



**POVERTY IN TIME: EXPLORING POVERTY  
DYNAMICS FROM LIFE-HISTORY INTERVIEWS IN  
BANGLADESH**

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## Aims

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- Part of a study of social policy in development contexts
- Used Gosta Esping-Anderson's (1990) idea of a welfare regime as a starting point
- Included a concern for informal forms of social protection, NGOs, international migration etc.
- Included a study of patterns of crisis, coping, opportunity and life trajectories



## Context and Methods

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- 6 villages and 3 towns in Kushtia district in Bangladesh
- 20 individuals from each site selected for life history interviews
- Household resource profiles (income, assets, other power-resources)



## Case-based verses variable based

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- case based
  - few cases, many variables, many moments
- variable based
  - e.g. panel surveys
  - many cases, few variables, few moments (usually)



## Life history interview approach

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- talked about people's general well-being (*obosta*)
- high level of historical and contextual detail sought
  - signalled initially by collecting family history information: births, deaths, marriages etc.
  - led into a conversation about dowry, illness, loans, employment, business, land, education, court cases etc.
  - mapped onto a template with national events
  - as information builds up cross-checking can occur
  - memory stimulation is important: sequencing, cross checking and a relaxed setting
  - people's own interpretation of causality



# Terminology

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- event
- episode
- trajectory
- transition
- passage
- life stage
- cohort
- era








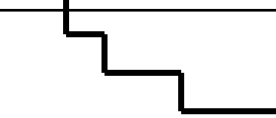


# Trajectories

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- improvements usually happen gradually
- declines are often more sudden
- trajectory patterns emerge



trajectory direction	trajectory pattern	depiction	number of cases (out of 90)
level	smooth		6
improving	smooth		3
declining	smooth		6
level	saw-tooth		17
improving	saw-tooth		17
declining	saw-tooth		14
declining	single-step		13
declining	multi-step		14





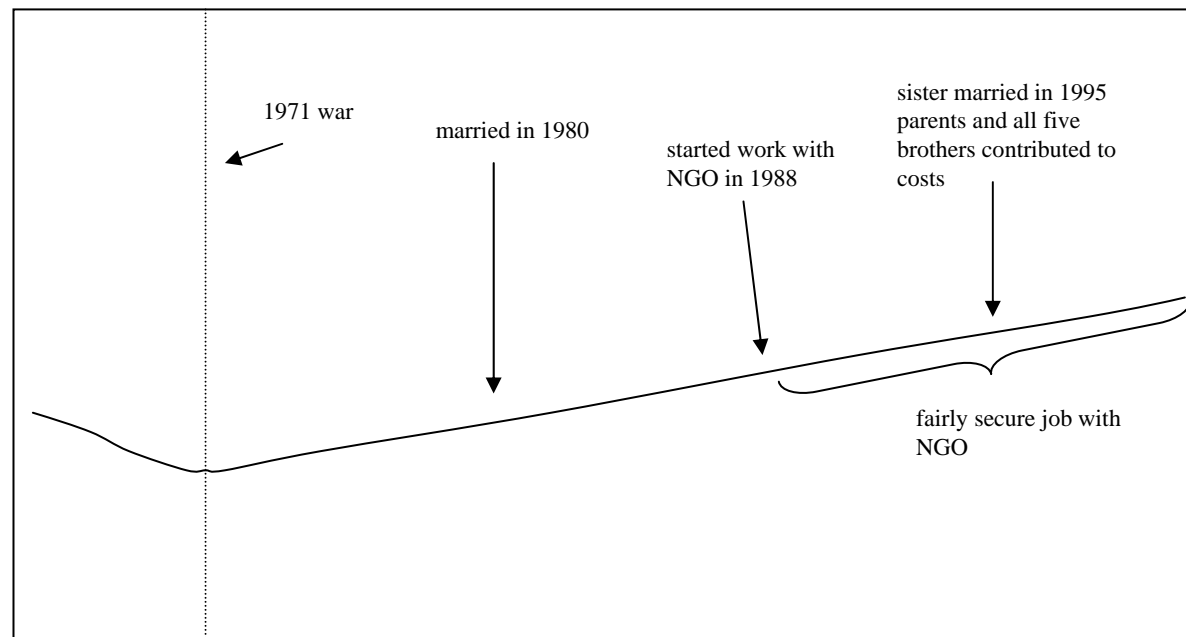
# Trajectory patterns

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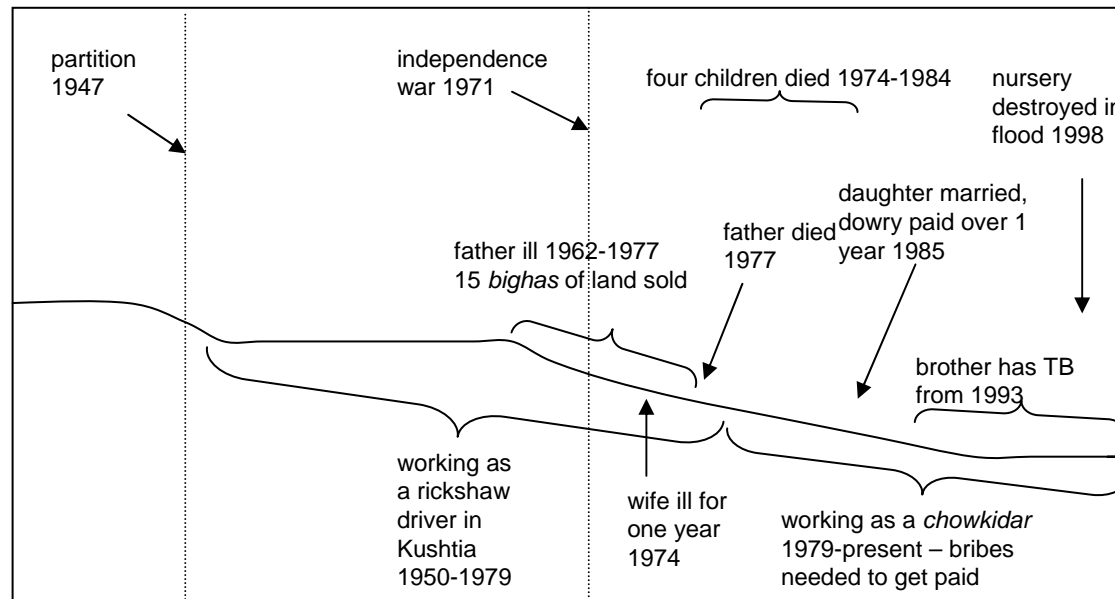
- smooth
  - improving
  - level
  - declining
- saw-tooth
  - improving
  - level
  - declining
- single step
  - declining
- multi-step
  - declining

# Improving smooth: Jehangir

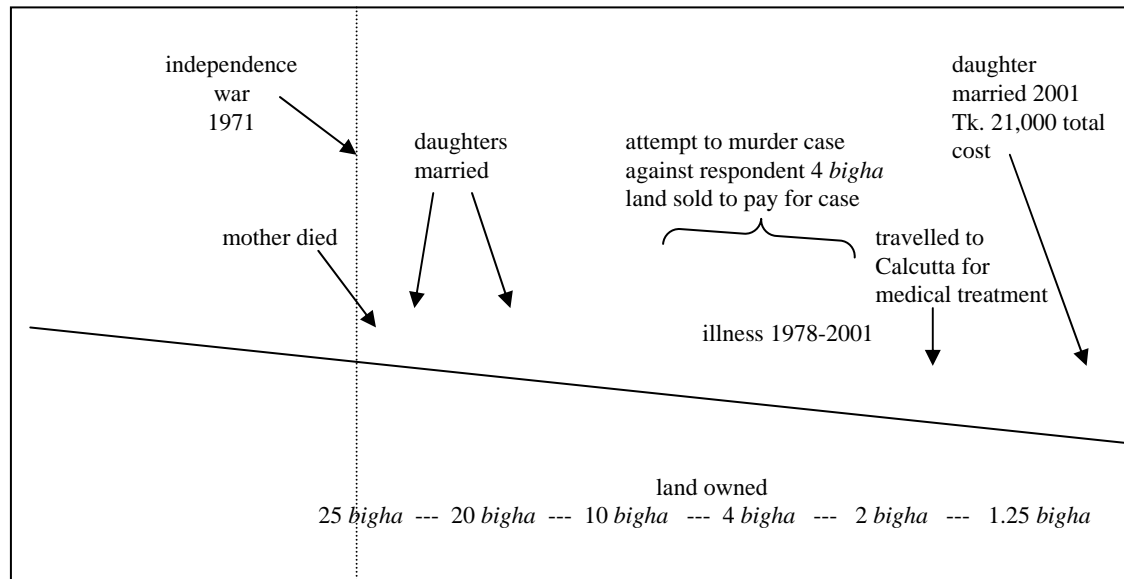
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# Declining smooth: Sukur Ali

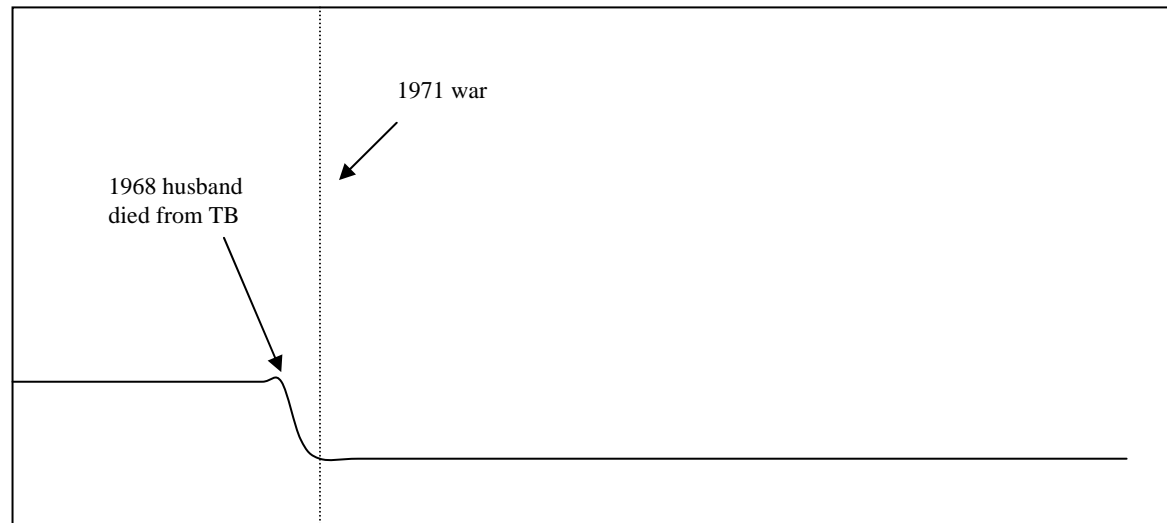


# Declining smooth: Anwar Hossian



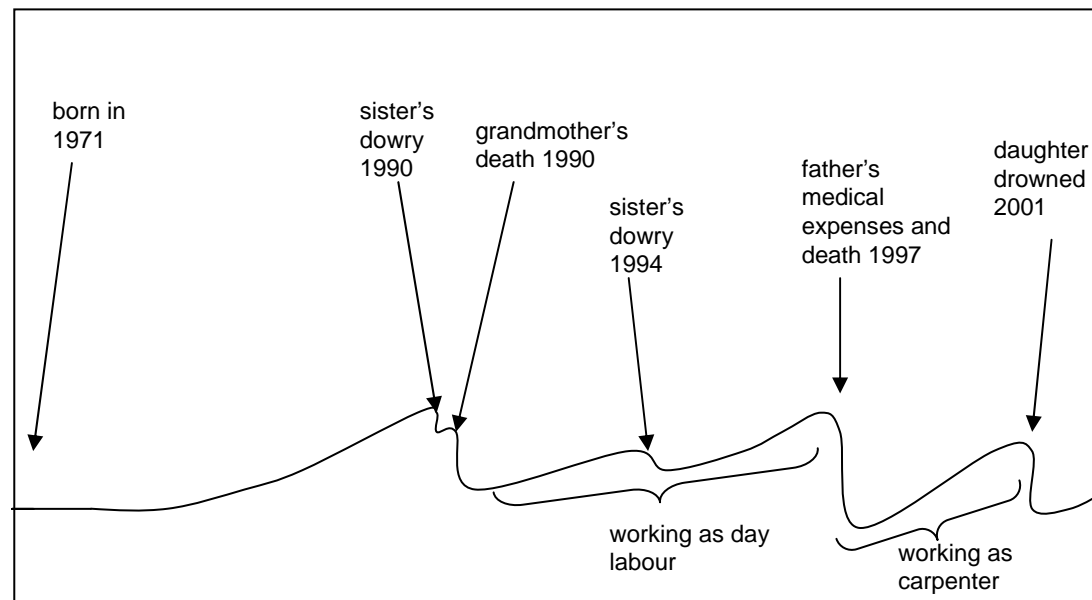
# Low level smooth: Nasima

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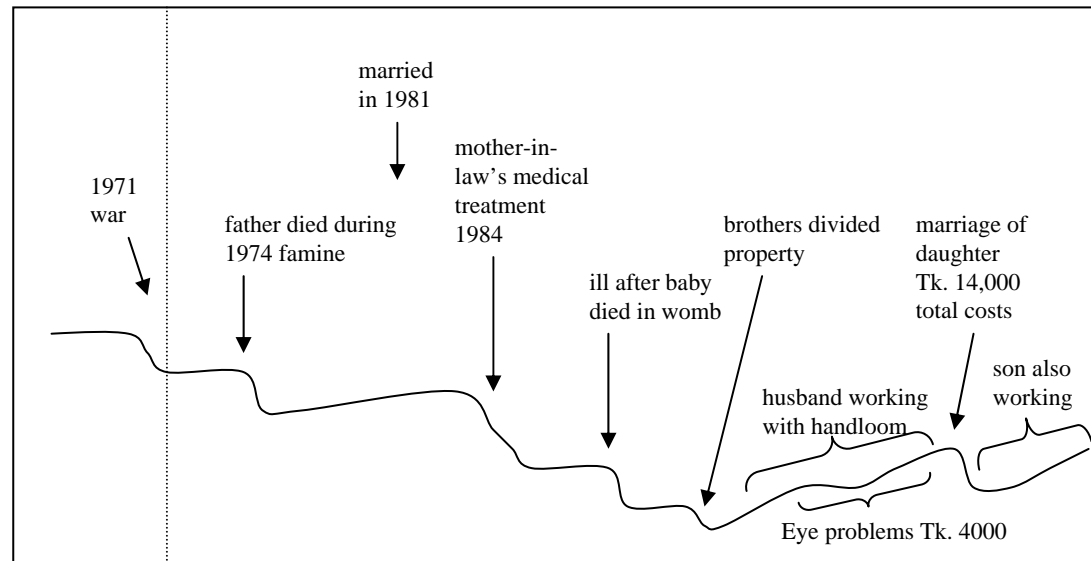


# Low level saw-tooth: Moznu

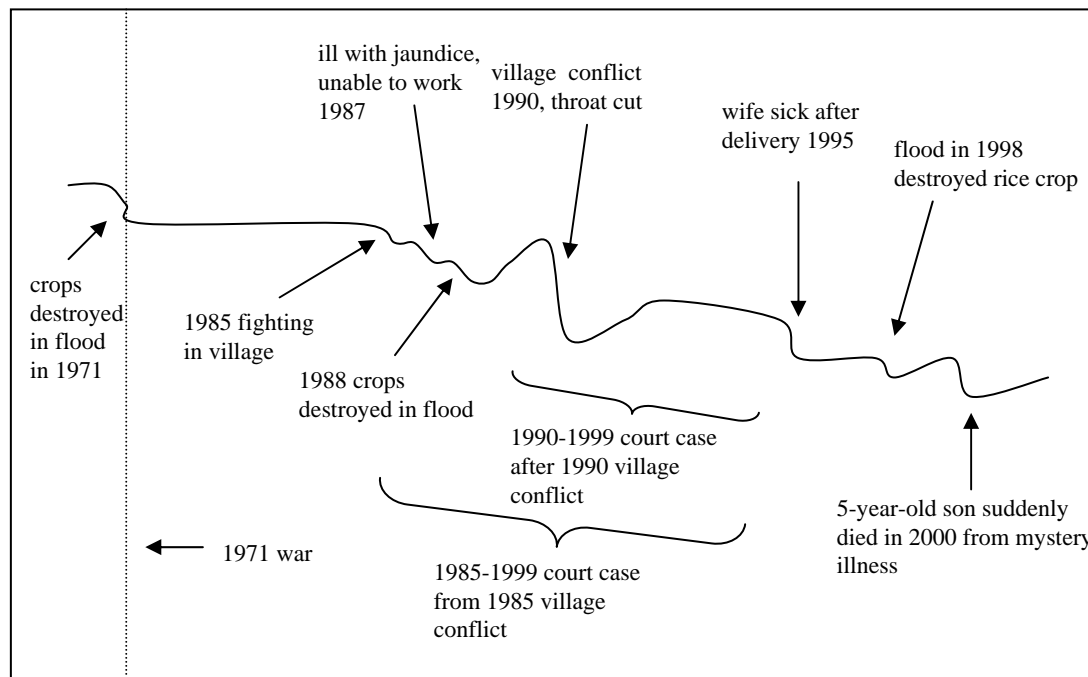
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# Low level saw-tooth: Fuljan

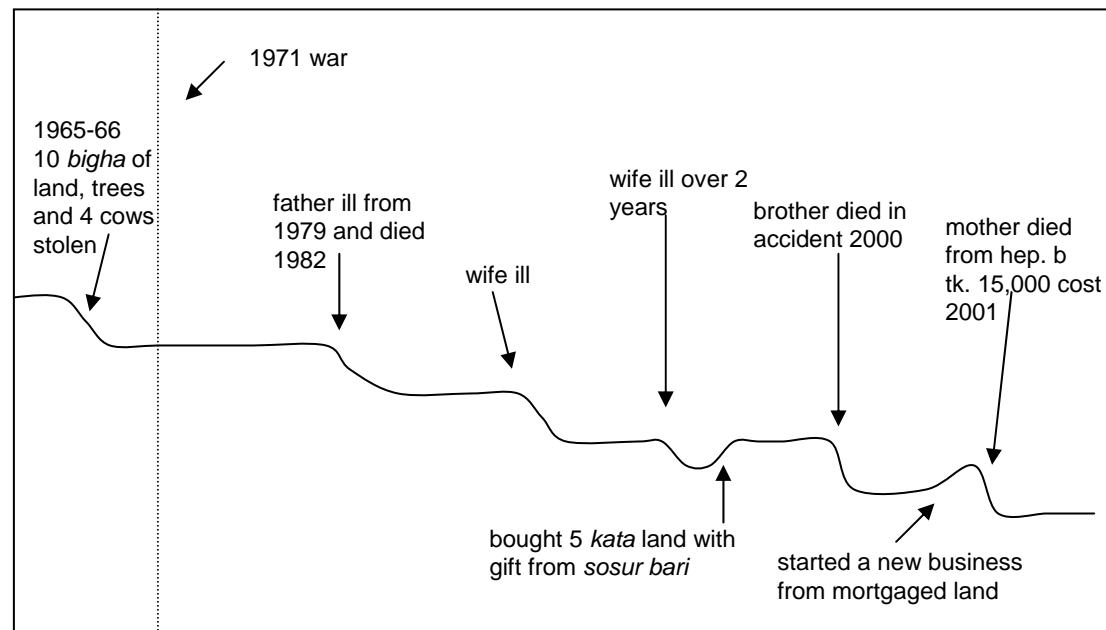


# Declining saw-tooth: Selim

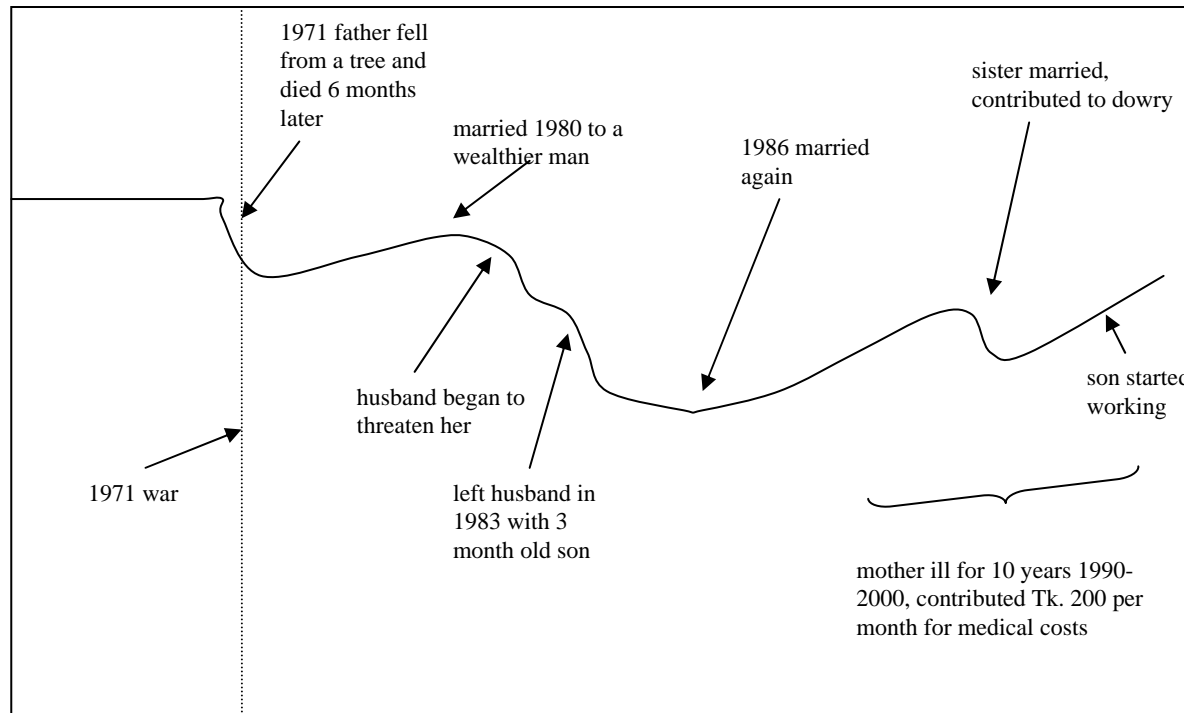




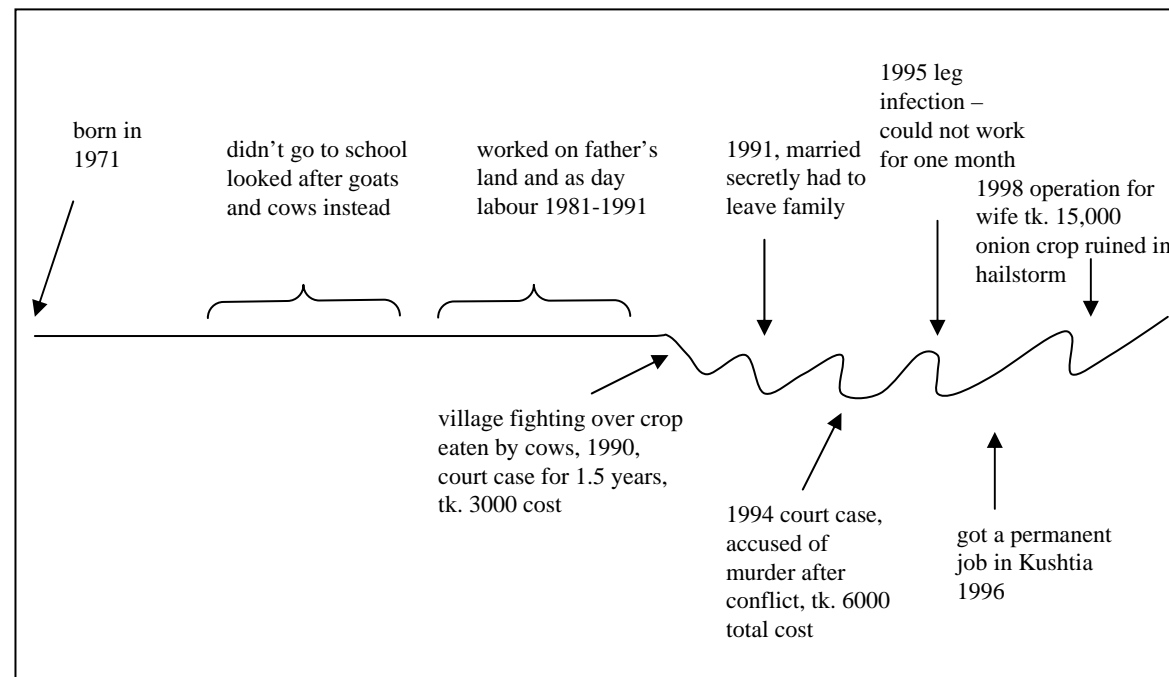
# Declining saw-tooth: Amir Hossain



# Improving saw-tooth: Rena

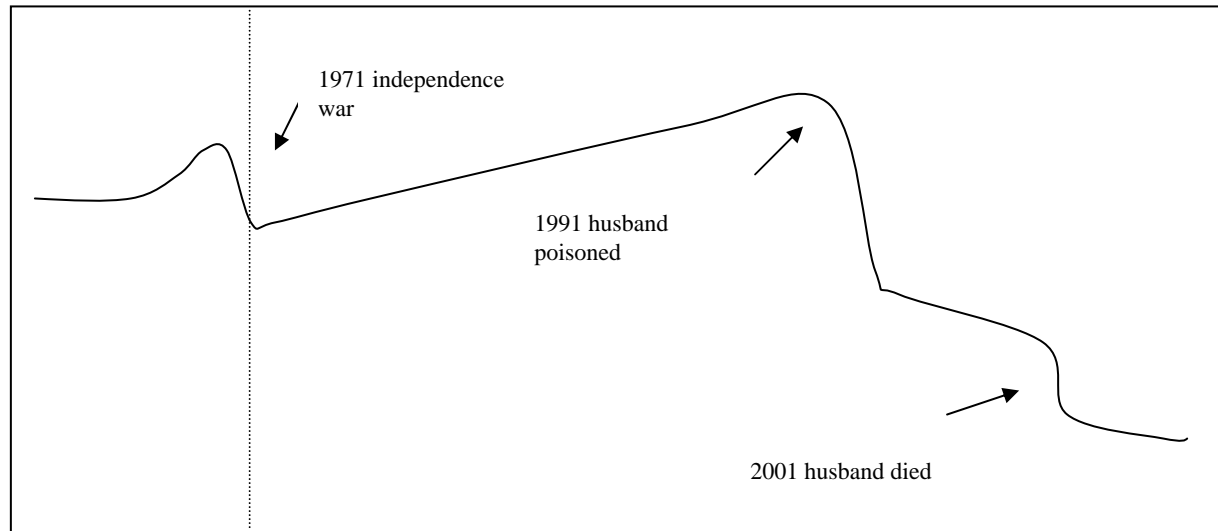


# Improving saw-tooth: Yasa



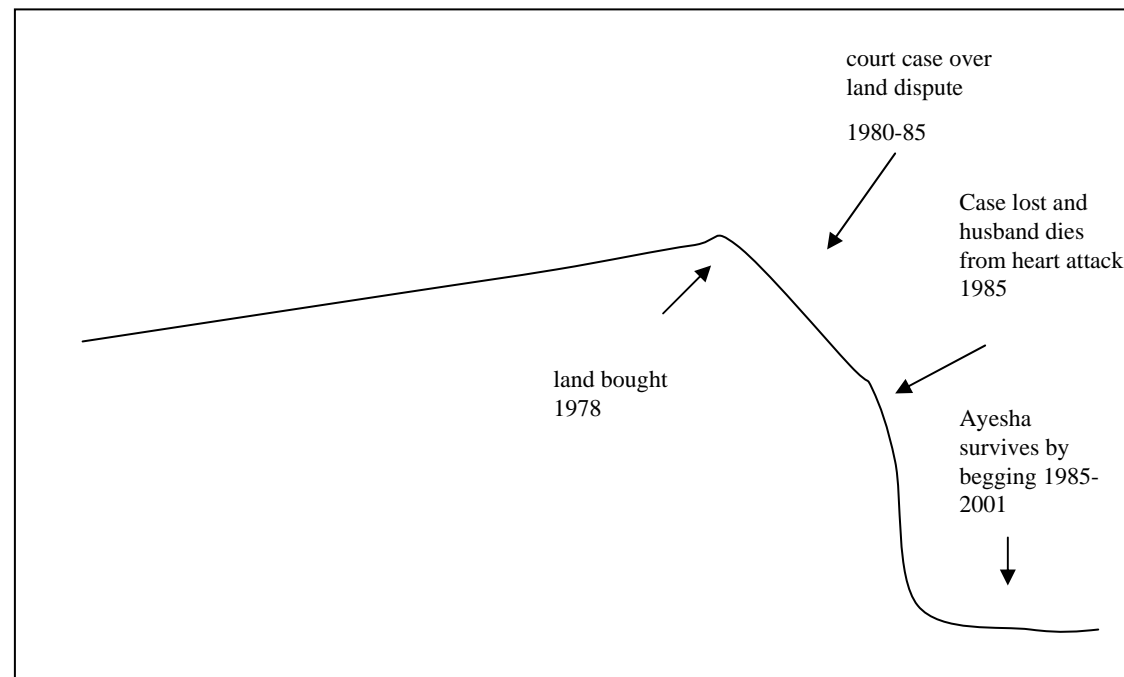
# Declining single step: Sephali

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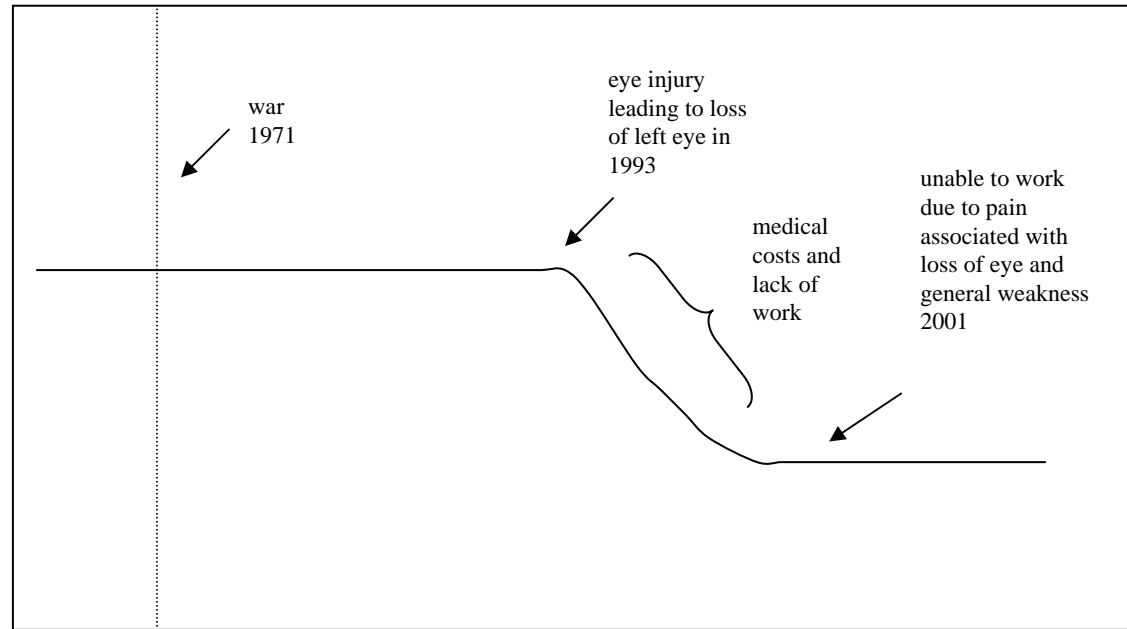
# Declining single step: Ayesha

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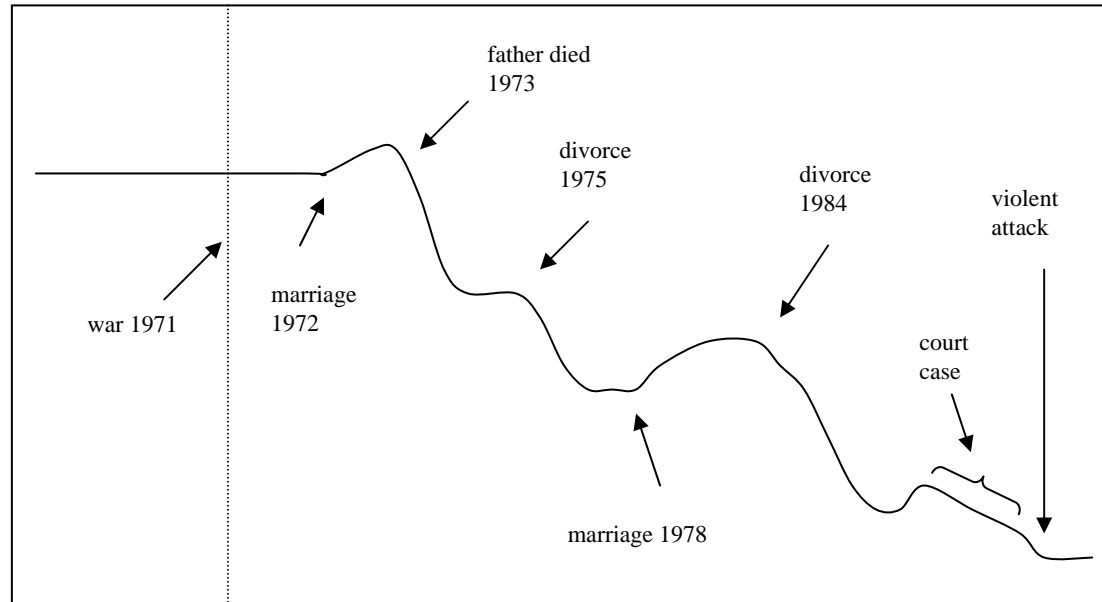
# Declining single step: Allauddin

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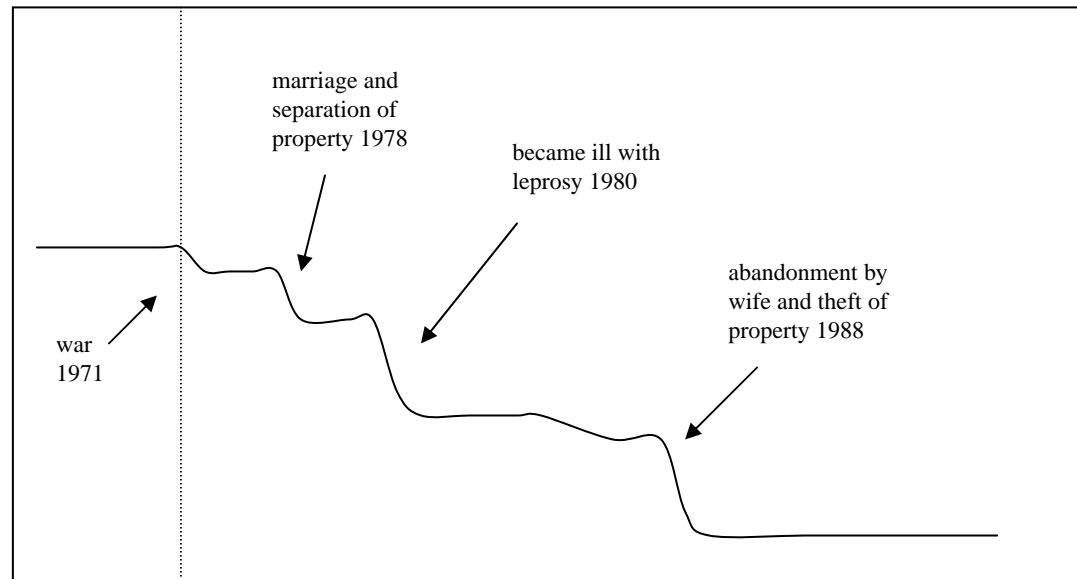
# Declining multi-step: Jasmin

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# Declining multi-step: Badsha

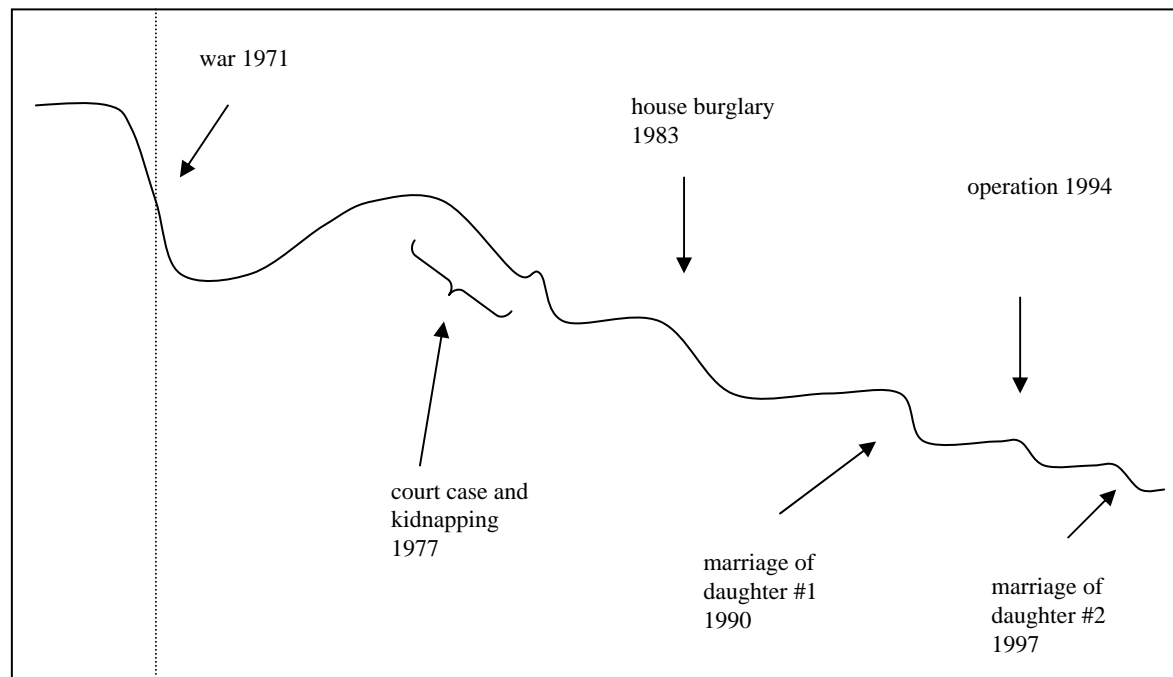
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# Declining multi-step: Amit

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# Causality

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- **1) Multiple causation**
  - Multiple distinct events coincide in time to produce a single outcome. Single causes can also have multiple effects.
- **2) Cumulative causation**
  - A prior event produces an interim outcome which changes or reinforces the effect of a following event.
- **3) Sequence effects**
  - The order of a series of events affects the final outcome
- **4) Interaction effects**
  - When events interact due to proximity in time, or for other reasons, a unique outcome is produced
- **5) Threshold effects**
  - When a threshold is reached a magnified effect is triggered
- **6) Duration of cause and effect**
  - Causes and effects can be of short or long duration. This creates a variety of combinations of cause and effect in time.



# Structured disadvantage

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- Exposure
- Insurance
- Vulnerability
- Resilience



## Concluding remarks

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- Nature of the interview
- Nature of analysis
- Uncovering people's interpretations of causation
- Scope for qual/quant combinations