Bangladesh, as they were believed to be a handful of fortunate families created by the Pakistan government with huge public support. However, over the years this view has changed as the government continually started encouraging the private sector and reducing the participation of government in business. Thus status value has started shifting from government jobs to private entrepreneurship. In the face of acute unemployment in the country, the entrepreneurs are now viewed as the rescuer and consequently receive high status in the society. Even though Roni (2003) argued for higher status of government jobs, he also maintained that this perception is changing fast.

- iv. **Masculine:** In the masculine culture, people segregate the sex role and attach importance to money and other material gains over comfort and quality of life. This notion of culture may justify the low level of women entrepreneurship in the country.

In analyzing the cultural aspects related to entrepreneurship, Rahman (1989) has listed a number of features of an underdeveloped country, which are also true for Bangladesh. These are:

- (a) **People are fatalists:** They believe that fate is

determined and so nobody has anything else to do with it. (b) People are superstitious: They waste time in determining the auspicious days in order to commence their activities with the help of a clergyman. (c) They believe that the success of any venture or enterprise depends on the will of God. (d) Ownership of land is valued more than ownership of an enterprise. (e) There is no dignity of labor and manual labor is thought to be the least dignified of jobs. (f) Government job is considered as the most dignified and stable job. (g) To help in the building of mosque or temple is considered more of a socially responsible job than investment.

Khandkar (1992) viewed Bangladeshi society as an ascriptive society where economic roles are distributed according to the social status of individuals—not according to their competences. Consequently, it offers a hostile climate for entrepreneurship. Rahman (1989) argued that these features would have a negative effect upon entrepreneurship.

However, some research findings relating to entrepreneurial features of Bangladeshi entrepreneurs offer favorable indications. Hanna Papanek (1969) reported that Bangladeshis did not lack psychological traits of risk-taking for doing business. A.F.A. Hussain, (1963), based on a study, arrived at the conclusion that the businessmen of Bangladesh are sufficiently intelligent and smart in taking advantage of the business opportunities. Similar findings are also reported by Abdullah Farouk (1983). These are indicative of the potentialities of entrepreneurship that can be developed through proper policy framework.

### ***Religion***

One very influential force that shapes the cognitive setup of people is *religion*. As most of the people of Bangladesh adhere to Islam, their cognition is mostly constructed by the values and beliefs of Islam. The external locus of control of the people in Bangladesh is widely believed to be an outcome of Islamic belief of fate. But it is rather a misconstrued concept. Islam has never encouraged people not to work, and just to rely on fate or wait for fortune. Rather, the values and spirit of Islam can be of much help in inculcating the qualities of dynamism in its followers. It is to be pointed out that Islam is itself a motivating force (Solaiman and Hillaly 1997). The verses of the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) are illustrative in this regard:

“Do not forget your share of the world” (Al-Quran).

“A person gets whatever he strives for” (Al-Quran).

“A faithful and trustworthy trader or businessman will be with the Prophet, Truthful, and Martyrs on the Day of Judgment” (Al-Hadith).

“The best of the earnings is the earning of those businessmen who do not lie when they speak, do not break the trust when trusted.” (Al-Hadith).

“Nine-tenth of the livelihood lies in business activities and one-tenth in cattle raising (agriculture)” (Al-Hadith).

Thus Islam approvingly speaks in favor of free enterprise and entrepreneurship, which, if properly taught may be instrumental for entrepreneurship development in the country. However, two particular issues pertaining to Islam have a significant bearing on the development of entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. One is the segregation of males and females. Islam disapproves of the free mixing of male and female which supports the tenets of masculine culture. And it may be believed to be instrumental for low level of women entrepreneurship in the country. Another aspect is exclusion of interest in Islam. Islam strongly prohibits interest (usury) as being exploitative. But, in reality, interest forms the backbone of the modern capital market and money market. Thus, the true followers of Islam find it contradictory to finance their ventures by raising fund from interest based banking system. Thus, even though Islam encourages its followers to be involved in business, a large segment of the practicing Muslims were excluded from this pursuit due to the absence of Islamic banking in the country. However, the introduction of Shariah (Islamic) Banking in the country has eliminated this problem. The recent adoption of shariah banking by hard core interest-based banks like, Standard Chartered Bank, HSBC bank, etc. (due to increased demand) in the country can be an evidence of people's concern for interest-free banking.

### ***Prevalence of Security***

Several writers have described entrepreneurial security as an important facilitator of entrepreneurial behavior. Security essentially involves protection from uncertainties, want, social disapproval and political interference. Brozen (1954) regards security as especially significant claiming that it may be the most important factor promoting entrepreneurship. His emphasis is upon protection from unnecessary



risks. Katzin (1964) stresses freedom from government control whereas Brandenburg (1962) simply cites security for person and property as being significant. No matter what the amount of security is (minimum, moderate etc.) it certainly is important. Roni (2003) maintains that perhaps this is the most important factor inhibiting entrepreneurial emergence in Bangladesh. Political disturbance in Bangladesh is high in comparison to neighboring countries. People often turn into unruly mob during observance of political programs, causing destruction of properties. More importantly loss of production increases risk and reduces profit significantly. In addition, a state of uncertainty looms large if frequent hartals are called. This phenomenon makes people cautious about security.

Government action has been another blow to security. After liberation, the government expropriated almost all private enterprises although some of these were given back later on; the government organizations have created insecurity on the part of the entrepreneurs.

Security is best protected if the rule of law prevails. In Bangladesh, there is little evidence to support the condition that rule of law could ever be established. Law and order situation has still remained far from satisfactory. People do not find any place to get remedy. Courts have been very ineffective, even devious, in discharging cases. In civil matters also, the court's directives remain unimplemented.

Taking all these factors together, Bangladesh has not been a place for undertaking entrepreneurial activities. Sometimes it is argued that people can do a job better if illegal ways are chosen over legal ways. Those ways certainly cannot be the ways for entrepreneurs who are not rogues.

### ***Social Marginality***

Entrepreneurs can emerge from socially marginal groups, like religious, cultural, ethnic or migrant minority. Their marginal social position is generally believed to have psychological effects, which make entrepreneurship a particularly attractive alternative for them. Marginality, as a factor of influencing entrepreneurship, is contingent upon legitimacy and mobility. If there is high degree of legitimacy and access to mobility channel, mainstreams will play more entrepreneurial roles than marginal. Under opposite conditions, the reverse will be true (Hoselitz 1975, Kriesberg 1963, Lipset, 1967).

Roni (2003) argued that because of inadequacy of

social legitimacy and mobility, the mainstream population in Bangladesh did not come forward with significant entrepreneurial roles. This gap could have been bridged, had there been sufficient number of entrepreneurs from marginal classes in the society. Ironically, for some reasons, the marginal segment of society, such as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and tribal people did not show much entrepreneurial enthusiasm in the country. The religious minority may feel a perceived sense of insecurity for large investment and the tribal people may be too backward to assume any role pertaining to entrepreneurship in the country.

Thus as the entrepreneurially active minority like Ismailiyas, Bohra, or Memons, are too few in number in Bangladesh, they are too scant to fill the gap required for the attainment of required degree of industrialization.

### ***Entrepreneurship Education and Training***

It has been well documented in the literature that entrepreneurship can be taught i.e. the required qualities of an entrepreneur can be developed in a person through education and training. On this ground the education and training on entrepreneurship has received wide recognition as a field of study at the School, College and University level. It is also believed that entrepreneurship can be developed by imparting short-term training programs to different target groups to equip them with the required skills and traits. In line with this proposition, entrepreneurship education and training is imparted at a variety of levels in Bangladesh with multiplicity of content and duration. A course on entrepreneurship has been introduced as an optional paper for SSC and HSC level students of business studies group. A similar course is also offered for the students of polytechnics. Under the National University, a course on entrepreneurship has been introduced for the honors and masters students of management. At the university level, under the BBA program, almost all the universities, both public and private, offer at least one course on entrepreneurship either as a compulsory or optional course.

As far as training is concerned, the number of organizations offering a training program on entrepreneurship has increased tremendously in recent years. Small and Cottage Industries Training Institute (SCITI), a special institute of BSCIC is dedicated to impart short (11-day) training programs on entrepreneurship development and small business management in the country. SCITI conducts training both at its Office in Dhaka and at the field level in

different thanas of the country. Other than SCITI, Women Entrepreneurship Development Program (WEDP), a special program initiated by BSCIC, Bangladesh Institute of Management, Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Directorate of Youth Development etc also offer short training program from time to time on entrepreneurship development in different relevant areas. Apart from government agencies, some private organizations and NGOs like, MIDAS, JOBS, KATALYST, BRAC, Grameen Bank, etc. also offer training programs for their target groups both in urban and rural areas.

Thus, as regard the education and training of entrepreneurship is concerned, Bangladesh has a variety of courses and programs for different levels of students and target groups. However, the curriculum, quality of faculties, methods of delivery, accessibility and overall effectiveness of these programs are yet to be assessed properly.

### Conclusion

The above notions of socio-cultural environment of Bangladesh indicate that it presents both positive and negative forces for the development of entrepreneurship in the country. Bangladesh offers a large pool of easily trainable employees at relatively cheaper price. The occupational and geographic mobility of labor is also observed to be one of the favorable conditions for labor market. However, in line with the cultural dimensions of Hofstede, Bangladesh can be regarded as a country upholding *collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power respect and masculinity*, which are commonly believed to be less friendly for entrepreneurship development. However, since culture is always in a state of flux, many scholars believe that things are changing, in many cases, favorably for development of entrepreneurship in the country. Besides, many scholars identified the risk bearing attitude of the Bangladeshi people as an indication of presence of the entrepreneurial zeal among the people. Moreover, Islam, being the main religion of the people in the country approvingly speaks in favor of entrepreneurship which adds to the stimulation for the entrepreneurship development. However, Islamic taboos related to interest based banking and role of women may be viewed, to some extent, as a barrier to the entrepreneurship development in the country. Lack of social security due to political turmoil in the country, shaky government policy and poor enforcement of law have a serious bearing on the level of investment in the country, which is directly or indirectly related to the entrepreneurship development. Regarding social marginality in

Bangladesh, it is felt that even though socially marginal groups are expected to emerge as entrepreneurs in a country, it did not take much root in Bangladesh due to the meager size of the group or their extreme backwardness. One positive aspect of the socio-cultural environment is that entrepreneurship education and training has been gaining importance in Bangladesh gradually and remarkable quantitative and qualitative changes have been brought in this field which portends optimism for entrepreneurship development in the country.

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