The Role of Development Aid in Policy Diffusion: A Case Study on Gender Responsive Budgeting and Planning in Bangladesh

By

Arup Barua

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Supervisors: Professor Agnes Batory, CEU
and Assistant Professor Fulya Apaydin, ibei

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Author's Declaration

I, the undersigned **Arup Barua** hereby declare that I am the sole researcher and author of this thesis. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no previously published by any other person expect where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non-degree program, in English or in any other language. This is the original and final version of the thesis.

Date: August 31, 2020

Name (printed letters): ARUP BARUA

Signature:

Abstract

This study identifies how development aid can explain policy diffusion – a knowledge gap and aims to address an unexplored aspect of policy diffusion. This study focuses on an instrument centric analysis of policy diffusion while previous studies are mostly dominated by agency centric investigation. It considers that diverse actors adopt development aid as a mean to influence developing countries across the world which results in policy diffusion. Therefore, an inductive and qualitative case study research has been undertaken to investigate this relationship – which would further potentially contribute to theory building. Additionally, this study encourages other researchers to examine the testable hypothesis, proposed in this paper. This hypothesis postulates that unconditional development aid is likely to diffuse policies in a developing country, when three assumptions and conditions are fulfilled. These include policy coherence between global development agenda and national interest; national government's support role and partnerships with other policy actors; and development partners tend to offer financial and technical assistance in the early stage of policy formulation.

Key words: policy diffusion, development aid, gender mainstreaming, gender responsive budgeting

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Acronyms

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All forms Discriminations against Women

CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency

CSW – Commission on the Status of Women

DFID – Department for Foreign and International Development

DPP – Development Project Proposal

ECOSOC – Economic and Social Council

FY – Fiscal Year

FYP – Five year Plan

GAD – Gender and Development

GE – Gender Equality

GM – Gender Mainstreaming

GOB – Government of Bangladesh

GRB – Gender Responsive Budgeting

GRP – Gender Responsive Planning

IO – International Organization

IPRSP – Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

MBF – Ministry Budget Framework

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MoF – Ministry of Finance

MoP – Ministry of Planning

MOWCA – Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

MTBF – Medium Term Budget Framework

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

POA – Plan of Action

PFA – Beijing Platform for Action

PLAGE II – Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality, Phase II

PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SIDA – Swedish International Development Agency

UNIFEM – United Nations Development Fund for Women

UN Women – United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WID – Women in Development

Chapter One
Introduction

Setting the context of the study:

Public policy is a complex phenomenon (Howlett and Ramesh 2003, p.8); it entails political, bureaucratic, technical and economic processes. Public policies create a long-term consequence due to the involvement of diverse actors with divergent priorities, interests, authority and power, and operational cause-effect relationship. Scholars of public policy, political science and others have formulated numerous models, frameworks and theories to understand and explain disparate aspects of policy making and implementation at various levels. Lasswell (1951) offered three major features which made policy sciences unique among a range of academic disciplines: multi-disciplinary approach; problem-solving; and a normative dimension.

Public policies and policy making processes differ, rest upon the type of political system and regime, and how a society is associated with the system (Howlett and Ramesh 2003). The adopted policies and their nature could be analyzed with the variation of regime types (Castles and McKinlay 1997). An agenda-setting approach to public policy underscores the significance of examining the key instruments and interests of primary actors in the decision-making process. It offers better understanding on why some specific issues are addressed, and a few alternatives are recognized by the key policy actors to solve a particular policy problem (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005; Kingdon 1995).

For Kingdon (1995, p. 5), an agenda is "the list of subjects or problems to which government officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying serious attention at any given time". Owing to the limited time span and human resources to extract information, the available inventory of problems and shopping list of potential solutions are compact (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Kingdon 1995). Three separate dynamic streams but to some extent connected, problems stream, policy (alternative) stream and politics stream greatly influence policy process (Kingdon 1995). Different groups of actors are

more vibrant in each stream. Consequently, in each stage of policy making and implementation, actors enjoy their institutional and social environmental leverage.

Following the literature on agenda setting, the knowledge, belief and attitude of key policy actors; and their socialization processes are a vital field to understand policy process and making. And, in addition to domestic players, a set of international actors including individuals, countries, international organizations, non-government organizations, private sector and others can shape the domestic policy formulation in various means through providing information, experiences and financial resources.

In public policy literature, a set of interconnected concepts like policy diffusion, policy transfer, lesson drawing, policy convergence are frequently and interchangeably applied. For Bennett and Howlett (1992, p. 288), this literature is 'over theorized and under applied'. Diffusion studies attempts to highlight adoption styles across a variety of countries (Knill 2005, p. 766). Policy transfer can be regulated by organizations from domestic and international level, and performed through a market mechanism and networks (Stone 2004). Orenstein (2003) asserts that state, non-state actors and international organizations drive policy diffusion as the 'global policy advocates'.

Gender equality and gender mainstreaming are two of the most discussed notions in multiple literature including gender studies. However, there is no monolithic interpretation of these two concepts. Along with different theoretical explanations from various ontological and methodological positions, diverse policy stands on gender equality also prevail. Development community has adopted gender mainstreaming as a vital strategy to embody gender dimensions into policies, programs and projects (Mitchell 2004). Following, True and Mintrom (2001, p. 50) argue that transnational networks of actors, for illustration the United Nations (UN), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have advanced the diffusion of gender mainstreaming agenda. Nevertheless, the mainstreaming agenda and its various instruments have been extensively promoted in the last three decades. Prior to this agenda, a transformation of approaches to gender equality and women's rights had taken place across the world.

By and large, the literature of policy diffusion is dominated by western and high-income countries, but a little effort has been paid to investigate developing country's experiences

scientifically. In parallel, these studies largely undertake an agent-centric approach to policy diffusion. To fill such a knowledge vacuum and complement, this study has adopted an instrument focused study while conducting an examination on a developing country's policy diffusion experience. In this study, I attempted to explore whether development assistance can be a useful instrument to explain policy diffusion or not. In doing so, a purposive country case, Bangladesh has been selected following considering several factors: a developing country that receives significant amount of development aid and considerable assistance in absence of war and armed conflict; it has gained accolade international forum for that particular policy issue; has mostly stable democratic environment; and relevant information and data are available.

Chapter Two
Research Design and Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study and inductive research. Further, it aims to provide more structured insights into a theory-building effort. Perhaps, a single case study method may not be sufficient to develop a scientific theory and establish an appropriate causal mechanism without detailed scientific investigations. However, this case study offers an initial foundation to an unexplored domain, which could potentially contribute to a theory construction. Ragin (1999, p. 1139) reflects on different reasons for the use of case studies in social science research. For instance, he highlights both causes: sometimes case study is considered for in-depth investigation, and taking a typical examination. With a reference to Eckstein (1975), Ragin also illustrates that cases are often adopted for theoretical purposes.

The case study method had been applied profusely in multiple academic disciplines and literature which include education research, psychology, sociology, political science, organizational research etc. To name a few, Yin (1981, 1984, 1989); Eisenhardt (1989); Wievorka (1992); Ragin (1992); Stake (1995); Bennett (2005); Gerring (2007) are among notable scholars who had researched on case study significantly. Case study is often interchangeably used with case and case study research (Herling et al. 2000). However, an experimental method also aims to theory-building through recurrent examination of the same hypothesis. It rests upon the 'logic of comparison' and comparing the results of two different conditions which are resulted from a single attributed variable (Loyed-Jones, 2003, p. 34).

In social sciences there are several interpretations of "case study" research (Schwandt and Gates, 2018, p. 590). Therefore, undertaking a case study method or methodology is a complex effort. Swanborn (2010) indicates that a case can be found at different levels: micro, meso, and macro; and engages single or multiple actors (cited in Schwandt and Gates, 2018, p. 591). Ragin (1992) contends that a case can be perceived as an *empirical unit* or a *theoretical construct*. Radley and Chamberlain (2012, p. 391) note that in psychology, case study uses individuals as the unit of analysis by and large; also family could be adopted as a unit. Yin (1984) stresses case study can imply single or multiple cases as well as several levels of analysis.

Stake (2005) argues "case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied". It stresses much on analytical rigor in the inquiry. Miles (2015, p. 309) argues case study as a context-dependent knowledge provides detailed knowledge for the researchers and others, which could be further used as lesson learning. Case study can use both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments at large (Eisenhardt 1989, pp. 534-535), while it relies upon researcher's research objective and interest.

For Yin (1984, p. 23), a case study research indicates "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". Simmons (2009, p. 21) provides a definition of case study: "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a real life context". Case study as a research strategy underscores on the understanding of causal aspects in a single setting (Eisenhardt 1989, p. 534). Furthermore, Thomas (2011, pp. 512-513) points out two elements of a case: a *subject* and an *object*. He elaborates that a subject should not mean a sample or representative of a population but an "interesting or unusual or revealing example", from which elements of objects could be undertaken.

Types of case study

Case study scholars have distinguished various forms of case studies in their works. The boundary of a case study can be outlined by considering a number of aspects: time frame, actor, event, institution and other analytical frame (Thomas 2011, p. 516) Bassey (1999) categories and explains five types of case studies in his book, *Case Study Research in Educational Research Settings,* namely theory-seeking; theory-testing; story-telling; picture-drawing and evaluative. In similar effort, Yin (2009) also indicates five types of case study: critical; extreme; longitudinal; representative and revelatory. While George and Bennett (in Thomas 2011, p. 515) classify five groups in case studies which include atheoretical/configurative idiographic; disciplined configurative; heuristic; theory testing; plausibility probes; "building block" studies of particular types or sub-types.

A case study can be adopted to entertain a number of objectives. Kidder (1982) highlights more on descriptive aspects; Anderson (1983), Pinfield (1986) stresses on theory testing; while Gersick (1988), Harris and Sutton (1986), and others sheds light on theory generation. Eisenhardt (1989) elaborates the process of theory building from a case study, which entails a multistep undertaking. This process is initiated with a research question to be investigated along with no theoretical considerations and no hypothesis to be tested (p. 536). Following, it transforms through *shaping hypothesis, enfolding literature and reaching closure* – which might not be feasible in one research. Therefore, this particular study doesn't generate a theory inevitably, but paves the way towards theory generation.

Criticisms of case study

Like other social science research tools, case study confronts multiple criticisms too. Making a generalization and establishing a causal inference from a case study are frequently questioned. Yin (1984, p. 21) contends - "How can [one] generalize from a single case"? Likewise, Kennedy (1979) also remarks that owing to inadequacy of generalization of case study, it's not adequately scientific inquiry. Bromley (1986) also posits that establishing external validity is a concern for single-case study research. On the contrary, Runyan (1982) and Fylvbjerg (2006) offer substantial explanations to counter such critiques. Runyan (1982, p. 441) in *In Defense of the Case Study Method* refutes four conceptual confusions around case study: use of retrospective method; arguments on qualitative versus quantitative method; use of "subjective" versus "objective" data; and the role of case studies in testing and generating causal relations (see Runyan 1982). In similar fashion, Flyvberg extends this discussion through the article "Five misunderstandings about case-study research" published in 2006. It scrutinizes five typical misunderstandings: over importance of theoretical knowledge than context-dependent knowledge; lack of capacity of single case study to contribute scientific reasoning; case study is more convenient to hypothesis generation; verification bias; and difficulty of making summary of case studies. Bryman (1988) and Flyvbjerg (2004) assert case study offers generalization to the theoretical postulation more than to population. Huberman and Miles (1993) argue that it's a technical discretion of the researcher to maintain a certain boundary of case study research (in Radley and Chamberlain 2012, p. 391& 393).

Data collection and analysis

In this study, both primary and secondary data have been applied. Primary information and data were collected from the key informant interviews, which were conducted through an open-ended questionnaire. Primary data which are recorded and used for this paper respect interviewees' oral consent. About the secondary data, these are gathered from a wide range of sources including journal articles, institutional reports, project documents, evaluation reports, ministries' circulars, publications etc. – used for the documents analysis.

Triangulation

To comply with the optimum validation of this research, triangulation has been carried out through analyzing reviewed documents and information recorded during interviews.

Research question

Whether and how development aid/assistance can explain policy diffusion in a developing country context?

Study objectives

To answer the above mentioned research question, this study entails two research objectives (these are not mutually exclusive):

1. Critically analyze the institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting and planning in Bangladesh
2. Examine how development assistance/aid has shaped the diffusion of gender responsive budgeting and planning in Bangladesh

Hypothesis and assumptions

This study constructs a testable hypothesis on policy diffusion that could further contribute to a theory formulation. This hypothesis postulates that development assistance (unconditional or untied) is likely to contribute to policy diffusion when the following assumptions and conditions are fulfilled:

Number one: There is broad policy coherence in global development agenda and national interest/ priority;

Number two: National government has a supportive attitude towards collaboration with other actors, and functional partnership with development partners (donors), and international organizations;

Number three: At the earlier stage of policy formulation process, especially during agenda setting development partners extend disparate forms of supports including technical expertise and financial resources.

Limitations of this study

This inductive case study research has several shortcomings, which could be taken into account while conducting further research on this hypothesis. Firstly, it is a single researcher led study as the condition of an academic degree completion. Therefore, a team of researcher would be able to build on this hypothesis with more rigorous methods. Secondly, this study explicitly focuses on single explanatory variable, development aid. At empirical level, all records on development assistance for gender mainstreaming or gender budgeting in Bangladesh might not be covered for this analysis. Thirdly, as I looked into historical backgrounds, many of the documents, reports, and data were not available or accessible due to lack of institutional repository, professionals' frequent job change, retirement, demise etc. Fourthly, on language barrier issue, I accessed only documents and publications in English and Bengali, so other essential documents in other languages might be missed out. Finally, due to COVID-19 global pandemic, the field study and data collection have been hampered and delayed, however, I attempted to mitigate this challenge through using online tools.

Chapter Three
Review of literature

In this literature review section, I am going to underline and discuss major issues, concepts and their empirical evidence demonstrated by other scholars. In this manner, I would precisely review and reflect on the literature of policy diffusion; mechanism of policy diffusion; gender equality and gender mainstreaming, their associated instruments; development assistance (or aid).

Firstly, I reflect on the core of policy diffusion literature. The policy diffusion scholarship is not new and still evolving. Perhaps, it has its roots in a number of academic disciplines since the mid-20th century. Policy diffusion scholarship has emerged from some sub-disciplines of policy studies, political science, communication studies etc., which has its scopes within each sub-field (Bennett 1991; Graham, Shipan and Volden 2012, p. 674). Graham, Shipan and Volden (2012) in their study argued that a diffusion study has been enlarged from four disciplines: American politics; comparative politics; international relations; and other fields. However, diffusion studies and the number of literature experienced a steady growth since the 1980s. Following, since the late 1990s and the early 2000s, diffusion literature has enriched manifolds (Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett 2007; 2008).

In the policy studies, there are several concepts: policy diffusion, transfer, convergence, learning, lesson drawing, harmonization etc. – have some conceptual overlapping and complement each other (Marsh and Sharman 2008, p. 269; Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett 2008; Graham, Shipan and Volden 2012, p.684; and but these have different focus (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000).

Policy diffusion is a process and a choice; when a country's policy decision is influenced by a policy instrument adopted and implemented by another country (Simmons and Elkins 2004, p.171; Braun and Gilardi 2006, p. 299; Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett 2008, p.781). For Strang (1991, p. 325), it is a process of adoption – "a trait or practice in a population alters the probability of adoption for the remaining non-adopters". Significantly, policy diffusion looks into interest-driven, structural and non-intentional processes (Obinger, Schmitt and Starke 2013,

p.113). On the contrary, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p.5) define policy transfer as a process through which "knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system". Policy transfer literature has its root in the USA, where investigations were carried out to elucidate several policy adoptions across federal level (Stone 2004, p. 546). Policy transfer studies believe in the centrality of operative agents (Stone 2004). Furthermore, some scholars from other disciplines, particularly sociology, adopt '*institutional isomorphism*' to examine the process of sameness in various decisions adopted by the governments, firms and others (Strang and Meyer 1993; Strang and Soule 1998).

Secondly, I detail out the agents and their nature, associated with policy diffusion and policy transfer processes. Since policy-making involves multi-actors in different stages of policy development, consequently a wide range of policy actors are central to this discussion. To understand policy diffusion better, it is crucial to have an *ante* understanding about the policy agents (Graham, Shipan and Volden 2012). In their study, they categorize three major types of actors in the diffusion process: internal; external; and go-betweens (pp. 16- 21). The internal actors are the domestic players, primarily dominated by the government. Following, the externals are the international actors, some of them have institutional and coercive power; and go-betweens make a bridge between the domestic and international actors. Furthermore, interests, preference and capacities vary among actors, and these factors affect the diffusion process and the outcome (Graham, Shipan and Volden, pp. 16-17).

On the other side, Dolowitz and Marsh's (1996; 2000, p.10) classification of agents explicitly identifies the key actors in the policy transfer process: elected officials; bureaucrats; political parties; pressure groups; policy entrepreneurs and experts; transnational corporations; think tanks; supra-national governmental and non-governmental institutions; and consultants. Haas (1992) stresses on the role of 'epistemic communities' in fostering policy makers' learning, and contribution to the diffusion of policies. Academia, researcher institutes, think tanks, mass media and intergovernmental organizations impact the dissemination of policies from one government to another (Dolowitz 1997, Stone 2004, Brooks 2005).

Thirdly, I highlight some selected and most discussed studies in policy diffusion literature. The early phase of diffusion study was influenced by a couple of seminal studies conducted by Rogers (1962), Walker (1969), Gray (1973) and others.

The evolution of diffusion studies

Rogers' (1962) original study *Diffusion of Innovations* is considered as a groundbreaking contribution to the diffusion studies, particularly in the field of innovation adoption. His model is widely applied in several disciplines including public health, education, communication, political science, technology etc. Rogers (2003, p. 13) defines technology is "a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving desired outcome". Following he describes diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (p. 5). Furthermore, Rogers elaborated the innovation-decision process to understand the innovation adoption; it includes five phases: i. knowledge; ii. persuasion; iii. decision; iv. implementation; and v. confirmation.

Following, Walker's (1969) article *the diffusion of innovations among American states* was an inductive approach to build theory from American state level experiences. He attempted to answer two major questions: i. why some states adopted new programs before others, and become a pioneer?; ii. how did new types of relations diffuse among the American states? (p. 881). He focused on the way through which organizations adopted a decision from a number of potential solutions. Walker explained such variations in adoptions through applying two broad types of factors: demographic and political (pp. 883- 887). One of the robust contributions of Walker's study is its elaboration of emulation in policy making, one of the diffusion mechanisms (p. 888). Along with several limitations, he indicated future investigations for theory building.

Furthermore, Gray's (1973) study, *Innovation in the states: a diffusion study* significantly contributed to the growth of diffusion studies. In this study she investigated three questions, in three separate policy areas – education, welfare and civil rights, and in different times. She answered the three following questions: a. how did new ideas diffuse among states; b. why some states were more innovative than other states; c. was there any similar diffusion pattern or not (p. 1175). One of the notable strengths of her study was the successful construction of interaction-

based diffusion model, which supported to explain adoption variations in three policy areas. Political and economic determinants were also effective in tracing some differences.

Meseguer (2005) conducts a study on policy diffusion, with a focus on policy learning and how this mechanism differs from other diffusion mechanisms. In her article, she distinguished rational learning and bounded learning; and stressed on rational learning from other countries' policies on the market and regulatory reforms. She also marks the difficulties in conducting an empirical test on this approach.

Following, Jordana, Levi-Faur and Marin (2011) study find a global diffusion of regulatory agencies across the globe, based on investigating in 48 countries and 15 sectors for a long time period. They also reveal a new pattern of restructuring of traditional bureaucracy, and acknowledge similarity with some other studies that other countries and international institutions can influence a country's policy adoption.

Diane Stone's articles (1999, 2004, and 2012) have also captured the attention of policy diffusion scholars and researchers. She argues that the growth of policy transfer is somewhat connected to globalization; and some countries and international organizations are more motivated in exporting policy lessons (1999, p. 51). In addition, she notes, the interdisciplinary approaches to policy transfer make diffusion literature comprehensive. In addition, Stone (2004) underlines the critical role of IOs and non-state actors through policy transfer networks, while she argued government agencies were at the core of earlier studies.

Mechanisms/ processes of policy diffusion

The mechanisms or processes of policy diffusion have been an engaging area of research and examined by numerous scholars in multiple academic disciplines including social sciences, technological innovation, information technology, behavioral sciences, psychology and other fields. DiMaggio and Powell (1983), Lee and Strang (2003), Simmons and Elkins (2004), Meseguer (2005), Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett (2008), Volden (2005, 2006, 2007), Shipan and Volden (2008) are the key scholars who studied policy diffusion mechanisms extensively in the recent times; previously Bennett (1991) detailed four processes of policy convergence, which are the most commonly observed – contributes to policy diffusion as well. Similarly, Towns (2012, pp. 184-185) also elaborated the processes of norms diffusion.

But, perhaps the diffusion study dates back to early 1940s – particularly while Ryan and Gross (1943) published their research "The diffusion of hybrid seed corn in two Iowa communities" in *Rural Sociology*. Following, Rogers' (1962) seminal book *The Diffusion of Innovation* had been a high impactful in diffusion studies, and through its several editions of 1962, 1971, 1983 and 1995 he established a model on diffusion of innovation (DOI). The latest edition has been published in 2003 that explores the adoption of the internet.

Bass (1969) introduced his innovation diffusion model and proposed five adoption categories: innovators; early adopters; the early majority; the late majority; and laggards. Subsequently, Rogers in his innovation diffusion model applied mathematical models and extended it significantly. Furthermore, he articulated that four factors influence new innovation adoptions, which involve the innovation; communication channels; time and the social system (Cheng et al. 2005, p. 440).

In his review article, Bennett (1991) elaborated four different mechanisms but all are directly associated with specific empirical cases and conditions. These mechanisms are emulation; elite networking; harmonization; and penetration (p. 220). Emulation stresses on the analysis of existing evidence, experiences that other countries have about a particular policy problem or a set of problems; and actors might emulate others' policy goals, policy contents and policy instruments (pp. 221-222). Following, elite networking offers a regular interaction of elites and other policy actors which result in their exchange of ideas, experiences and problem-solving knowledge. Owing to actions led by transnational actors including intergovernmental organization, supranational institutions and nature of problems, there is an alignment or common traits in dealing with the similar domestic problems; and an avenue is established for transnational co-operation (p. 225). Finally, contrast to harmonization, penetration is a non-voluntary and coercive way where a state is compelled to adopt a certain policy decision or measures (p. 227).

Following, Meseguer (2005) explicitly investigated policy learning as a policy diffusion mechanism in the context of market and regulatory reform. Lee and Strang's (2006) work on government-downsizing applies evidence-based learning to explore cross-country experiences. Weyland (2007) also underscored on learning as a diffusion mechanism, with a focus on bounded learning (Meseguer and Gilardi 2009, p. 529).

In a different style, from an economic aspect, Simmons and Elkins (2004, p.172) articulate two broad diffusion mechanisms: foreign economic policies might 'alter the payoffs', linked to adopting or keeping a domestic policy; and available information set about foreign economic policies might modify national government's policy decision, as a potential response to external policy.

However, amongst all researchers' outlined stripes of diffusion mechanisms, four mechanisms are most common: learning; emulation; competition, and coercion.

Learning

In the domain of policy studies, policy learning is one of the most discussed issues as a diffusion mechanism. Learning denotes a mechanism when a policy actor learns from existing knowledge and previously executed policy in a similar domain. In general, this form of policy adoption is about to happen while the same policy instruments or similar policy goals are well executed, and attained desired results (Braun and Gilardi 2006; Volden 2006; Gilardi 2010; Jensen and Lindstadt 2012). National policy actors often opt for policy strategies which are approved and tested in abroad; and, occasionally, look for 'best practices' to avoid unknown policy consequences (Obinger, Schmitt and Starke 2013, p.114).

Meseguer (2005, p. 72) asserts policy learning is a voluntary venture. Learning only takes place when policy actors believe in a cause and effect (Elkins and Simmons 2005). Levy (1994, p. 286) argues policy actors might be learning at two levels: basic tactical level, about attaining a specific policy goal; and deep level, where actors have insights to take what policy goal. States may also learn together from joining in international organizations (Haas 1959). In parallel, Nye (1987) asserts that international institutions buttress member states' learning associated to a particular policy through their established norms, rules and operating procedures.

Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2007, p. 460) highlights three approaches to social learning: social knowledge from the political science perspective; Bayesian learning from economics perspective; and channeled learning in political science. Meseguer (2005) distinguishes rational learning and bounded learning as two forms of learning; and, also states with a reference to prospect theory that political actors do not add the same weight to all information, and they prioritize some pieces of information. The literature on policy studies and

diffusion encounter a number of terminologies which suggest a similar understanding that includes *political learning* (Heclo 1974); *lesson drawing* (Rose 1991); *instrumental learning* (May 1992); *social learning* (Hall 1993); *policy-oriented learning* (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993), to mention a few. For Rose (1991, p. 21), "lesson-drawing draws upon empirical evidence of programme in effect elsewhere to create a new programme for adoption at home".

Emulation

This mechanism of policy diffusion, emulation, is closely connected with the learning mechanism. Contrary to learning, policy emulation is an unsighted performance by adopters, Meseguer (2005, p. 79) calls it a "blind action" when actors neither reflect on previously developed policy outcomes or instruments nor contextualize their own empirical determinants. Maggetti and Gilardi (2016) contend that policy impact is not objectively considered in policy emulation. Socially constructed elements, events, and symbolic aspects of policy are quite significant, as underscored by Cao (2009), Greenhill (2010), Krook and True (2010). Furthermore, argued that over time emulation process gets modified which rests on social acceptance. With the citation of Holden (1986) and, Conell and Cohn (1995), Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2007, p. 462) present that emulation of successful policies takes place frequently. Meyer et al. (1997) observe isomorphism is coupled concept with emulation, which signifies a growing similarity of policies across the world as a result of policy diffusion – further contribute to the creation of a 'world society'.

Coercion

In policy diffusion literature, there is a contention whether coercion would be distinct diffusion mechanism or not. Simmons, Dobbin and Garrett (2018) classify coercion as a separate and significant mechanism; reversely Maggetti and Gilardi (2016) have an opposite stance. For Gilardi (2012), coercion denotes an actor's policy adoption resulted from external pressure from other states or international institution. Maggetti and Gilardi (2016, p. 90) denied to consider coercion as a policy diffusion mechanism.

Owing to a member of disparate international organizations (IOs) and supranational organizations, member states are often subject to encounter coercion in various forms (Obinger, Schmitt and Starke 2013, p.115). They also argue that acute power imbalance and asymmetry

among states and, between a state and an IO might occasionally result in coercion as a policy diffusion mechanism. Thompson (2006) contends "powerful states often channel [their] coercive policies through international organizations" (cited in Bearce and Bondanella, 2007, p. 708). This mechanism is much relevant to the regulatory and reform conditions attached with financial aid packages, sanctioned by international financial institutions as well as donor countries.

For DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p. 150), coercive diffusion resembles with coercive isomorphism – where an organization confronts both formal and informal stresses from other organizations, and a dependent relationship functions there.

At the global level, some powerful countries can adopt coercive instruments over other countries through trade and economic sanctions. They can use both hard power and soft power through international institutions like the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Shipan and Volden 2008, p. 843).

Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2007, p. 454) find coercion as an anti-liberal mechanism. They extend that power of manipulation of information and expertise including financial cost and benefit contributes to some countries' and organizations' coercive mechanism.

Conditionality, policy leadership and hegemonic ideas key forms of varying coercion in diffusion mechanism (Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett 2007, pp. 454-457). Among these three forms, conditionality could be perceived as harsh coercion; and policy leadership and hegemonic ideas as soft coercion. Mosley et al. (1995) explored the root of conditionality and found the World Bank's loans under structural adjustment programme (SAP) had a far reaching impact on IFIs' conditionality, imposed on many countries. In most of the cases, developing countries in a dire need of financial resources, and to access incentives, they have to accept and comply with such conditions consequently (Vreeland 2003, in Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett 2007). Grueber (2000) explains, perhaps powerful countries can influence weak countries unintentionally; that is named as go-it-alone-power by Grueber. And, leaders mostly advance well tested models for their domestic decision making. Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2007, p. 456) claim hegemonic ideas as the weakest form of coercion, where ideational channels are applied by dominant actors to exhibit their influence over others. Epistemic communities or policy entrepreneurs are crucial actors to endorse ideas politically (Haas 1992, Mintrom 1997).

Competition

Competition is another form of horizontal policy diffusion process (Meseguer 2005). Since this process mostly indicates a market driven and economic aspect, it is also named as economic competition, like Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett (2007), and Shipan and Volden (2008) address. In an international setting, when an economy competes for export and capital markets, some forms of policy diffusion take place. To attract foreign investment and maintain a competitive export market, governments have to adopt a market-friendly economic policy (Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett 2007, p. 457). Formerly, in the 1970s, Hannan and Freeman's (1977) study, *the population ecology of organizations* cultivated a market led competitive diffusion mechanism. Competition for economic and trade reasons does not always yield in positive results but also unintended consequences. Conybeare (1986) contends economic competitions among countries could be detrimental, perhaps can result in faltering trade negotiations and trade wars.

Holzinger and Knill (2005) advocate that the scope of above discussed mechanisms mostly rest on several conditional factors (cited in Obinger, Schmitt and Starke 2013). That implies bilateral and multilateral relationships among countries and organizations robustly determine how they would interact with one another. Furthermore, they added the nature of political institutions, ideology, existing policy, and strategic ambitions are significant conditional factors.

Gender mainstreaming and its instruments

In the following discussion, I single out gender mainstreaming (GM) and gender responsive budgeting; and development assistance as practical components of this study.

Charlesworth (2005) notes 'gender mainstreaming' has turned into development mantra in international institutions to deal with gender inequalities and discrimination. For Morley (2007, p. 609), GM is an antidote to gender marginalization. Gender equality (GE) had been a founding principle of the Charter of the United Nations (United Nations), but the mainstreaming approach picked up the steam following the first 'Decade for Women'. When it was declared by the UN in 1975, women in development (WID) was a dominant approach. After that, the Fourth

World Conference on Women produced the real momentum for GM at the UN and other IOs levels. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defines gender mainstreaming:

> The process of assessing the implications for women and men for any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences as an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. (ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2)

However, within feminist school there are several critiques – outline the limitations of GM. In the similar fashion, Hankivsky (2005, p. 978) expresses "GM is inherently limited and limiting because it prioritizes gender as the axis of discrimination".

Further, gender budgeting/ gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is one of the most adopted instruments for GM and gender equality. A gender budgeting embodies a gender analysis of several aspects of revenue collection and public expenditure. However, there prevails no uniform pattern to execute this and several tools can be applied (Elson 1998; Budlender and Sharp 1998). IOs have promoted GM principles at various levels, which can be classified into operational GM and institutional GM (Payne 2011, p. 519). GRB formulation and implementation reflects more about operational GM, where GE aspects to be addressed in governments' policies, programs and projects.The enforcement of gender budgeting can vary; which rests upon the nature of the political system; budget coverage and the phase of the budget cycle (Elson 2002, p.16). Elson (2002, p. 18) further notes, basic principles of GRB should count: knowledge of gender inequality; and knowledge of public sector finance and programmes.

Aid and development

Lastly, development aid, foreign aid and development assistance are some popular notions which are used interchangeably in development studies and foreign policy literature. These tools had been a central part of foreign policy of the wealthiest countries particularly after World War II, in the wake of restructuring a new world and regional orders. These patterns of behavior are still in sight and both donor countries and IOs influence less developed or developing countries' national development and policy environment. Aid granting creates and deepens an avenue for an institutional influence and authority (Clifford 2005, p. 86). For

instance, Marshall Plan was the biggest aid programme, also called American assistance, a total of $14 billion, for the recovery of war-wrecked European economy (Kunz 1997; Eichengreen and Uzan 1992; Mallalieu 1958).

Many newly emerged countries especially through war and armed conflict, and poor economies had been heavily depended on foreign aid and development assistance. According to the World Bank (1998), on an average more than 53% of government expenditures sourced from aid, for 50 most aid recipient countries, for the period 1975 – 1995 (cited in Svensson 2000, p. 62). Since the 1960s, the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have contributed to a huge volume through bilateral and multilateral channels. Further, Morrissey (2004, p. 153) showed, on average, aid as a percentage share of GDP was increased to 15 from 6, for the low-income countries. While for low-middle income countries it stayed stable around 3%; for the same time period between 1970-75 and 1991-95.

Donor countries' and organizations' potential interests for aid giving can be examined from three dimensions: commercial; political or strategic and economic (Clifford 2005, p.79). Private charity is not considered as foreign aid or development assistance. Conditionality of development assistance is a concern of central criticism against aid and development. Conditions or strings attached with aid programs, most commonly by the IFIs compel states to follow and adopt a particular policy option.

In the 1980s, conditionality or tie became a key aspect of development assistance and international money lending (Morissey 2004, p.154) and structural adjustment programmes heightened this practice. Following, Washington Consensus and its associated reforms conditionality affected the growth and institutional development in many counties across the world. However, attached conditionality or tied aid rest upon the interests and nature of the donor organizations and countries. Some countries and agencies are more prone to imposing varying degrees of conditions. To illustrate, the British government and their development agency seem not putting any aid condition: "the UK will not make aid conditional on specific policy decisions, or attempt to impose policy choices" (cited in Evaluation of DFID's Policy and Practice, Jansen et al. 2006 p. 16).

The impact of aid on national development and economic growth is a contested domain. There are several explanations in favor and against, which assess different decisive factors for development. Chenery and MacEwan (1966, p. 177) argue that the prime role of aid should support the expansion of an economy. Rosenstein- Rodan (1969) familiarized the notion 'aid as a catalyst' and noted aid should be disbursed where it might have a maximum impact in mobilizing national effort. However, Boone (1994), Burnside and Dollar (2000), Dollar and Svensson (2000) reveal that some studies identify a little nexus between aid and macro level economic indicators. Pronk (2004) comments aid does not result in development, but it may support in connecting and following a right direction. In addition, institutional scholars argue that aid cannot be utilized best due to the poor institutional environment.

Chapter Four
Frameworks for Analysis

At this section, I would present and discuss a set of theoretical and conceptual frameworks which might offer a deeper understanding on a number of events. Perhaps a single theory, model or conceptual framework would not suffice to explain a wide range of behaviors and actions, demonstrated by different actors including states and international institutions. In this part, I elaborate policy diffusion theories; norms diffusion models, closely linked to policy diffusion theory; models of gender equality; and a taxonomy of power, to explain the significance of power in international affairs.

Policy diffusion theories

Numerous scholars, who studied policy diffusion, outlined distinct aspects in their diffusion theories. Therefore, policy diffusion theories can also be categorized. Quang Bui (2015) in his review article "review of innovation diffusion theories and mechanism" classifies three major types of diffusion theories, based on a review of a gamut of disciplines: i. classic diffusion theory; ii. institutional diffusion theory; iii. cognitive-institutional diffusion theory. Each type of diffusion theory stresses on different diffusion mechanisms, which is also context-dependent.

Classic diffusion theories focus on the interaction among the actors which spread information about new ideas, innovation and technologies. A contact, point-to-point interactions among actors diffuse innovations across regions and a population (Strang and Meyer 1993; Strang and Soule 1998). Ryan and Gross (1943), Rogers (1962, 1995) advance these classic diffusion theories, which are mostly grounded on information-based models – while innovation diffusion takes through different communication channels from the innovators, early adopters to others. Rogers (2003) argues that adopters spot the benefit in adopting new innovations – they become attractive to others. Classic diffusion theorists reflect on the adopter centric cost and benefit analysis (Strang and Meyer 1993). However, classic diffusion theories have their theoretical limitations – influence of external actors', environment and factors is not well considered.

Institutional diffusion theories are a major and substantial type of theory, which can explain the adopter's external environment, and shape actors' decision making process. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) spearheaded the establishment of institutional diffusion theory, from a sociological perspective. They examined institutional diffusion in a lens of institutional homogenization and flagged up three different mechanisms: *coercive isomorphism*; *mimetic isomorphism*; and *normative isomorphism* (pp. 150 -154). This group of theorists argues that actors including organizations are not interested in taking risks of losing advantages and benefits from non-adoption reasons. Following, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) sheds on the indirect benefit, symbolic benefits, in ratifying institutional adoption. In short, institutional diffusion theories underscore how actors' adoption decision is shaped by institutional factors (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, Scott 2008). However, these theories are also not free from limitations and criticisms. Major constraints are their overemphasis on institutional influence, dearth of engagement with agency, why and how early adoptions take place, and their institutional evolvement (Child 1997, Strang and Macy 2001, Heugens and Lander 2009, Bui 2015).

Finally, the cognitive-institutional diffusion theory, also perceived as a sub-group of institutional diffusion theory. It is a macro level theory, which focuses on the mechanism that fosters or limits innovation adoption (Bui 2015). The role of information is a key aspect of cognitive-institutional diffusion theory; it asserts collective information supports cognitive learning for innovation adoption at an organizational level (Wang 2009). Collective learning and actions direct to organizational adoption that is influenced by population and community. Social learning bestows a causal explanation for its innovation diffusion mechanism (Bui 2015). The significant contribution of this theory is its elucidation about how peoples' collective learning shapes organizational behavior (Wang 2009). Nevertheless, it has several limitations as well; the major criticism is that it does not connect the features of innovation that attract adopters.

Theories of norms diffusion in international affairs

In international relations, the study of norms - evolution and diffusion, is a substantial area which contributes to policy diffusion and public policy literature. In general, a norm indicates "a standard of behavior for a given identity" (Finnemore and Sikknik 1998, p. 891; Katzenstein 1996, p. 5), "legitimate behavioral claim" (Florini 1996, p.15). Norms are

established as a patterned behavior through a continued replication of a specific behavior by a country (Goertz and Diehl 1992, p. 636).

Krook and True (2010, pp. 106-108), in *Rethinking the life cycle of international norms* scrutinized four styles of norm diffusion: i. the world- polity model; ii. the norm life-cycle model by Finnemore and Sikknik (1998); iii. the boomerang effect model, and iv. the spiral pattern model.

The world-polity model owes its core to primarily sociologists and scholars of international relations; underscores the idea of 'world culture' which promotes values, ideas, norms globally among states (Simmons 2009). Krook and True (2010) contend, as of this model, nation-states are a result of cultural construction, and placed in a world society – that advances cultural means of globalization, learning and copying, and institutional isomorphism. The essence of this model is that defined norms are followed and adopted by states (Tskhay 2020, p. 21).

Norm life-cycle model is grounded on Finnemore and Sikknik's (1998, p. 895) conception; they suggest norm development is a three-stage mechanism: a. norm emergence; b. norm acceptance; and c. norm internalization. Furthermore, they claim norms diffuse in the international community while they ensure support from states' 'critical mass'. The model has a missing link in why a state gets interested in implementing and complying with a norm. In addition, Sikknik (2005, p. 172) indicates the desire of developing a dynamic model which can explain the interplay between domestic and international actors.

The boomerang effect model was originally introduced by Keck and Sikkink (1998). This model attempts to explain how norm diffusion takes place even against a state's resistance. Transnational advocacy networks have a vital role in promoting norms across international institutions and nations (Keck and Sikkink 1998). It reiterates where civil society has less influence over state, then domestic groups aim to connect and ally with transnational actors to lobby with the state, or international institutions may also exhibit their principled power. This model particularly signifies the role of transnational actors and communities in the diffusion process, as policy entrepreneurs (Krook and True 2010, p. 107). Furthermore, Cortell and Davis Jr. (1996), and Goertz and Diehl (1992) add, it also highlights the role of political elites and

authorities in norms implementation since they transform domestic legitimacy (in Tskhay 2020, p. 23).

The spiral model of norm implementation is developed upon the boomerang effect model by Risse et al. (1999). This model focuses on the role of non-state actors in norm socialization, where state is mostly non-compliant; and outlines five stages of norm promotion and socialization. These stages are: domestic repression; state denial; tactical concessions; prescriptive status; and rule-consistent behavior (Risse et al. 1999, p. 20; Krook and True 2010). The most striking aspect of this model is that it underlines the interaction and interplay among domestic non-state actors, state actors and international community. Notwithstanding, the drawback of this model is its bounded engagement with the critical factors that can explain states' norm commitment and compliance.

Power dynamics in international politics and development

"politics is saturated with power: whether hard and sharp, whether soft, sweet or sticky, whether agentic or structural, power determines how political outcomes are produced and how the identities and actions of diverse actors, individuals, or institutions are enabled, produced, constrained, and transformed" – Weldes (2010)

The theoretical dimensions of power and power asymmetry have huge implications to understand the relations among states, states and international institutions – how they interact and regulate others' behavior and decision making process at various levels. Particularly, at the global level, power dynamics can partly explain inter-state and state- international organization relations. For Barnett and Duvall (2005), "global governance without power looks very different from global governance with power".

However, power is not a unilateral concept; it has different interpretations and multiple meanings and typology. In international relations, disparate schools of thought particularly realist, liberals, constructivists, neoliberal institutionalists offer different understandings on the nature of power; and how power yields in various forms of international events and outcomes. In this section, I adopt Barnett and Duvall's (2005) power taxonomy, to better understand various forms of power and their complex and reciprocal effect in international affairs and politics. Additionally, this power taxonomy would provide further insights into analyzing policy diffusion and its distinct mechanisms.

"Power is the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate." (Barnett and Duvall 2005, p. 39)

Barnett and Duvall (2005, p. 48), adopts four types of power: *compulsory power*; *institutional power*; *structural power*; and *productive power*.

Barnett and Duvall's delineated compulsory power following classical realist style definition of power. It has a similar conception of 'power' defined by Dahl (1957), from a behaviorist approach, which indicates the capacity of an actor in compelling another actor to perform a set of actions. For Weber (1947), the notion of power is the "probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability exists". For the realist scholars, compulsory power, commonly known as hard power – is the supreme power to protect a state's own interest. As of Baldwin (2002, p.178), along with material capabilities, symbolic resources are a key tool in exercising compulsory power. However, other IR scholars disagree with realist tradition of power definition and exercise.

Institutional power, unlike compulsory power, is not coercive and direct in nature. Relational dimension and engagement instruments between actors are the key factors which make institutional power distinctive from compulsory power. Barnett and Duvall (pp. 51-52) suggest institutional power cannot be fully monopolized by a single actor rather it's a collective action and inter-state's relations are institutionally organized. They further argue coordination challenges and cooperation problems could be solved by institutional approach, although focal points can take advantage in shaping collective agenda and outcomes. For illustration, the World Health Organization (WHO) possesses an institutional power to lead and coordinate any global health crisis, mandated by the Charter of the United Nations (Article 57).

Subsequently, the other two forms of power, structural and productive powers operate and diffuse through social relations; however, functional specificity makes a variation between these two powers. It is also often raised, for some scholars use institutional and structural power interchangeably. With a reference to Bhaskar (1979) and Isaac (1987), Barnett and Duvall (2005) claim structural power theorists indicate structure as an internal relation. There is a structural

relation among social beings and this relation is mutually constructed. Furthermore, identify two directions in which structural power defines the outcomes of actors' coexistence: i. structural relations do not demonstrate equal social relations, rather result in unequal status and capacities; ii. structural power forms actors' self-understanding and interest. Amongst constructivists, there is an ideational discrepancy between the structural theorists and sociological institutionalists. Latter camp does not view structure as internal relations among actors. According to Finnemore (1996), structural power signals that rules contribute to the creation of actors' roles, identities and interests.

Lastly, productive power is another category of power that advances through the construction and re-construction of discourse, social process and knowledge system. This power directs to a social transformation. Foucault's *power and knowledge* conception also contributes to the understanding of productive power. For instance, the Fourth World Conference on Women and subsequent Beijing Platform for Action established a new discourse for gender equality and gender mainstreaming across the world. This event has transformed numerous institutional norms and policies, to foster gender equality at different levels including international, regional and domestic levels.

Models of gender equality

Although a bulk of literature has been produced on gender equality, there is hardly consensus on the approaches to gender equality. Particularly the empirical aspects, the interventions for gender equality is highly contested. Teresa Rees (1995, 1998, 2001, 2006) analyzed different approaches that have evolved and have different degrees of contribution to gender equality, based on European experience. She extensively investigated how gender mainstreaming has been addressed by different international institutions through their policies and programmes.

Rees (2001, 2006) suggests three major models of gender equality, through which each model of gender equality had been advanced, built on European institutional experiences. She broadly labels three models: equal treatment; positive action; and mainstreaming.

The equal treatment approach to gender equality has its root in liberal feminist literature (see Rees 1998). While examining European episodes on gender equality movement, Rees finds

that it is the Treaty of Rome 1957, which created the first major institutional obligations for signatory countries, to recognize and ensure equal treatment for men and women in wage through revising their national laws and policies. However, before the 1980s there was not mentionable progress in equal treatment, there was a prevalence of gender pay gap in most of the member states. She further adds an equal treatment approach could not direct to equal outcome owing to individual stereotyping, which hinder collective negotiations for a reform in the wage system and social welfare system. A major shortcoming of this approach is in its failure to bridge gender inequality, but contributed to address sex discrimination.

Positive action was introduced as an approach to tackle the shortcomings of equal treatment approach, argued by Rees. To overcome such constraints a series of positive action measures were undertaken, to address discrimination and disadvantages which women were facing, by the European Community members. These measures were primarily training focused interventions to upscale women's skills and upgrade their employability in the labor market (Brine 1999). Some training programmes directed women to participate in some working areas, which were previously monopolized with men's participation (Rees 1992), women's skills and confidence as a result of those training schemes supported them to participate in new professional fields (Rees 1998). However, positive action could not transform the institutional norms and culture, rather it offered a platform for women to experience such discriminations, since the institutional environment was male dominated and biased.

Finally, the mainstreaming approach was introduced to mitigate the gaps, which positive action and equal treatment could not address. At the global level, gender mainstreaming as a discourse and an approach gained the ground following the World Conference on Women and Beijing Platform for Action. However, there are several interpretations of gender mainstreaming. For Rees (1998), gender mainstreaming is the systematic integration of equal opportunities and rights for men and women in the institutional system and culture.

In summary, equal treatment focuses on the individual rights centric approach to gender equality; positive action deals with responding for collective discrimination and disadvantage; and mainstreaming underlines on the transformation of structure and institutional culture.

Chapter Five
Findings, Analyses and Conclusion

Findings, Analyses and Discussions

This section of this paper offers a succinct analyses and discussion, which are grounded to validate following three assumptions to satisfy the stated hypothesis:

I. There is broad policy coherence in global development agenda, and national interest and priority.

II. National government has a positive attitude towards collaboration with other actors, and functional partnership with development partners (donors), and international organizations. This might result in national ownership.

III. At the earlier stage of policy formulation process, especially during agenda setting development partners extend disparate forms of support including technical expertise and financial resources.

These three assumptions have different levels of analyses. The first one mostly looks at international level and the second focus on domestic level. The final one exhibits an interaction between the two levels of analysis.

Firstly, gender equality and women empowerment are placed in a dominant agenda in global development theory and practice. Following WWII and diffusion of international human rights norms, there had been a substantial development of gender dimensions of international norms and conventions – which shaped country level policies, programmes and projects. In between the 1970s and the 1990s, approaches to gender equality had been transformed from WID to GAD – many agents including countries and organizations contributed to this transformation. Here, I reflect on the roles played by the UN and development partners for the operational integration at different levels including in member states and aid recipient countries.

At the global level, gender equality, gender mainstreaming (GM) and its various instruments have been devised and promoted by several IOs, donor countries and their development agencies.

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979 – is still acknowledged as the blueprint of gender equality and women empowerment agenda. It came into force in 1981. In parallel, four world conferences on women, in between 1975 and 1995, have had a transformative role in advancing gender equality across the globe – which fostered the socialization of the UN member states, IOs and CSOs. In a short period of time, several international events namely World Conference of Human Rights 1993 in Vienna, NGO Forum on Women 1995 in Huairou, China took place. These all international events and consensus had a multiplier effect at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 – where Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) was adopted. Consequently, PFA offers a comprehensive list of issues those impacts women's lives and well-being through 12 critical areas for action (Beijing Declaration). All these 12 areas particularly women and economy; women and poverty; institutional mechanism for women's empowerment were the primary point of references for the early institutionalization of GRB. Since then the UN system adopted gender mainstreaming instruments, and UNIFEM focused to promote gender budgeting at regional and country levels (see Payne 2011). Furthermore, for the promotion of GE, UNIFEM secured its first strategic support from DFID in 1998 (DFID 1999).

The Commonwealth is one of the first institutions to adopt a Plan of Action (PoA) for promoting gender equality. It endorsed the Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development in 1995. The Commonwealth Secretariat supported the foundation of GRB in many countries, particularly supported member states pilot programmes on GRB (Commonwealth Secretariat 2002). Its strategic plan 2004/05 – 2007/08 highlighted GM for the first time; and GRB had been integrated with gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment - one of the critical areas outlined in the PoA for GE 2005- 2015 (Commonwealth PoA for GE 2005-15).

CIDA has been a significant actor in spreading gender responsive policies and programmes across the world. In 1976, it formulated a policy guideline on WID; and a separate WID directorate was set up in 1984. Following, CIDA's 5-year WID PoA was adopted in 1986. Later in 1994, WID and GE division was established within CIDA. Most importantly, in 1995, the government of Canada prioritized 6 programmatic areas stated in its foreign policy statement

(Canada in the World 1995). And, it adopted poverty reduction policy – where gender equality was a component of poverty reduction strategy.

In 1996, Swedish parliament endorsed the advancement of gender equality goals in its partner countries, through bilateral and multilateral development cooperation. In the following year, SIDA adopted an Action Programme for fostering GE, for the period 1997-2001.

About the American experiences, a WID office was inaugurated in the missions and regional bureaus of the USAID in 1974. It published a policy paper on women in development, in 1982. Following, USAID adopted its Gender Plan of Action (GPA) in 1996; it entailed gender integration in policy, personnel, performance and monitoring and evaluation (USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy 2012).

In addition, since the late 1990s, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also adopted gender responsive policies and orchestrated their programmes accordingly. The World Bank emphasized gender mainstreaming approach to development to improve women's lives (World Bank 1998). It published its first gender strategy in 2001, for the period 2001-05; and adopted Gender Action Plan (GAP) in 2007 – which contributed to the gender mainstreaming at both operational and institutional levels (World Bank). Similarly, the IMF also endorsed more gender responsive policies and undertook several studies to examine the impact of GRB. IMF's working papers (2003 and 2006), *Gender-Responsive Budgeting* and *Gender Budgeting* created wider attention for gender responsive fiscal and macro-economic planning across the world.

In a similar fashion, the international conferences on financing for developing (FFD) also dealt with women's empowerment. GRB has been addressed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), as a measure to mainstream women's empowerment in FFD (AAAA 2015, p. 4). In a recent book*, Fiscal Policies and Gender Equality,* Kolovich (ed. 2018) showed how fiscal policies can promote GE, and GRB be a substantial instrument of it.

In summary, there was coherence on gender equality across the globe, where IOs, development agencies/ donor organizations, national governments had a coherent and common goal through different paths.

Secondly, Bangladesh had national interests and priority on gender issues as well for various reasons. The prime reason is in its Constitutional guidelines: the Constitution ratifies equality and non-discrimination between men and women in all spheres of life. In that line, articles 10, 19, 27 and 28 of the Constitution enshrine the legal foundation for adopting gender sensitive policies and programmes. Then, as a signatory country to the CEDAW and Beijing Declaration, the country has a normative obligation. This normativity includes the implementation of global norms, and to respect the accountability mechanism through performing domestic legalization and policy change where necessary (PFA). Another significant factor was the state socialization and proactive role played by the IOs those adopted and advanced gender mainstreaming agenda globally.

The nature of interaction and cooperation between the government of Bangladesh (GoB) and development partners (DPs) has changed significantly. Back in the 1990s, the DPs had more influencing power than now – that time GoB had to rely on financial resources more from partners, but in recent times GoB has exercising more negotiations (Author's interview 2019).

> "when I was working [until 1998, as a deputy director] at the Commonwealth Secretariat, we initially started GRB pilot programmes in three countries and later worked with more member countries. One of our key challenges was to inform the political elites and build their capacity to understand the scope of GRB. In south Asian region, we commenced to put our effort in Sri Lanka first, since their policies were more gender responsive than other countries in the late 1990s." (Author's interview)

In addition, early efforts to explore the scope of GRB and associated analytical frameworks supported Bangladesh to validate gender dimensions in its public finance management reform initiatives.

The contemporary GRB evolution in Bangladesh has some connections with public financial management (PFM) and fiscal reform initiatives in Bangladesh, which were initiated in the early 1990s (Finance division, and author's interview). Earlier PFM was directly influenced and supported by some international financial institutions (IFIs), particularly the World Bank, IMF and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (World Bank, ADB). The government had

incentives and imposed conditions also, as this reform would potentially bring public expenditure discipline and accountability.

The World Bank driven poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), first launched in 1999 in 35 low-income countries, advocated for a poverty reduction with an attention to gender dimension and to improve the efficiency of public expenditure (World Bank). Zuckerman (2002, p.7) notes that among the earliest PRSPs, 3 PRSPs explicitly discussed gendered budget: Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia. The GoB adopted PRSP after the end of its fifth Five Year Plan (FYP), 1997-2002. The interim PRSP (IPRSP) adopted in 2003 underlined women's advancement and removal of gender gaps (IPRSP 2003, p. 47; see IPRSP Annex 8).

> "In my consultancy experience with the government, I found substantial support for and interests on GRB among the finance and planning ministers, and senior bureaucrats. However, initially it was challenging to work with government officials due to it's a common nature of the bureaucracy to maintain the status quo". (Author's Interview)

Along with GRB agenda, development partners supported different line ministries and agencies to promote gender mainstreaming across all development practice.

> "As a part of our project [PLAGE II] objective, we aimed to increase the institutional capacity of the ministry of finance, and ministry of women and children affairs to advance gender responsive planning and budgeting." (Author's interview)

For instance, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded policy leadership and advocacy for gender equality project phase II (PLAGE II), implemented by the ministry of women and children affairs (MoWCA), prepared a *Trainers' Manual on Gender Mainstreaming in Education.* It was jointly executed by the Ministry of Education and MoWCA with a view to facilitating gender responsive education system and management. In addition, in the same year 2011, PLAGE II project supported more trainers' manual for gender mainstreaming in other government machineries, among those *gender mainstreaming in planning and development training, and gender mainstreaming at the department of women affairs training manual* are the notable outputs. The first one was jointly enforced by the MoWCA and National Academy for Planning and Development, Ministry of Planning. The total

financial contribution of PLAGE II was $12.5 million (CIDA Bangladesh Country Programme Evaluation). Prior to this, in 2009, MoWCA published *gender responsive guidelines for design and review of development projects* across all ministries, which was supported by several development partners.

In addition, while the GoB was formulating National Women's Advancement Policy 2011, Sixth FYP FY 2011-15, Seventh FYP FY 2016-20, and medium-term Perspective Plan 2010-21, different DPs including the UN, INGOs and others advocated for gender responsive tools which also embodied GRB. Furthermore, a well-structured GRB would be a useful source for GoB to track and report on the SDG's indicator 5.C.1: system to track gender equality (see SDG 8 and its targets, indicators).

Lastly and most importantly, in this part, I unveil how development assistance turned into a contributing factor in the institutionalization of gender responsive budgeting and planning in Bangladesh.

Following the Beijing Declaration and PFA, the international community including major IOs restructured their institutional. Simultaneously, the launch of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its goal on the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment stimulated the adoption of gender sensitive policies and gender mainstreaming tools across the world (the UN). In addition, PRSP agenda also influenced national governments to improve gender dimensions of development and growth, although the advancement of GE was not the key objective of PRSP. Derbyshire (2002) adopts "policy evaporation" to label PRSP's gender mainstreaming path, while initially it drew attention but gradually lost the momentum.

"In the 2000s, most of the development partners supported millennium development goal three on gender equality, and contributed to introduce gender responsive policies and programmes" (Author interview)

The institutionalization of GRB in Bangladesh has been supported by a number of IOs and bilateral partners through providing both technical and financial support. The medium term budget framework (MTBF); recurrent, capital, gender and poverty (RCGP) database; and gender budget report (GBR) are the three core components of GRB in Bangladesh (Siddique 2013, p.1), – which has been gradually unfolding over the years. The MTBF was initially launched in four

ministries in FY 2005-06, tracks gender focused expenditure (Siddique 2013, p. 6). However, MTBF was one of the components of the financial reform package under PRSP. Dr. Kanniz Siddique, former deputy director of the Commonwealth Secretariat, supported the ministry of finance as a consultant to make the undertakings of the MTBF more gender responsive (Siddique 2013, p. 4).

> "Although several consultants including internationals came to Bangladesh to work on GRB, but all of them could not properly contextualize our needs and priority. However, among them our national expert Dr. Kaniz Siddique played a very important role". (Author's interview)

Dr. Kaniz Siddique shares, during early phase several development partners particularly the embassy of the kingdom of Netherlands, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) had been very supportive for GRB (Author's interview). Furthermore, she adds that Evers and Siddique's (2006) edited book *Who gets what: a gender analysis of public expenditure in Bangladesh* is the output of a research conducted on the scope of GRB, with the funding from the DFID (Author's interview).

Under the ministry budget framework (MBF), there are two categories of standards by which any project's contribution to poverty reduction, and gender equality and women empowerment are measured (Ministry of Finance). In MBF's first part and at section 3, information on poverty alleviation and women's advancement are provided (see Siddique 2013). To support this task, in the second part, the implementing body has to mention how expected expenditure would contribute to poverty reduction based on 12 standards, and women's development on the basis of 14 standards (Ministry of Finance). Development partners extended both financial and technical support in developing such standards and building technical capacities of government officials across various line ministries.

> "we [PLAGE II] partnered with different line ministries and their bodies to make training modules and courses more gender sensitive" (Author's interview)

Under PLAGE II, in 2009, MoWCA developed *gender responsive guidelines for design and review of development projects.* Subsequently, in July 2009, the planning division of the ministry of planning published a circular to instruct all ministries and divisions – to follow the

above mentioned guideline while preparing, endorsing and revising a development project (MoWCA 2009).

In FY 2009-10, the finance minister shared gender budget report for the first time during the presentation of the national budget. The GBR of four ministries': health and family welfare, education, social welfare and disaster management were published in that year (Siddique 2013, p.13). Since 2013-14 all ministries have been publishing their respective GBR.

"our honorable finance minister [then] Mr. Abul Maal Abul Muhith played the strongest role in launching GRB in Bangladesh. His previous work experiences with different organizations and at various levels helped him robustly to lead this institutional change" (Author's interviews).

Since the mid-2010s, among the UN agencies the UN Women has been supporting the MoWCA in scaling up the training programmes for government officials and reviewing some national policy documents to strengthen GRB. For instance, under the "strengthening GRB in Bangladesh" project UN Women Bangladesh is providing more technical support, which includes the hiring of consultants to review and revise several national policy documents which deal with gender equality and women's empowerment. For a three-year project from 2017-20, there was a total budget of 42.1 million Bangladesh Taka (BDT); where GoB contributed 37.04 million BDT and UN Women provided 0.506 million BDT.

Conclusion

Policy diffusion studies are a major domain of interests for many policy scholars and researchers. As a sub-field of policy studies or policy science, policy diffusion is investigated from a wide range of academic disciplines, with diverse theoretical models and approaches. However, this study was undertaken to explore the role of development aid in policy diffusion. It has appeared from the literature; there prevails a limited scientific understanding on how a policy instrument or tool can bolster understanding and explain policy diffusion in a context-dependent case. This study has considered development aid including financial and technical assistance as a substantial independent variable, to examine policy diffusion in a developing country. Development assistance can be easily measurable when it comes about financial assistance in the form of grant or loan. However, technical assistance might not be directly quantifiable, but its

output can be monitored and analyzed. Therefore, through this inductive study, I have attempted to formulate a hypothesis, which might contribute to a theory development – relying upon further scientific research on similar issues and in a different country. Through this study, I am inviting other researchers to investigate the validity of this hypothesis.

In this study, my hypothesis is tested true and offers a validation through holding three assumptions. Unconditional development aid can also advance policy diffusion; i. when there is policy coherence between global development agenda and national interest, ii. a national government supports partnership and collaboration with multiple domestic and international actors, iii. development partners extend their cooperation during the early phase of policy cycle. Following, I explained the evolution of gender responsive planning and budgeting in Bangladesh, through analyzing the role of development assistance from bilateral and multilateral levels. This investigation has revealed policy coherence on gender equality and gender mainstreaming agenda in the global development and Bangladesh's national growth and development. In turn, the government of Bangladesh had collaboration with several partners and international organizations, to advance its women empowerment and implement different policy commitments on gender equality. Finally, it has been discovered that the development partners played proactive roles at various levels and in different periods in the institutionalization of gender responsive planning and budgeting in Bangladesh.

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Annex:

List of interviewees

Sl.	Name	Organization/ Institution
1	Satyajit Karmaker	Additional Secretary, Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of People's Republic Bangladesh
2	Dr. Kaniz Siddique	Consultant to GoB and other donors; former Professor at the North South University, Dhaka; Former Deputy Director at the Commonwealth Secretariat
3	Ranjan Karmaker	Director, Steps Toward Development
4	Mahmuda Khan	Social Advisor, USAID
5	Tapati Saha	Former official, CIDA
6	Kousik Das	UN Women
7	Farzana Sultana	Global Affairs Canada
8	Dr. Abu Eusuf	Professor, Department of Development University of Dhaka, and Director, Center on Budget and Policy; University of Dhaka
9	Shaila Khan	UNDP