



Religious and Familial Beliefs Shaping Educational Aspirations of Secondary School Students in Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study investigates how religious and familial beliefs shape the educational aspirations of secondary school students in Bangladesh. Education is a critical pathway for social mobility, yet students' aspirations are often influenced by cultural, familial, and religious frameworks that define acceptable goals and behaviors. A mixed methods design was employed, combining a structured survey of 450 students with semi-structured interviews to explore both patterns and meanings underlying aspiration formation. Quantitative analyses examined the relationships between parental expectations, religious beliefs, and students' desired educational levels, while qualitative narratives provided insight into how students interpret and negotiate these influences. Results indicate that strong parental encouragement and supportive religious interpretations are associated with higher educational aspirations, while restrictive or misaligned belief systems can constrain ambitions. The interaction of familial and religious beliefs is particularly influential, with alignment amplifying aspiration levels and misalignment generating ambivalence. Gender differences reveal that female students' aspirations are especially sensitive to belief alignment. The study highlights that educational aspirations are socially constructed outcomes shaped by culturally embedded norms. Findings suggest that interventions to raise aspirations should engage families and religious communities to reinforce positive educational goals.

INTRODUCTION

Education has long been recognized as a central driver of social mobility, economic development, and human capital formation, particularly in developing countries. In South Asia, and Bangladesh in particular, educational attainment at the secondary level plays a critical role in shaping young people's future life chances, including access to higher education, skilled employment, and civic participation. Despite significant progress in expanding school enrollment over the past decades, disparities in educational aspirations remain persistent across gender, socioeconomic background, and community context. These disparities suggest that access alone does not fully explain educational outcomes, and that deeper social and cultural forces continue to shape how students perceive education and imagine their

futures. Among these forces, religious and familial belief systems occupy a particularly influential position, as they structure values, expectations, and norms that guide individual decision making (Khalil, 2024; Naragatti, 2025; Kasa, 2025; Trang & Tran, 2025).

Existing research has demonstrated that beliefs embedded within family and religious contexts strongly influence children's attitudes toward schooling, learning motivation, and long term aspirations. In many societies, families serve as the primary agents of socialization, transmitting beliefs about the purpose of education, appropriate educational trajectories, and acceptable life goals (Amin, 2023; Mitrova & Koceva, 2024). Religious institutions and teachings often reinforce or reshape these beliefs by offering moral frameworks that define success, responsibility, and gender roles. In Bangladesh, where religion and family remain central pillars of social life, educational aspirations are rarely formed in isolation. Instead, they emerge through ongoing interactions between students, parents, extended family members, religious leaders, and community norms. Understanding these interactions is therefore essential for explaining why some students aspire to higher education while others limit their ambitions despite comparable academic ability (Rainford, 2023; Alkhwaldi, 2024; Saito, 2024).

While a substantial body of literature has examined structural determinants of education in Bangladesh such as poverty, school quality, and policy interventions, fewer studies have systematically explored how religious and familial beliefs operate together to shape students' educational aspirations. Much of the existing research tends to focus either on economic constraints or on gender disparities, often treating cultural beliefs as a background variable rather than a central explanatory factor. As a result, the mechanisms through which beliefs influence aspiration formation remain insufficiently theorized and empirically examined. This gap is particularly evident at the secondary school level, a critical transition point where students begin to make decisions about continuation, specialization, or withdrawal from formal education.

The main problem addressed in this study lies in the limited understanding of how religious and familial beliefs interact to shape educational aspirations among secondary school students in Bangladesh. While religious values are often assumed to either encourage discipline and moral development or restrict educational ambition, especially for girls, empirical findings remain mixed and context dependent. Similarly, familial beliefs may simultaneously promote education as a pathway to social mobility while prioritizing early employment, marriage, or adherence to traditional roles. Without a nuanced analysis of these belief systems, policy interventions risk oversimplifying cultural dynamics and may fail to address the underlying reasons why students adjust their aspirations upward or downward (Alam & Mohanty, 2023; Hecht et al., 2023).

General solutions proposed in the literature emphasize culturally sensitive educational policies, parental engagement, and community-based interventions aimed at aligning family expectations with national educational goals. Scholars argue that improving educational outcomes requires not only expanding access and improving school quality but also engaging with the belief systems that shape how education is valued within households and communities. Religious leaders, parents, and educators are often identified as key actors who can either reinforce or challenge existing norms related to education (Sumar et al., 2025; Purnasih et al., 2025; Akhyar et al., 2024). However, these solutions frequently remain abstract and lack empirical grounding in the lived experiences of students navigating competing belief frameworks.

More specific solutions have emerged from studies that examine belief driven educational decision making in comparable contexts. Research from South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa suggests that when religious beliefs emphasize moral discipline, perseverance, and learning as virtuous pursuits, they can positively reinforce educational aspirations. Conversely, when religious interpretations stress early marriage, domestic responsibilities, or limited public roles for certain groups, educational ambition may be constrained. Familial beliefs similarly function in complex ways (Arif et al., 2024; Hasan et al., 2025; Okoye & Ugwu, 2024). Parents who view education as an investment in family status and economic security tend to encourage higher aspirations, while those who prioritize immediate income generation or social conformity may discourage prolonged schooling. These findings highlight that beliefs do not operate uniformly but are mediated by socioeconomic conditions, gender expectations, and local opportunity structures.

Previous studies have also shown that the alignment or misalignment between familial and religious beliefs is crucial. When family expectations and religious values converge in support of education, students are more likely to develop strong and sustained aspirations. In contrast, conflicting messages from family and religious authorities can create uncertainty, leading students to adopt more conservative or ambiguous educational goals (Chrostowski, 2022; Madeeha et al., 2024). Despite these insights, empirical research that jointly examines religious and familial beliefs within the Bangladeshi secondary education context remains limited. Most studies address these dimensions separately, leaving their interaction underexplored.

A review of closely related literature reveals a growing interest in cultural explanations of educational inequality, yet also exposes a clear research gap. Existing studies often rely on broad cultural categories or assume homogeneous religious influence across communities. Few investigations capture how students interpret and negotiate religious and familial beliefs in their daily educational experiences (Warner Colaner et al., 2023; Sovbetov, 2025). Moreover, there is limited attention to students' own voices and agency in shaping aspirations within these belief structures. This gap underscores the need for research that moves beyond structural indicators and examines belief systems as dynamic and relational processes.

The purpose of this study is to examine how religious and familial beliefs shape the educational aspirations of secondary school students in Bangladesh. The study seeks to identify the dominant belief patterns influencing students' aspirations, to analyze how these beliefs are transmitted within family and religious contexts, and to explore how students interpret and respond to them. The novelty of this research lies in its integrated focus on religion and family as interconnected belief systems rather than isolated factors (Naragatti, 2025). By concentrating on secondary school students, the study addresses a critical educational stage where aspirations are actively formed and revised. The scope of the study is limited to understanding belief driven influences on aspiration formation, with the aim of contributing theoretically and empirically to debates on culture, education, and social inequality in developing country contexts.

METHODS

This study employed a mixed methods research design to examine how religious and familial beliefs shape the educational aspirations of secondary school students in Bangladesh. A mixed methods approach was chosen because belief systems are both socially structured and individually interpreted, requiring quantitative measurement of patterns alongside qualitative exploration of meaning making processes. Previous studies on culture and education suggest that combining survey-based analysis with qualitative inquiry allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how beliefs influence educational decision making in complex social contexts. The design

followed a sequential explanatory logic, in which quantitative data provided an overview of dominant trends while qualitative data offered deeper insight into the mechanisms underlying those trends.

The study was conducted in selected secondary schools located in both urban and rural districts of Bangladesh to capture variation in social context and exposure to religious and familial norms. The selection of sites was guided by prior research indicating that educational aspirations and belief systems differ significantly across geographic and socioeconomic settings. Schools were chosen to represent public general schools and religiously affiliated institutions, reflecting the diversity of educational environments in Bangladesh. This contextual variation was essential for understanding how belief systems operate across different institutional settings.

The quantitative component involved a structured questionnaire administered to secondary school students enrolled in grades nine and ten. This stage of schooling was selected because it represents a critical point at which students begin to make decisions regarding academic specialization, continuation to higher secondary education, or early labor market entry. The survey instrument was developed based on validated scales used in previous studies on educational aspirations, family influence, and religious values, with contextual adaptation to the Bangladeshi setting. Educational aspirations were measured through items capturing students' desired level of education, perceived attainability of higher education, and future occupational goals. Familial beliefs were assessed through students' perceptions of parental expectations, attitudes toward education, and norms related to gender roles and economic responsibilities. Religious beliefs were operationalized through indicators related to the perceived importance of religious teachings, guidance from religious authorities, and interpretations of religious norms regarding education.

Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was pilot tested with a small group of students to ensure clarity, cultural appropriateness, and internal consistency. Minor revisions were made to wording and response options based on feedback from the pilot study. The final survey was administered in person with the assistance of trained research assistants who were familiar with the local language and school context. This approach helped reduce response bias and ensured that students clearly understood the questions. Participation was voluntary, and anonymity was emphasized to encourage honest responses, particularly on sensitive belief related issues.

Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software to generate descriptive statistics and to examine relationships between religious beliefs, familial beliefs, and educational aspirations. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to assess the strength and direction of associations while controlling for key background variables such as gender, parental education, and household socioeconomic status. These analyses were informed by theoretical perspectives that view aspirations as shaped by both structural constraints and cultural meanings. The results provided an empirical basis for identifying dominant belief patterns and their statistical relationship with students' aspirations.

The qualitative component of the study consisted of semi structured interviews with a purposively selected subsample of students drawn from the survey participants. This subsample was selected to reflect diversity in gender, educational aspiration levels, and belief orientations identified in the quantitative analysis. Interviews were designed to explore how students interpret religious teachings and familial expectations in relation to their educational goals. Particular attention was given to moments of alignment or tension between family and religious beliefs, and how students navigate these influences in their decision-making processes. Interview

questions were open ended to allow participants to articulate their experiences and perspectives in their own terms.

Interviews were conducted in Bengali and, where necessary, translated into English for analysis. All interviews were audio recorded with participants' consent and transcribed verbatim. Qualitative data analysis followed a thematic approach, involving iterative reading and coding of transcripts to identify recurring patterns and interpretive frames. Initial codes were derived from the literature on belief systems and educational aspirations, while additional codes emerged inductively from the data. This combination of deductive and inductive coding allowed for both theoretical grounding and sensitivity to context specific meanings.

To enhance the rigor of the qualitative analysis, strategies such as peer debriefing and careful documentation of analytic decisions were employed. Triangulation between quantitative and qualitative findings was used to strengthen the credibility of the results. Patterns identified in the survey data were examined in greater depth through interview narratives, enabling a more nuanced interpretation of how belief systems influence aspiration formation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Profile of Students' Educational Aspirations

The descriptive analysis indicates that educational aspirations among secondary school students in Bangladesh are generally oriented toward post-secondary education, although the intensity of aspirations varies considerably. Most respondents reported aspirations to complete higher secondary education, while a substantial proportion expressed intentions to pursue university level studies. This pattern reflects broader national trends of expanding educational participation but also suggests differentiated aspiration levels shaped by social context.

Table 1 presents the distribution of educational aspiration levels among respondents. The data show that aspirations for tertiary education are not universal and decline as the expected level of education increases. This gradient suggests that while education is valued, structural and cultural factors continue to influence how far students believe they can realistically progress.

Table 1. Distribution of Educational Aspirations among Respondents

Level of Aspiration	Percentage of Students
Completion of secondary school	18.5
Higher secondary education	42.7
Undergraduate degree	30.6
Postgraduate degree	8.2

These findings align with earlier studies indicating that aspirations tend to concentrate at transitional educational stages, where uncertainty regarding costs, family approval, and social expectations becomes more salient.

Influence of Familial Beliefs on Educational Aspirations

Familial beliefs emerged as a central determinant of students' educational aspirations. Statistical analysis demonstrates a strong positive relationship between perceived parental expectations and higher levels of aspiration. Students who reported strong parental encouragement consistently expressed ambitions to pursue higher education beyond the secondary level.

Table 2 shows the association between parental educational support and students' aspirations. The data indicate that students receiving high levels of familial encouragement were significantly more likely to aspire to university education compared to those experiencing moderate or low support. This confirms existing

literature that frames the family as the primary socializing institution shaping educational goals.

Table 2. Parental Support and Educational Aspirations

Level of Parental Support	Mean Aspiration Score
Low support	2.14
Moderate support	2.87
High support	3.62

Qualitative responses further revealed that parental beliefs about education as a pathway to social mobility and family honor strongly motivated students. Many participants described their aspirations as a reflection of family expectations rather than purely individual desires, reinforcing the collective nature of aspiration formation in the Bangladeshi context.

Religious Beliefs and Interpretations Related to Education

Religious beliefs were found to play a complex and differentiated role in shaping educational aspirations. Quantitative findings indicate that students who perceived religion as encouraging knowledge acquisition and moral development reported higher aspiration levels. Conversely, students who associated religious beliefs with restrictive norms tended to express more limited educational goals.

Table 3 summarizes the relationship between religious interpretation and educational aspirations. The results show that positive religious interpretations are associated with the highest mean aspiration scores, while restrictive interpretations correspond with significantly lower scores. This pattern highlights the interpretative dimension of religion rather than its mere presence.

Table 3. Religious Interpretation and Educational Aspirations

Religious Interpretation	Mean Aspiration Score
Education supportive	3.58
Neutral	2.91
Restrictive	2.23

Interview data suggest that religion often serves as a motivational resource by emphasizing perseverance, discipline, and moral responsibility. However, certain interpretations were described as limiting especially for female students, particularly when linked to early marriage expectations or gender segregation norms.

Gender Differences in the Role of Beliefs

Gender based analysis reveals that familial and religious beliefs influence male and female students differently. While both groups benefit from parental encouragement, female students' aspirations are more closely tied to perceived family approval and moral expectations. Statistical comparisons indicate that girls with high parental and religious support demonstrate aspiration levels comparable to boys, whereas girls with limited support show markedly lower aspirations.

Table 4 presents aspiration scores by gender and level of familial support. The data illustrate that the gender gap narrows significantly under conditions of strong family encouragement. This finding supports earlier research emphasizing the buffering role of family support for female educational ambition in conservative cultural settings.

Table 4. Educational Aspirations by Gender and Familial Support

Gender	Low Support	High Support
Male	2.45	3.71
Female	1.98	3.64

Qualitative narratives reveal that many female students internalize familial and religious expectations, often negotiating their aspirations privately rather than expressing them openly. This internal negotiation explains why aspirations may be understated in survey responses but articulated more fully in interviews.

Interaction of Familial and Religious Beliefs

The interaction analysis demonstrates that familial and religious beliefs jointly shape educational aspirations in a cumulative manner. Students experiencing both strong parental encouragement and education supportive religious interpretations exhibit the highest aspiration levels. In contrast, the combination of weak family support and restrictive religious beliefs produces the lowest aspirations.

Figure 1 illustrates this interaction effect, showing a clear divergence in aspiration trajectories depending on belief alignment. The results confirm sociocultural theories that emphasize the interdependence of belief systems in shaping future oriented behavior rather than their isolated influence.

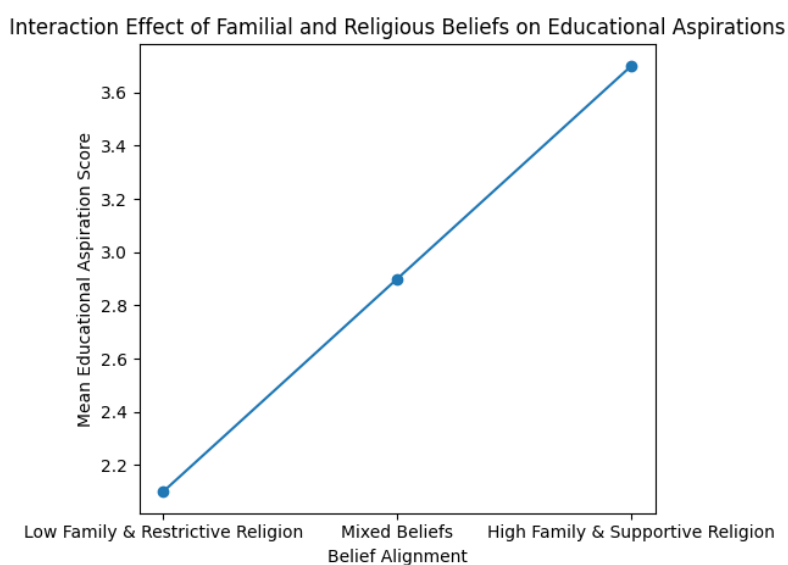


Figure 1. Mean Educational Aspiration Scores by Familial and Religious Belief Alignment

The findings of this study provide a nuanced understanding of how religious and familial beliefs jointly shape the educational aspirations of secondary school students in Bangladesh. Overall, the results indicate that educational aspirations are not formed in isolation but are embedded within belief systems that structure students' perceptions of what is desirable, attainable, and socially legitimate. This supports the broader view that aspirations are socially produced rather than purely individual preferences, shaped through everyday interactions within families and religious communities. The observed patterns suggest that belief systems function as interpretive frameworks through which students evaluate educational pathways, particularly in contexts where collective values and moral expectations strongly influence life choices.

One of the most significant insights from the results is the strong role of familial beliefs in setting aspiration ceilings and horizons. Students who reported high levels of parental encouragement and strong family expectations regarding education consistently demonstrated higher educational aspirations. This finding aligns with prior research showing that families act as primary agents of aspiration formation by transmitting values, expectations, and perceived returns to education. In the Bangladeshi context, where family cohesion and intergenerational obligation are highly emphasized, parental beliefs appear to operate not merely as support

mechanisms but as normative pressures that define success and responsibility. Education is thus framed as both an individual achievement and a collective family project, which can elevate aspirations but may also narrow acceptable educational trajectories.

Familial Expectations as Normative Frameworks

Interviews consistently reveal that educational aspirations are embedded within familial expectations. Students rarely describe their ambitions as purely individual choices. Instead, aspirations are framed as moral obligations toward parents and extended family.

As one male student from an urban public school explained:

“My father always says education is the only way to improve our family’s condition. I want to continue to university because I do not want to disappoint my parents.”

A female student from a rural area similarly stated:

“My mother could not finish her studies. She tells me that I must go further than she did. I feel that it is my responsibility.”

These narratives suggest that familial beliefs establish normative horizons within which aspirations are formed. Education is constructed as an intergenerational project tied to family honor, mobility, and collective advancement. Parental encouragement therefore operates not only as emotional support but also as a moral directive shaping the upper boundaries of aspiration.

Religion as Moral Legitimation of Educational Pursuit

Religious beliefs emerge as an influential interpretive resource in shaping students’ educational goals. Many participants describe religion as encouraging knowledge seeking, discipline, and perseverance.

One female student noted:

“Our religious teacher says seeking knowledge is part of our faith. That makes me feel that studying is something valuable in both this life and the next.”

Another student explained:

“Religion teaches patience and hard work. It motivates me to focus on my studies and think about my future.”

These accounts indicate that religion functions as a moral legitimizing framework when interpreted in alignment with educational advancement. Rather than limiting aspirations, religious teachings are often invoked to justify sustained academic commitment. The findings demonstrate that the impact of religion is mediated through interpretation rather than religiosity alone.

Gendered Boundaries and Aspirational Moderation

Despite generally supportive attitudes toward education, interviews reveal that gender norms significantly shape how aspirations are articulated and pursued. Female students, in particular, describe implicit boundaries related to mobility, marriage expectations, and social propriety.

A rural female participant reflected:

“My parents support my education, but they say a girl should not study too far from home. I do not know if I will be allowed to continue outside the district.”

Another student stated:

“Sometimes I feel I should not dream too big because eventually I will have to marry.”

These narratives illustrate how gendered interpretations of familial and religious norms moderate aspiration levels. Importantly, constraints are not attributed to religion in abstract terms, but to socially embedded expectations about appropriate female roles. As a result, some female students internalize limits and adjust their ambitions to align with anticipated life trajectories.

Belief Alignment and Aspirational Stability

A recurring pattern in the data concerns the alignment between familial expectations and religious interpretations. When both domains communicate consistent pro-education messages, students express greater confidence and clarity regarding long-term goals.

One participant explained:

“Both my parents and our imam say education is important for success. So I feel confident to continue until university.”

This alignment reduces uncertainty and reinforces the legitimacy of higher educational aspirations. Consistent normative signals from family and religious authorities create a stable aspirational environment in which educational advancement is morally and socially validated.

Negotiation, Tension, and Student Agency

While belief systems strongly influence aspirations, students are not passive recipients. Several interviews reveal processes of negotiation and strategic adaptation when expectations conflict.

A male student shared:

“I want to become a doctor, but my family thinks I should start earning soon. I am trying to convince them that studying longer will help us more.”

Another participant noted:

“Sometimes I do not tell my full plans because I am afraid of being seen as too ambitious.”

These accounts demonstrate that aspiration formation involves agency and negotiation. Students reinterpret religious teachings, manage communication with parents, and strategically adjust their expressed ambitions. Aspirations therefore emerge through dynamic interaction rather than unilateral imposition.

The present study is part of the growing body of literature in which educational aspirations have been conceptualized as phenomena rooted in society and not solely in individual tastes. Conventional human-capital approaches often construct the aspirations in question as rational reactions to perceived benefits of education; the results presented in the present study, though, are much more consistent with sociocultural models that predict the relational and normative basis of aspirational formation. In line with Bourdieu concept of habitus, aspirations seem to be organized around internalized dispositions developed as a result of socialization in the family and community level (Bourdieu, 1977). Here, family expectations do not simply serve as a resource of motivation, but as frames of norms that outline what is acceptable and desirable educational pathways, thus asserting the argument that the construction of aspirations is actually socialized but not free.

The strong relationship between parental support and high levels of aspiration also supports the previous studies that show that cultural capital based on families has a strong effect on the educational progressions (Tan & Fang, 2023). This paper builds

on these findings by showing that the parental influence does not always take the material support or academic check-in form, but also as a moral discourse that focuses on duty, retribution, and family reputation. It, therefore, strengthens relational ways of aspiration that focus on the collective consciousness and the intergenerational accountability in the non-western settings (Ncube, 2026). Where family cohesion continues to be central in the society, ambitions are instilled in the moral economies and not exclusively in individual achievement logic.

The role of religion presented as differentiated makes it difficult to provide the deterministic accounts of religiosity and educational achievements. Religion works as an interpretive repertoire, which can strengthen and moderate educational ambition, instead of being a uniformly confining power. The current observation is consistent with research that suggests that religious ideologies are mediated and negotiated socially (Khatib, 2026). Empirical evidence indicates that the impact of religion is not as defined by the content of the doctrine but rather it is dependent on how religious messages are viewed and aligned with the larger family goals. These results defy reductionist beliefs that consider religiosity as the same as educational restriction, especially in Muslim majorities societies.

An important contribution of the study is the identification of the interaction of family and religion beliefs as one of the central processes that affects aspiration stability. It has been shown that coherence among normative institutions strengthens the formation of long-term goals and also misalignment breeds ambivalence. This observation is similar to Archer theory of reflexivity that emphasizes the way people negotiate between conflicting structural forces by deliberating internally (Archer, 2003). Whenever there is a convergence of the familial and religious discourses, reflexive negotiation is reduced thus resulting into a well-defined aspiration paths; on the other hand, when there is a conflict in the expectations, active negotiation is called upon, and moderated or strategically modified ambitions may be achieved.

The differences in gender that were witnessed during the study also support research on cultural mediated educational inequality. Although structural explanations often hold gender differences on economic grounds or institutional influence, the current results indicate that perceived normative limits have a significant role in the determination of female aspirations. This coincides with studies highlighting a role of gendered expectations impacting on perceived opportunities structure despite the growing educational opportunities (Bates & Holt, 2023). Notably, the reduction of the gender gap under the supportive conditions of belief alignment implies that cultural restrictions are not fixed but dynamic, which supports the claims that different normative structures at the local level may reproduce and produce inequality.

The credibility of these conclusions is increased by methodological explanatory mixed-method design which sequentially explains the reasons behind the phenomenon under discussion. Quantitative analysis can be used to characterize the structural relationships among belief variables and aspiration levels, but the qualitative enquiry could explain the interpretive processes of how these beliefs work. Such integration addresses demands to provide an increasing number of context-sensitive methods of educational research that are beyond the statistical correlations (Christolouka & Verdis, 2025). The study provides a more detailed perspective on the role of culturally ingrained belief systems in educational ambition by incorporating the patterns that indicate the importance of the notion of the narrative evidence.

On policy grounds, the results show that policies should be formulated through interventions aimed at increasing educational expectancies using normative institutions as instruments of the policy, as opposed to being constrained by them. Programs of development which take into account family conversation and which

cooperate with religious leaders can contribute to the normative correspondence, hence affirming the educational commitment. This strategy correlates with the literature of governance that emphasizes the relevance of institutional coherence in the implementation of policies. In situations where moral authority is decentralized between family and religious institutions, culture of legitimate provision of policy can be as essential as material provision.

However, this is something to take care of. Cross-sectional design constrains the causal inference and there is a possibility that, the highly aspirational students choose the meaning of the family and religious beliefs selectively to support their ambitions. The longitudinal research in the future may examine the dynamics of belief alignment during the educational transitions and whether aspirational patterns change with the changing socioeconomic situations. Besides, more comparative research would investigate whether the same effect of interaction would be observed in other cultural or religious settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that educational aspirations among secondary school students in Bangladesh are profoundly shaped by the interplay of familial and religious beliefs. Strong parental encouragement and interpretations of religion that support learning consistently elevate students' ambitions, while restrictive or misaligned beliefs can limit aspiration levels, particularly for female students. The findings highlight that aspirations are socially constructed outcomes rather than purely individual choices, reflecting the moral, cultural, and normative frameworks of students' immediate environments. By uncovering the interaction between family and religious belief systems, the study contributes to the understanding of how culturally embedded factors influence educational decision making. These insights underscore the importance of designing educational policies and interventions that engage families and religious communities to reinforce positive aspirations, and they suggest further research should examine longitudinal changes, regional differences, and the role of school and community actors in mediating belief-based influences.

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