

Reorganizing Life

A Study on Socio-Cultural Adaptation Strategies of Bangladeshi Married women Immigrants of Oslo, Norway

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60 Credits

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November 2022

Reorganizing Life: A Study on Socio-Cultural Adaptation Strategies of Bangladeshi Married women Immigrants of Oslo, Norway.

<http://www.duo.uio.no>

Print: Representeren, University of Oslo

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Abstract

Let us take a minute; look at our society. We will find a group of people who share different nationalities. We define them as immigrants. This is an ethnographic study of Bangladeshi women immigrants in Oslo, Norway. It investigates the socio-cultural adaptation strategies of Bangladeshi married women. The socio-cultural context of the two countries is far different from one another. If the host country (migrated country) is under the developed category, it extends that difference even more. There are notable facts that force them to migrate. A sudden change in the socio-cultural environment has some significant aftermaths as well. Anthropologists have been studying those for a long time. However, how are they overcoming those aftermaths? It was predicted and evident in different studies that globalization merges cultural boundaries. It is also evident in this study. This research aimed at how Bangladeshi women integrate and separate two cultures' components. It also indicates their morals and values while filtering or adapting different cultural components. Prioritization and negotiation between native and foreign cultures signify their surviving skills. Moreover, it is creating cultural hybridity. This study also elucidates their motives and positionality against their adapting strategies. Nevertheless, this thesis scrutinized the role of the Bangladeshi Community Organization. Bangladeshi community organization provides an extraordinary service to newcomers. This organization is a constructive way to connect people with its root. They aim to create an influential community to provide non-monetary (e.g., psychological support) support to newcomers to survive while facing the harsh reality. Lastly, it is a bootstrapper for Bengalis to rejuvenate themselves with their folklore knowledge to uphold their country's image.

Acknowledgment

I want to express my gratitude to the almighty Allah for blessing me to pull off my work after many hurdles. I am grateful to my participants for their unconditional support throughout fieldwork.

I am expressing my heartiest gratitude to my Supervisor, Professor Ingjerd Hoem, for her excellent assistance and support in finishing this project. I am also grateful to my previous supervisor Professor Knut Gunnar Nustad, for guiding me from the first to develop this project and run it onto the field. I am sincerely thankful to all my academic mentors for triggering the spark of studying anthropology from different insights. Last but not least, I plan and wish to keep surfing in the sea of anthropological expertise to enrich my knowledge.

Abbreviation

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
FYP	Five-Year Plan
TA	Teaching Assistant

Table of Content

Chapter Number	Content	Figure	Page Number
	Abstract		iii
	Acknowledgment		iv
	Abbreviation		v
One	Introduction		1-4
	Background		1-3
	Research Question		3
	Thesis Structure		3
Two	Literature Review		5-8
Three	Research Methodology		9-13
	Empirical Research Field		9
	Research Participants		9-11
	Access to the Field		11
	Methods		11-12
	Participant Observation		11-12
	Semi-structural Interview		12
	Secondary Data		12
	Methodological Tools		12-13
	Ethical Concern		13
Four	A Piece of Bangladesh: Kringsjå Studentby		14-36
	‘We are One’: Bangladeshi Community Organization	1	14-25
	The Gala Day: Eid-Ul-Fitr 2021		25-36
	Chapter Summary		36
Five	BTS: Citizen to Immigrants		37-47
	Discussion		37
	Chapter Summary		46-47
Six	Plan to Path		48-75
	Discussion		48-51
	Cultural Shock		51-53
	Nothing Like Home but Have to Go Forward		53-61
	Language		61-67
	Do That I Like; Dress That I Love		67-70
	Religious Activity		70-74
	Chapter Summary		74-75
Seven	Discussion		75-78
Eight	Conclusion		79-81
	References		82-85

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“Women’s dignity is just like a drop of water on a lotus leaf. If you move too much, it will fall on the ground”

-Taslima Nasrin

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you”

-Jane Goodall

“Culture is a way of coping with the world by defining it in detail”

-Malcolm Bradbury

One: Introduction

This chapter is focused on a discussion of the background of the problem. We will focus on questions like, what is the problem and why is it identified as a problem? Moreover, this chapter contains the research question of the study. Finally, the thesis structure of the study

Background:

‘When Bangladeshi boys leave the country for better education and livelihood; some of them come back at some point in their life. If a woman leaves the country for once, she tries her best to settle down abroad. Actually, we dominate our women so much that they lose their hopes to live. That’s why once they get freedom, they refuse to wear the chain of social prejudice and domination.’

-Professor D. Muhammed Zafar Iqbal¹

I find this quote very interesting to portray women’s position in Bangladesh. Though Bangladesh acceded to CEDAW (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) in 1984 and maintained reservations to Articles 2 and 16(1c). The Constitution recognizes equal rights for women and men in the public sphere, and a reasonably robust legal and policy framework guarantees women's rights. The national women's Development Policy 2011 and its National Action Plan provide a base for government action to promote gender equality. The 7th 5-year plan integrates gender equality issues across several sectors with some new sectoral policies addressing gender issues effectively. Currently, gender-responsive budgeting is institutionalized across 43 ministries. Internationally, Bangladesh secured a good place on several gender indicators. (UN Women Bangladesh, n.a). The 8FYP has declared to develop a country where men and women will enjoy equal opportunities and rights. Women will be recognized as equal contributors to economic, social, and political development (BBS, 2022). However, women are being dominated by their families and society. As a result, they are migrating to survive and lead a life of freedom.

¹ Muhammed Zafar Iqbal is a Bangladeshi science fiction author, physicist, academic, activist & former professor of computer science and engineering, and former head of the department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology. I read that quote in his Facebook profile. Later, I did not find the post. He tried to portray the vulnerable social position of a Woman in Bangladesh.

To make the phenomenon clear, let us look back at the question: why do people migrate? Today's migration can be described through a hierarchical process. Previously migration process was defined or studied through World-systems theory (known as dependency theory). Then it was replaced by Modernization theory. These theories divide the world into two categories: core (modern and developed) and periphery (traditional and under-developed). When the people of periphery countries move to the core country, they adapt to modernity and adopt new cultural and social changes. Later, the juxtaposition of both theories was used to define modernity (Ferguson, 2008). After that decolonization and economic development made the process faster. Just like other scholars, anthropologists are studying migrating and migrating-related changes in people's lives for a long time. They are also analyzing cultural negotiation, gender-based relations, power relations, and material and non-material components related to migration (Tsing, 2000). A study from 2012 showed that a lot of women are migrating abroad for unequal wages and opportunities in the professional sector. A strong and secure economic environment attracts them to move abroad (Sultana & Fatima, 2017). There are many socio-cultural reasons behind migration. For example, to avoid conflict, terrorism, violence, or in search of a safe, secure, and peaceful life. Without this, some people move to other places or countries because of environmental degradation, climate change, and natural disaster. So, what about the aftereffect of migration? Caroline B. Brettell's study 'Anthropology, Migration, And Comparative Consciousness' (2009) discusses the cross-national cultural comparison through migration. Comparative method to analyze similarities and dissimilarities between two cultures. This study talked about the European and African scenarios of migration. It is a potential comparative study between two continents and their people's living patterns. This potential gap exists where anthropologists should also study immigrants' reactions to those components.

Moreover, I am specifically interested in studying this gap. A qualitative study of Bangladeshis on the adjustment to a new life abroad showed that people are pretty happy with their present situation. Because, to some extent, they successfully meet their expectations despite cultural differences. They are hardly adapting to different socio-cultural relationships and facing problems (Farid, 2016). What are people doing to adapt to the new environment, society, and culture? People indeed feel like a fish out of water in a new environment where everything is far different from theirs. How are they minimizing cultural shocks? Adapting to the culture and social surroundings is essential to move on to a new life with a new dream. It is only possible to change or adapt to something after a while or to change oneself from top to bottom. Migrants integrate their own countries' cultural and social abilities to adjust themselves to the new

environment, society, and culture. Every individual has calculated strategies to minimize their hurdles. Social structure plays a vital role in making socio-cultural strategies. At the same time, cultural differences influence social relationships. Food habits, morals, ethics, beliefs, previous lifestyles, Etc., play a vital role in adapting strategies. Even the political condition of the host country may affect this kind of strategy making. As the socio-cultural environment and structure vary from country to country, the strategy-making methods also differ. This study investigated the socio-cultural adaptation strategies of Bangladeshi women migrants who moved to Norway with their families.

Additionally, it also studied the role of Bangladeshi community organization role in Norway. I did this because when I studied my empirical research field, I found out that this organization plays an essential role for Bangladeshis in Norway and outside of Norway. Moreover, studying individuals and organizations will analyze adapting strategies well.

Research Questions:

Based on my interest, this study intended to explore the socio-cultural strategies of Bangladeshi immigrants (married women) living in Oslo, Norway. While doing the literature analysis, I found this potential gap. Mostly, we are concerned about the causes and aftermaths of Migration. However, there is a big gap between those two. We hardly look at the conditions of immigrants.

I also focus on ‘What are the reasons behind their migration?’ Before I finalized my research question, I did a pilot survey. I randomly talked with my targeted group of people to get familiar with their perspectives. To ensure that my topic does not include any offensive or controversial elements. At that time, I learned that their previous (Bangladeshi life) had a remarkable impact on their strategy-making. That was why I also scrutinized the reasons behind Migration. Last but not least, this study explored ‘What is a Bangladeshi Community Organization’ and ‘what kind of roles is this organization playing for Bangladeshis in Norway?’

Thesis Structure:

This study contains eight chapters. The first chapter discussed the background of the study. It talked about Bangladeshi women's social status, the reasons behind their migration, and how the idea of this research was generated and pulled off. It also includes research questions. The second chapter was about the theoretical part of the study. It discussed the previous migration studies to find the study's potential research gap. At the same time, it includes the limitations of the study. The third chapter discussed the methodological part of the study. This chapter contains the empirical research field, research participants, research method, methodological tools, and ethical concerns. The fourth chapter of the study contained the first half of the

findings. It contains two significant parts of the study. One discussed the group or preparation meeting, and the other discussed the gala day (Eid event). The fifth chapter discussed push factors of Bangladeshi women immigrants and their life in Bangladesh. The sixth chapter explored strategies of individuals to adapt to socio-cultural changes. The seventh chapter discussed the study findings through anthropological theories and knowledge. The final and eighth chapter was the concluding remarks of the study. It includes a short overview of the study's purpose and findings.

Two: Literature Review

This chapter is going to discuss previous studies on migration. Before talking about the phenomenon, it is necessary to know about the thoughts and viewpoints of the other authors. It will help to draw the outlines and to establish a platform to justify the argument.

Discussion:

A migrant is a person who is permanently or temporarily relocating to a different place or in a country. They are not only shifting their living location but also from a different society and culture. Groups and individuals have ways of responding and describing coping strategies under different cultural frames and lenses, which are interconnected with the tradition and livelihood of their own and new society. The workplace environment and labor market prospects practically impact migrants (Gherghina et al., 2020).

World's migration scenario at a glance: The number of international migrants worldwide in 2019, 272 million people reside in a different country other than their birth country (from 258 million in 2017). Female migrants constituted 48 percent of this international migrant stock. Of approximately 38 million migrant children, three out of four international migrants are of working age. That means they are between 20 and 64 years old. One hundred sixty-four million are migrant workers. Approximately 31% of international migrants worldwide reside in Europe, 26% in the Americas, Asia, 30%, 10% in Africa, and 3% in Oceania (United Nations, n.d.).

The history of migration is as old as humanity. Nowadays, many people make one of the most challenging decisions: leaving their homes and townships to lead a safer or better life. The term migration encompasses significant movements and situations that involve people from all walks of life and backgrounds. The terms "refugee," "asylum-seeker," and "migrant" are often used to refer to the same group of people who are on the move, who have left their countries and have crossed borders. The terms "refugee" and "migrant" are often used as synonymous, but it is essential to distinguish between them as there is a legal difference (Amnesty International, 2022).

Over the period of time, researchers have worked on theories to define process and push factors of migration. They have worked on a number of theories to study different insights into migration. Moreover, they often analyzed migration through ontological, epistemological, and methodological frameworks. For example: El Khoury assessed the impact of age, gender, language, and acculturation choice on the socio-cultural adjustment and well-being of Syrian refugees in Stuttgart, Germany. Correlation analyses and t-tests were used to examine the

relationships between different variables drawn from a demographic's questionnaire, the Acculturation Attitudes Scale (AAS-16), the Revised Socio-cultural Adjustment Scale (R-SCAS), and the Mental Health Inventory (MHI-18). The results indicate a wide range of factors at work affecting refugees' well-being. A case is made for coaching designed for refugees in socio-cultural adjustment and cross-cultural stressors. At the same time, Arulmani recruits his travelogue of 17 years, capturing interviews with immigrants and refugees in different parts of the world. He discusses two studies to represent the disturbance of cultural equilibrium as individuals try to find their way in a host country. Drawing upon his research, he presents the cultural preparation status model of aspiration and engagement as a framework that guidance and counselling workers might use to help immigrants optimize their engagement with the systems of the host country (Hughes et al., 2019).

A comparative study has been done on Finnish society's two generations of adopted adolescent immigrants. It studied ethnic diversity and adaptation skills among adolescent immigrants. This research showed that the adolescent generation is adopting their adopted parents' socio-cultural and psychological strategies, and there are differences between the first and second generations adolescent immigrants' strategies. The first generation is doing much better than the second generation. Parental knowledge is the main thing that makes the difference. At the same time, first-generation adolescents are more psychologically vulnerable than second-generation. Immigrants' ethnicity plays a vital role in adaptation the socio-cultural and psychological knowledge of their new parents (Turjanmaa & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2020).

The immigrant rate in Norway has increased in the last few decades. In 1992, the immigrant population in Norway was 183,000 individuals, representing 4.3% of the total population, and net migration that year was 9,105 people. In 2012, net migration peaked, as 48,714 people came to the country. Since 2013, net migration has decreased. In 2016, net migration was 27,778 (Wikipedia contributors, 2022). According to UDI, 6320 had got family immigration permits by the end of September (Statistics and Analysis, n.d.). Researchers have been studying the migration cultures of Norway for a long time. Norway is a Scandinavian country, and Norway is often known as a country where social policies and cultural values promote gender (Żadkowska et al., 2020). Martiny's study on the young immigrants of Norway represented that many children and adolescents are growing up in an unknown culture utterly different from their own. They constructed a new identity consisting of their present and original culture. They experienced this socialization within their families and society. Even some of them adopted dual identities. It is challenging for them to endorse their ethnicity and national identities. So, integration is the recommended pattern for adopting the new environment.

A study by Susanne Søholt (2014) stated that former worldviews and experiences are challenged when facing the Norwegian bureaucratic, egalitarian, and largely secular society building on formal education. Gender, age, and religion are valued differently in immigrant and mainstream Norwegian cultures. The socio-cultural baggage of the immigrants and their capacity to seek solutions to rebuild their lives in new settings are decisive for the adaptive behavior they develop concerning housing. She also claimed that immigrants from different countries must adopt the residence country's housing culture, housing system, and access structure to live in society. Immigrants' behavior in the housing market is believed to be culturally informed because housing outcomes, residential patterns, and segregation differ among populations with different country backgrounds. Their own culture highly influences individuals behavior. This makes a clear difference among the immigrants when there are approaching housing contracts in the competitive housing market. Immigrants are making building various private and reciprocal networks to have housing. They also push their families to build and increase social networks within the new society. They are transforming their own culture and creating a hybrid culture for this network building. (Søholt, 2014).

The integration of migrants adapts a different perspective and is centered on the challenge that the immigrants pose for individual societies. One paradigm focuses on migration as a transitional phenomenon. On the other hand, another paradigm includes the structural context and policy framework to adapt the migrant in society. Additionally, migrants have ways to integrate and compatibility with the transitional activities within the culture. Recent time study focuses on migrant integration is overly dominated by national frameworks and a focus on ethnic and cultural differences between minority and majority populations, and such tendencies detract attention from other vital areas. An equally important challenge arising from the criticism of 'methodological nationalism is that the adopted implicit national gaze contributes to maintaining the binary between 'us' and 'them.' While such a binary may seem increasingly meaningless given the effects of globalization upon many people's lives, several states still only allow single citizenship, thus upholding such a binary in legal and political terms. For migrants, this means that they must choose either to be naturalized or to remain aliens. This is currently being articulated in ongoing policy debates throughout Europe on whether or not to permit dual nationality (Erdal, 2013). Indeed, there is always a difference between the natives and migrants. Even for the migrants, there is a shift in global migrant policy frameworks. IMO has formulated a global migration policy for the governments of different countries. However, what about the migrant's life which is generally neglected? There is a clear difference between the migrants, for example, their lifestyle, struggling patterns, etc. They are not only discriminated against as

natives or migrants but also discriminated against within the migrant groups. During their struggling period, they make different strategies. Some are from their own culture, and some are adapted from the new culture.

In the migrant study of Norway, I have identified the research gap in three ways. Firstly, most studies focus on the residence country problem, global political and economic crisis, transitional activities, and discrimination between the natives and the migrants. However, it ignored the migrant's life and cultural value. Secondly, the study of Martin's represented that the young immigrants are integrating their own and the national (host-country) culture. Despite challenging dualities. However, what about those who are shifting with their families? Especially the women. How are they managing their dualities? Are they also adopting the integration that Martin mentions? Thirdly, Søholt talked about the migrant's behavior and the adaptation strategies focusing on the housing pattern but overlooking the impact of the native culture on their life. In my opinion, it is essential to understand the strategies and strategic differences within the migrant groups to formulate the migrant policy or to draw any contextual framework on global migration issues.

My study explored the socio-cultural adaptation strategies and strategical differences among the migrant group to identify the cultural impact on strategy making.

Three: Methodology

It will discuss the methodological part of the study. It includes information on the research field, targeted group, and access to that field. Methods: that were used to pull off the study. Moreover, methodological tools were used during the study. Additionally, the ethical concern of the study.

Empirical Research Field:

I am from a middle-income developing country in South Asia known as Bangladesh. In my country, people migrated within the region because of climate change and employment opportunities. From the time of my previous research, I was interested in observing the actual migration scenario worldwide. I have read a few articles and had opportunities to work with top-level NGOs. Most of them study the push factors of migration and the intentions of the migrants. But what about the aftermath of migration? What are they doing to survive? How are they making them capable of coping with a different society than their own? From these curiosities, I was interested to know about their strategies to adapt to the socio-cultural environment of a new place. One cannot change their culture from top to bottom and become a new human being. Their native culture plays a vital role in adapting to the unfamiliar socio-cultural environment. If so, to what extent their native culture is helping them in making the new adaptation strategies? I am currently living in Oslo, Norway, for my study purpose. It was an absolute opportunity for me to meet my curiosity. Oslo has the highest number of migrants among all the cities in Norway (UDI, 2020). Most people prefer Oslo because of its job sectors and the prospect of employment. I think Oslo is the most suitable field to pursue this study.

Research Participants:

I chose a specific group and one community organization for the research participants. I decided to study Bangladeshi immigrants. I narrowed down the migrant group based on two variables. The first one was gender and the second one was marital status. I chose Bangladeshi married women migrants moving with their families for the study. And the Bangladeshi community organization of Oslo, Norway. The organization is working on Bangladeshi migrants. They arrange monthly meetings and discussions on the problems they are facing within the community. They also perform yearly get together to build a harmonious relationships among themselves. The organization is vital in building adaptive strategies for living in Oslo among newcomers.

Being a Bangladeshi citizen, I am doing my research on Bangladeshis. My position in this study is that I am a native anthropologist. In anthropology, it is a never-ending debate between native

and non-native anthropologists. For my study, it is a potential point of argument. Signe Howell (2017) proposed that anthropologists go for long-distance and long-term fieldwork. She indirectly identified native study as a potential threat to the academic field of anthropology. While looking at that statement, I found it sceptical about criticizing native anthropologists. I strictly believe that native anthropologists are meticulously studying their own culture. Barbara Boudewijnse, in her study of 'Fieldwork at Home: The Interest in Psychology and the Problem of Writing,' has mentioned the advantages and disadvantages of studying at home. The most significant advantage is the familiar environment. Native anthropologist does not need to think about boundaries—for example, language, culture, Etc. For a native anthropologist, there is no time boundary because s/he is an insider, and s/he is always living in the field (Boudewijnse, 2016).

Additionally, it is an absolute advantage to get access. During my study, I have enjoyed this advantage a lot. I should have thought about the access to the field and participants. I saw many classmates struggling to get access to the field. On the contrary, it is challenging for a non-native anthropologist to study the field's language, culture, and environment.

Moreover, potentially to learn those. For a non-native anthropologist, fieldwork has a definite start and end. S/he has to ensure to collect of data within the given time. Moreover, they try to study regularities as so many things are unknown. They focus on socio-cultural differences instead of going in depth. Even non-native anthropologists accept that. Kirin Narayan talked about this gap in her 'How Native is a Native Anthropologist?' She said that white anthropologists are taking advantage of native anthropologists. They are using them to study their native field. Native anthropologists claim they have better knowledge to study their native land and understand the phenomena better than others. Undoubtedly, native anthropologists are helping to enrich the branch of anthropology (Narayan, 1993).

Nevertheless, Malinowski asked the anthropologist not to interpret but to study it as a participant or as one of the group members to share their views and experience (Clifford, 1983). Moreover, I agree with this statement. My point is that if you have to present yourself as an insider for better understanding, then interrogating an insider or a native anthropologist for being biased or ethnocentric is vague. However, to some extent, it is problematic to study own field or culture. It is tough while write. What to write and how to write? At the same time, it is challenging to criticize native culture. It is challenging for a native anthropologist to interpret and describe the fieldwork. Because whatever is ordinary or evident for him/her; may not be for others (Boudewijnse, 1994). While I was analyzing my data, I faced this problem. It was hard for me to question my culture. Questioning own culture means doubting own existence.

So, I had to pay extra attention while writing. In this case, non-native anthropologists are enjoying the advantage. It is comparatively easy for them to question society's socio-cultural values and dynamics.

Access to the Field:

As my fieldwork and residing place are the same. It was easy to access my field. I am staying in one of the student villages. My targeted group was married Bangladeshi women immigrants who came here as dependents and lived with their families. My targeted group and informants live in the two famous student villages. Both of the student villages were within walking distance from my place. Communication wise it was easy for me. I have frequent transportation facilities from my home besides walking. As a community member, I did not need special permission to cover events and group meetings. Before starting my fieldwork, I took proper consent from them to take pictures and videos.

Methods:

To acquire the answer to my research questions, I followed a combined methodological approach. I looked for the answers with the help of two methods:

- Participant observations
- Semi-structural interview

Participant Observations:

My study intended to explore the socio-cultural adaptation strategies of migrants. I looked for my answer through participant observations. Participant observation was the primary method for conducting my study. First, I contacted the Bangladeshi Community organization coordinator and explained my purpose. Bangladeshi Community organization arranged several events and programs based on different occasions. I tried to join all events and seasonal get-together programs. It helped me observe and talk with them in person about this issue. I merged all events finding together. And wrote it under group interviews. Secondly, I did one-to-one interviews with married women living with families. I interviewed three women. I found them through the Bangladeshi organization. I shared my research ideas with them and asked them to cooperate with me. I visited them personally. One of them accompanied me to observe their everyday life. I went grocery shopping, cooked food together, and did household chores. Due to their everyday schedule, it was impossible to do this with others. I am also from Bangladesh. We belong to the same culture. It is an absolute

advantage for me to differentiate the cultural differences and to understand their newly adapted strategies for living in Norway.

Moreover, being insiders, they opened their hearts without hesitation. It helped me to get some adequate information to develop this study. Additionally, it opened some worthy research scope to study this community in the future.

Semi-Structured Interviews:

I assumed that everyone might not be connected with the Bangladeshi community organization—specifically, married women immigrants. For them, I conducted a semi-structured interview to find the answer to my research question. I made a semi-structured and open-ended questionnaire. I contacted them. I shared my research ideas and asked them if they were interested in cooperating with my research. I asked about their own experience and their thoughts. What was their experience when they came here, and what is it now? What did they do to manage their living? Each interview took more than one hour. I did not interrupt them and did not ask any questions outside my study. I gave them flexibility so that I could study the natural flow of their life.

Secondary Data:

Secondary data is necessary to analyze and justify the findings of a study. It is equally essential to apprehend the present, past, and future debate and narrative. Moreover, it is essential to analyze secondary data to find a potential gap for further study. For example, do we know what migration is? It is a global phenomenon. One wants to work on its solution. It is only possible to work on it by comprehending the causes of migration. For my study, I have reviewed previous works on migration. I found a potential gap in studying it from an anthropological perspective. To analyze my findings, I used the ‘Acculturation Framework’ and ‘Dirt Theory.’ Though the acculturation framework is considered an old theory, this helped me to portray my study findings. Additionally, I used some modern ethnographic studies as well. Moreover, I have used old but highly impactful theories like Dependency and Modernization theory to give a short but practical overview of the migration journey (push factors, shifts, or changes in the process).

Methodological Tools:

A structured open-ended question was prepared for the one-to-one interview. During the one-to-one interview, a notebook and recorder were used simultaneously to record the conversation and as practice material for the research. I used the notebook to note down the important key points related to my research. The recording was used at the time of interpreting and analyzing data. Pictures were taken during group discussion and get-together programs. I have used them

in my study. I did not use a recorder during events and group discussions. I used a notebook during group discussions to note down the main points.

Ethical Concerns:

American Anthropological Association (AAA) has found some codes of ethics for anthropologists that they have to abide by during their fieldwork. According to AAA, “Anthropological researchers, teachers, and practitioners are members of many different communities, each with its own moral rules or codes of ethics. Anthropologists have moral obligations as members of other groups, such as the family, religion, and community, as well as the profession. They also have obligations to the scholarly discipline, to the wider society and culture, and the human species, other species, and the environment. Furthermore, fieldworkers may develop close relationships with persons or animals with whom they work, generating an additional level of ethical considerations.”

As a research worker in anthropology, I abide by those codes of ethics:

- **Honest:** Before starting the interview, I made sure to give a brief about my research and the use of information. I was honest about my real intention of meeting with them. I shared my research goal with the participants.
- **Permission from the participants:** I took the proper consent from the participant before taking photographs and recording. The consent was taken orally from the participants.
- **Don't be harmful:** I was careful about my behavior, language tone, and speaking structure. So, it may not harm their moralities and cultural belief.
- **Respectful:** I was respectful of their opinion. I did not push or force them to share their personal information with me or to change their opinion for my benefit.
- **Privacy:** Proper confidentiality was maintained throughout the research. Participants' identities were kept secret. Their opinion was used under an anonymous name, so there was no opportunity to trace back. Moreover, their recordings have been protected under the well-protected folder of UiO's storage hotel. And no one has the access of that folder without me.

Four: A Piece of Bangladesh: Kringsjå Studentby

In this chapter, we will explore group events of Bangladeshi immigrants. Firstly, we will study a meeting of Bangladeshi immigrants before launching an event. Secondly, the final event. We will study the celebration and cultural practice scenario in the foreign land of Bangladeshi immigrants. Bangladeshi Community Organization's roles and functionalities will also be analyzed through those scenarios.

'We are One': Bangladeshi Community Organization



Figure 1: Flag of Norway and Bangladesh

Motherland is always a place of sentiment for immigrants. They share an unconditional bond with the land and the people. I am using the term unconditional bond to represent the bond of Bangladeshis in a foreign land without any monetary (financial) or non-monetary (political or social) exchange. The picture (figure 1) resembles the unity of Bangladeshis on the land of Vikings Norway. Along with Bangladeshis' respect and humbleness for Norway. It is a common practice for the Bangladeshis to use the flag to announce their existence.

'Welcome to the mini-Bangladesh'- I heard these words when I attended the first gathering of the Bangladeshi community at Kringsjå. Kringsjå studentby has the largest Bangladeshi community in Norway. Not only the community but also the natural beauty resembles Bangladeshi villages. The road towards kringsjå is covered by greenery during the summer. Though it never reminds Bangladesh during winter because of the winter pattern. According to a little doll-like Bangladeshi girl, Norway is an Elsa land. I could not find any similar word to describe the innocent beauty of Norway like take one. Winter in Bangladesh is as cold as fall here. The backside of Kringsjå is like a paddy field and the Sognsvann Lake is a big central pond of a village. None of these things are exaggerated to describe the beauty of Bangladesh.

The most spectacular fact is the children's playground becomes playful during the afternoon. As soon as, it's the afternoon, Bangladeshi children come out and knock every door to join them. However, this scenario is rare in Bangladesh except, it is a village. There are almost fifty-plus buildings in Kringsjå student village. Most of them are situated in the Zig-Zack shape or sometimes it's round. Thus, one building is very close to the other building. One of my friends was telling me 'One can blindly say that there is at least one Bangladeshi in each building. Even some buildings' floor has all Bangladeshis. In Bangladesh, it is a common norm to share a strong bond with your neighbour. Neighbours are allowed to visit and share an opinion without any invitation. They are there to share happiness and sorrows with each other. In my childhood, I saw my neighbours come to our house anytime. Similarly, my mom visited them whether she needs something or not. My friend also added. I heard that whoever was going to work knocked on a door suddenly and shouted 'Acho' (are you there?). Not only these but also anyone can call you to ask for food. It is common for Bangladeshi people to ask for food. It is not because she or he is poor, but it is because they don't want to make it, or they are exhausted. Whoever is in this practice is known as 'KOLIJAR DOSTO' (bosom friend). This term is frequently used among Bangladeshis. It is a metaphor to showcase the depth of their friendship. KOLIJA is a Bengali word, and it means heart. DOSTO stands for a friend. It means a very close heart-to-heart relationship between two friends. She also mentioned that the bond between Bangladeshis is unique, in a sense of strength. During COVID-19, I had no job. I was depressed and frustrated. I wanted to move on no matter what. I could not accept the fact that I am suffering here because of the job; when in Bangladesh I had a decent job and now I am trying for the oddest one still I cannot get it. I was accusing myself of taking a dumb decision. I shared these thoughts with my senior. He told me that it is very normal to be depressed. But, it is not a solution to scream without trying. There are thousands of things in this world. Now, it's your responsibility to get the suitable one for you. Those words saved me. He encouraged me and even helped me to find my current job. I am truly grateful to him.' Bangladeshis do this out of generosity. It is not like they are getting any monetary benefit for this. The shared culture and geographical location make them a group of kin where 'We Feeling' is stronger. Renowned sociologist William Graham Sumner divided groups based on feelings. According to him, there were two groups: In-group and out-group. In group members define them as WE. He defined five characteristics of In-Group. 'We Feeling' is one of them. This group of people distinguishes themselves from others through these feelings (Mondol, n.a). But this 'We Feeling' is kind of conditional. They do expect that they would also get help when they need it. Especially, if you are single and they are single, they expect to make it an alley. Being an

insider of this community, I would like to describe it as a way of looking partner. But, as a researcher, I think, it is a method of making a community based on conditions. Nevertheless, it is also an identifying characteristic of that specific community. Most of the meetings and gatherings are organized by this community. Bangladeshi festivals like Eid, Pahela Baishakh (the first day of Bengali New Year), Durga Puja (the biggest festival of the Hindu religion), etc. have been organized by this community. Bangladeshi community organization is not a formal organization. Nobody knows about the exact time of the founding of this organization. Though this organization has a similar position to other formal organization except for the financial manager. This position is mostly controlled by the general secretary and secretary. These two positions are held by the oldest members of the community. But it is not mandatory to be the oldest. The main function of the organization is to organize the central festival along with seasonal gatherings. Another important role is to provide information regarding living and job. Oslo-based Bangladeshis are members of this community but those who live outside of Oslo can be members as well. Bangladeshis outside Oslo come to join those festivals to have a day worth remembering. There is no central fund for the organization. Festivals and programs have been organized on one-time funding. It has been collected during the event. Other than that, the organization also runs humanitarian activities. During the catastrophes in Bangladesh, it collects funds from Bangladeshis and sends them to Bangladesh. In 2021, the organization created a Facebook group to provide information more accurately. At the same time, it is easy to discuss and have an opinion from everyone. His group has some strict rules. Nobody is allowed to promote personal products, and sexual, and political activities. Though humanitarian activities are welcomed. Religion-based promotion is also prohibited. Admin position is open. Anyone can be the admin but she or he must take full responsibility for any incident. At the same time, there is no hard and fast rule that you have to be a member. If anyone feels offended or uncomfortable is welcome to leave. From the time, I joined the group. I observe that everyone is disciplined and well-aware of their role. People are very active. Sometimes they share information like job openings in Norway or any incident like community notice. In a nutshell, it is a virtual version of a Bangladeshi community organization. This organization is playing an important role for newcomers. It is a blessing for them.

Getting back to the first meeting, the first meeting was called to arrange the first Eid after one year of the severity of COVID-19. Though, there was a restriction of gathering no more than fifty people at a time and keeping a safe distance among pupils. To organize this program, a Facebook chat group was opened to communicate with each other. Everyone was excited to

meet people and have some quality time together. A day had been fixed, matching everyone's availability.

On the fixed day, I went to the meeting place. It was one of the student buildings of Kringsjå. All of us gathered in the common space which combined the living room and the kitchen. There were some chairs, one table, and one sofa. When I entered the room, it was crowded. Some were standing while some were sitting on the cabinet. I also noticed one person was sitting on a person's lap. As soon as I entered, everyone shouted, 'ashen, boshe jan (come, and sit with us). I sat in the corner of the room; the table was in front of me. Seniors were sitting around the table. Juniors and my batchmates were sitting beside and behind me. The common social norm was followed there. Older people are always the center of attention. They pose the highest power in decision-making or influencing a decision. Among the Bangladeshis, this sense of respect is very strong. It is not likely you must follow but it is something that shows your family values and position in society. Let me draw an example. A younger child of a family is always asked to show proper respect to elders. The Bangladeshi children of Norway also follow the same norm. I saw their families always ask them to greet elders properly. As long as, they are unable to do this, their parents keep asking them to do it properly. On the other hand, his norm is significantly absent in lower-class families. These lower-class families include uneducated and lower-income families. Where making money is the only goal, there learning to respect others is complete a joke. Well, Pupils seemed delighted. Though the room was a bit cozy, the atmosphere was lively. Everyone was talking with each other. I saw that one of the boys was making tea and asking everyone about the sugar. Shortly, he served teas. Suddenly, one person shouted 'silence'. Everyone became alert and looked at him. He shouted again, 'hey, hopefully, everyone is here. We should start meeting as some of us have to go back to work. I am Mahan. I am studying at Oslomet. I can see a lot of new faces. To them, welcome to Norway. Some cheaters and millionaires (after making fun of his friends and seniors). Let us introduce ourselves to each other. At least the name, hometown, and university.' Now again, when he addressed people as cheaters and millionaires; apparently it is a violation of social norms as I said before. Someone may find it contradictory to their position. But it is a very interesting fact that when people jokingly use slang to each other is a representation of their closeness. Cheaters and millionaires do not relate the verbal meaning rather it is a metaphorical representation of relation.

After his call, everyone started introducing themselves individually. Whenever they got one from the same hometown or university, they gave a shout-out. Just like ‘ah, gom asuni’²(how are you). Though Bangladeshi people talk in Bangla, the accent and meaning of words differ from region to region. It represents their root of origin. End of the introduction part, one of them cleared the purpose of the meeting and called for ideas. I noticed that suddenly the environment became very quiet. The person sitting beside me was recalling the previous Eid memories and left a long breath of frustration. It seemed that he was not hopeful to celebrate it freely. Apparently, the head of the community seemed very worried because of COVID rules and regulations. He was asking others to check the recent rules. One proposed to make the gathering as short as possible and divided into groups but some people denied being divided into groups.

‘Eid is an event of joy and togetherness. If we had to celebrate it separately, then it is a meaningless meeting. We can just celebrate it by ourselves. We are thousands of miles away from our family. we have no one to share our feelings, happiness, and sorrows. If you think that you need divination here, it is better not to call a meeting like this. So, I think it is better to drop the idea of celebrating Eid separately. Rather, we need to focus on how we can celebrate it together without any hassle.’ One person said those words out of anger. Eid is very special to Muslims. It is celebrated gorgeously and in the most stunning way in Bangladesh. Eid stands for togetherness. In Islam, Eid signifies the bond of brotherhood. Every Muslim of Bangladesh believes it from the bottom of their heart. It is not like celebrating alone will make it less significant, but he believes that Eid is meant to be celebrated together. That’s why he encountered the idea of minimizing numbers. While sharing those words, he seemed very angry. Moreover, he was annoyed by the senior’s decision on the community. Some asked him to calm down while supporting his decisions. A few more people also swing their heads to support his opinion. One of the seniors who has been living here for six years spoke up while referring to the previous year’s program.

‘I do understand that our present situation is different. But we are not..... We can make it with a proper plan and strategy. Let’s follow the same plan as before. One dish party. Everyone will bring one dish according to their preference. There will be one organizing committee to arrange

² It is a local language of Bangladesh. It is known as CHITTAGONIAN. People of Chattagram speak in this language.

those. Anyone is welcome to attend the committee. It will be great if we contribute a small part from our position.'

At this point, the boys seemed delighted while the girls were a bit down. One of my friends asked me my opinion regarding this matter. What am I going to make? I casually laughed and replied I will see. It was hard for me to reply. I had no idea what is going to happen. A gentleman sitting in the corner of the room clapped for grabbing attention. He said,

'I think, it is a good idea. Why not make the committee now? Everyone will be aware of their responsibility as well. I will note the interested people's names and open a separate chat group to contact each other.' 'I want to add one more thing'- apparently, the leader of the group stopped him in the mid of the conversation and said, I want to add that we should vote first for the idea of one dish party, then we can move to the next.'

As soon as he finished, everyone howled loudly, 'yes, yes. we want that.' He laughed and said, 'so, do we agree on the one-dish party?' Everyone agreed through a clangorous YES sound. It seemed that he wanted to hear those words to gather confidence. He added, 'Please raise your hand so we can count?'

Everyone raised their hand even before he finished. The room environment turned into a festive mood quickly. Everyone was talking about their plan for that day.

'Who wants to volunteer to organize the party?' a few interested people raise their hands. A boy who came to Norway in 2020. I know him before I came to Norway. He is very talkative and active. When people were busy talking, he silently entered about ten minutes ago and was standing in the corner from my left side. He raised his hand,

'I would like to say something. First of all, it is a great idea to have a party like this. But newcomers like me are not aware enough of the availability of foods and other kinds of stuff. We are not familiar with the marketplace. And there is another barrier of language. We cannot find products as it has a different name..... Certainly, everyone may not be in the same state as me, but I believe most of us are in the same situation. What if we divide into groups and divide the responsibilities? Maybe seniors, I mean couples can take the responsibility of cooking food, and singles like me can contribute monetarily. We will take the responsibility of booking the place and decorating it. But, of course, we need guidelines for that. Moreover, in this pandemic, we don't have jobs. So, it will be great to share the financial burden among us.'

At this point, the leader of the senior group seems puzzled. He asked to take some time to discuss over the session. Newcomers seemed to be a new group. They whispered their opinion on the matter. Quick divination was observed in the room. The senior group was concerned about the arrangement of the events. Financial issues were not present among them. They were thing about how flawless they can arrange it, so everyone can enjoy it. On the other hand, newcomers were greatly tensed about their financial condition. There were two reasons behind it. First, the value of Norwegian crone was high. One had to pay eleven Bangladeshi Taka for one krone. It cost a lot of money. Second, due to covid restrictions companies were not hiring. So, there were very less jobs. Most of the newcomers came to Norway on self-funding. It was hard to survive without a job on self-funding. Perhaps, both groups' purpose was the same, their priorities divided them into two parts. As soon as priorities were clear, it turned into a job-seeking request to the seniors. I found it very interesting. It was not a natural flow to change topics. They (newcomers) made it into an opportunity of seeking jobs. Human needs are always their priority. Newcomers' priority was making money to make their leaving. Though it was not an original context of the discussion, the context was determined through their priorities. If we look back, from the first whether it was a divided group on the basis of purpose or not, it was a symbolic representation of turning the discussion into an opportunity; based on their priority.

One said,

'Bhai, you have three jobs now..... What's the point of having so many jobs? Give me one. I need one badly.'

The room bust out laughing. Some started pulling the legs of others. Again, a very strategic way to ask for help. Making fun of anyone's financial condition was not the intention. There is no specific group of people that you can joke with. It depends on the person and how closely you are related to each other. Seniors laughed and assured to help them out as much as they can. Some even referred to some restaurants and food delivery companies. One of them suggested making a CV and knocking to as many restaurants as possible. They shared their experiences and were so light on the present situation. They asked to have patience and look for it slowly. When I started writing the paragraph, I used the term 'Unconditional'. These are examples of using the term. You do not have blood relating or not like that you have shared the same district or neighbourhood. Just because of having the tag of Bangladeshi tied them up together. They are there for each other in their sorrows or happiness. I do remember one

incident. The day I came here, I didn't know anyone. The weather was bad and extremely unbearable for me. I travelled from forty degrees Celsius to minus one degree. When I landed, it was eight four past fifteen. But it looked like ten at night. I was scared. I knew one person who came here one week before me. He received me from the central station. He helped me with my bags and to find out my house number. He eventually cooked for me. I could not expect more. I did not expect such a warm welcome in an unknown land. Later, I got to know that it is a common practice for Bangladeshis. They do it from their heart without having any expectations. In the meantime, during the discussion, people started leaving. The leader noticed it, and he asked for everyone's attention. Everyone became alert. He started,

‘We should call the end of this meeting. We will inform you. Before that let's create a group and make one representative who can communicate and convey information between two groups. It will be easier in this way. Otherwise, it is quite difficult to arrange such a meeting and to have everyone together. Though we have limitations this time, hopefully, we can manage. And try to reach as many people as possible. So, we know the numbers. I hope that we can have a good time together, apart from family, far from our motherland. Newcomers, you guys try to inform your friends. It will be a good meeting for us. We do not know many of you. It is good for them as well.’

After finishing this he sat down. Everyone applauded and agreed with him. People were leaving while some were sitting and gossiping. One of my friends came to me and ask for my opinion. I assured him of full support and contribution from my side. He then asked,

‘Have you found any job? was asking if there is anyone who needs a job. His restaurant is looking for an employee.’

After thinking a bit. He started again without waiting for my reply,

‘Do you have any stigma?³ I mean, you don't want to work as a cleaner or babysitter as we are not used to these odd jobs. We are our mamma's baby. They think that these kinds of jobs are not for their pampered child. These jobs are always for the uneducated person. But now, the scenario is quite different. If you want to survive, you have to work. I know, all of a sudden, it is hard to accept. Still, we need to do it. It is not acceptable in our country, but no one cares

³ He talked about social stigma. Social stigma refers to distinguish among the people of society based on their social status.

about social status here. No one is going to judge you by your profession. I think you can try that job at least. If not, you can look for others. But at least try.'

I said nothing with a smirk and slightly shook my head. Because those words were not new to me. From the time, I came to Norway, everyone was telling me about the social differences between Bangladesh and Norway. There is indeed a significant difference in social status. Odd jobs like cleaning, waitress, babysitting, etc. are for the lower caste people of society. Educated people, I mean graduated and post-graduated like we meant to be for the higher social jobs like the BCS cadre (government job), corporate jobs, teachers, etc. People from middle-class families cannot even think about odd jobs. Parents of middle-class families used to threaten their children with this. Let me explain it. During my childhood whenever I cut a bad figure in an exam. My father told me that I have to marry a rickshaw puller. Because I am not qualified to be a wife of a well-educated person. Similarly, when my younger brother cut a bad figure in an exam. He told my brother that he will buy a rickshaw for him. Because he is not qualified for a suitable job according to the social standard. It is an ancient way of differentiating people through their profession. I heard that my grandfather used to say those words to my father and my uncles as well. But the scenario is quite opposite if you are working an odd job in a foreign land. Because you are in a foreign country, and it matters. If one person in the family lives in a foreign country, it has been considered that the family is rich. Even though the person is working a lower-class job, it doesn't matter.

Growing up in such an environment is a challenge for students who are coming to study abroad without strong financial support. They had to work cross the line. They had to manage to see everything neutrally and judge rationally instead of believing odd ancient rules. Even whoever has financial support does not want to take financial support from the family. the reason is social ego. What is society going to say? They care more about society. Middle-class families of Bangladesh are mostly controlled by society. They strictly abide by the rules of society. If it is a boy, it's his responsibility to take care of the family. Even if the parents have their income source. If the boy is depending on his family. Society is going to register him as a useless son. The situation is more or less similar for girls. Girls are meant to be husband's dolls. They should get married as soon as possible. Coming abroad is mostly a way of escaping from those social rules. They want to settle down somewhere they won't be judged.

Going back to the discussion. During these times living in Oslo, the sentence I have heard mostly is 'this is not Bangladesh. You need to be bolder, more confident, and carefree. No one

cares about your physical appearance. There is nobody to question your family status, bank balance, etc. Stick to your plan and work hard.' All those words have a deeper meaning. Almost ninety percent of the students came to Norway without strong financial support as it is tuition-free, and it is possible to cover daily expenses through a part-time job. Even though they are struggling to break the shell of prejudice throughout the living period. I will discuss those in the personal interview.

After the end of the meeting and conversation, I asked to see everyone again and prepared to leave. One of the seniors came forward and asked me about my address. He offered me a lift and accepted it. He told me that he lives in Majorstuen and he has a car. So, he can drop me off on the way. After we got into the car, he asked me if I am doing any jobs or not. He could refer me if I need a job. I politely refused his offer because I was working already. He told me to inform him if I need or have someone who is looking for a job. I assured him to let him know if I get anyone who needs a job. This common nature I observed all over. I know a Norwegian restaurant. There almost 80% of the employees are from Bangladesh. They don't recruit anyone without Bangladeshis. they always hire among the newcomers. Even whoever needs a job, went there first and then went to another place. There is a chain to follow to get a job. If anyone wants to manage it by themselves, they are welcome to do. But if anyone wants to work with native people, he or she must follow the chain of command. It is not like if one wants to do it by themselves, he/she is out of the chain. It means he/she will lose the priority to get a job. One's relationship with the employer will determine the position in the queue. He dropped me off and invited me to his home. I accepted the invitation and told him will visit shortly.

After two days, I got a notification of a new chat group. It was created for new students. The admin of the group, my friend made a welcome announcement. He said,

'Welcome everyone. Today our senior group just informed us, that they have decided to divide the responsibilities. Seniors- I mean married seniors will cook one dish. They will discuss it by themselves. So far forty-five people have confirmed their presence. We are responsible to arrange the rest. I was thinking to buy drinks and make the salad. And if girls want to make something they can do it.'

Gradually all the girls refused to cook as it was a huge arrangement, and no one wanted to take the risk. One said,

‘If it is Bangladesh I would like to cook because I have my mother there. But here I am alone, so I don’t want to take the risk. Moreover, we don’t have good ingredients here to cook traditional sweet dishes. So, I think, it is better to skip the idea of cooking.’

It is a very interesting fact of saying I cannot cook. If you look at the statement, I cannot cook. You would probably take it easy. It is not mandatory that everyone would know everything. This statement is a representation of their family’s social status. They want to showcase their position in the family. you cannot cook because you are not allowed in the kitchen. It is not because you are a bad cook. Even if you are a bad cook, you must enter the kitchen to prove that. But if you are completely not allowed, that means your family pampered you as the dearest child. During my days in Bangladesh, my aunt told my mom, ‘Bhabi, chinta koren na. amader meye biya somoy amra chakor diya dibo. Ore ranna ghore jawa lagbe na’ (Sister-in-law, don’t take tension. When our daughter will marry, we will send a servant with her. So, she does not need to cook.). it symbolizes power, wealth, and social status. They don’t care about family rather; they care about social status. The same thing shows here. I asked my friend why they are denying not cooking. She clearly replied that she doesn’t want to take responsibility. If it is bad, then everybody will laugh at her. Moreover, she is not interested to burn her hands while cooking. Everyone seemed to be agreed. So, when they mean it, it is the taste. It is not always the taste. It is also about their unwillingness to save themselves from embarrassment.

Though one or two people said everything is possible if we want. But no one seemed interested.

Another boy said,

‘We better fixed an amount of money. Then buy drinks, one-time use cutleries, decoration pieces, and something for the kids like chocolates, chips, bubbles, etc. So, the seniors don’t need to take tension with others.’

One of the girls added,

‘Yes, it is a good idea. We will make the salad as well. As it is not possible to arrange it like Bangladesh, we can make it through our efforts.’

All through those times, everyone was recalling the memories of their previous Eid. How did they celebrate? How did they arrange the Eid program with their families and everything? Although the conversations, everyone was presenting their memories, no one was interested in making memories. Not having a job, changed the situation for newcomers. At the same time, celebrating Eid without families left a stressful long breath for them. In the mid of those

conversations, everyone agreed and fixed an amount and date to collect the money. They made one central Vipps number and started collecting the money. After this conversation, everyone became silent. Later I heard that boys joined the seniors and girls remained quiet to avoid responsibilities. They just confirmed to join the program and to help anytime if needed. Before the day of Eid, we were notified about the time to come. And asked to bring individual water bottles and necessary stuff to avoid mess.

The Gala Day: Eid-Ul-Fitr 2021

On Eid day, Eid prayer was held at Kringså football field. As there was no proper big place to have Eid prayer. At the same time, it was a lot of people, so they selected the football field as a prayer place. The prayer took place at 10 o'clock in the morning. The party time was 11 o'clock. Women did not participate in the Eid Salat. For women, it is not mandatory to participate in the Salat. And women must follow some specific rules for salat. Women's prayer places should be covered. That means no one can see them. They can participate but they must sit behind men. I came to know about this from an online Islamic Q&A website. There they discuss Al-Bukhaari and other hadiths. I can read Quran but do not understand the meaning. That's why I took help from this website to understand the narration of those topics based on hadiths and the Quran.

I live in Sogn studentby. It is close to Kringsjå. It takes 5 mins by bus or 20mins by walk. On Eid day, I was waiting for my bus and suddenly one person who was standing beside me spoke up,

‘Apu ki Kringsjå jaitesen? (Sister, are you going to Kringsjå?)

I was startled and looked at him with a surprised expression. I was wondering how did he figure out that I am a Bangladeshi? I replied positively. Before I asked the question he said,

‘I was looking at you for quite some time. But looking at your attire, I am convinced that you are definitely a Bangladeshi. Though I was confused that you could be Pakistani, later I looked at your makeover and it said that you are Bangladeshi.’

I laughed and praised his observation power. I did not put in any special makeover. I wore a ‘TIP’. It is a traditional accessory and part of a makeover for Bangladeshi women. The shape of this accessory varies but a round shape is very common. Colours and designs also vary. A tip is not just an accessory, but it is a sentiment to the Bangladeshis. One can easily find several poems, songs, and stories on this. Writers used it as a metaphor for innocence and Bengali

charm. We took the bus together. I noticed that a lot of people were looking at me. Maybe they find it weird. It is the common nature of humans to react or attract to an unnatural thing. We got off the bus. Then we took a walk for almost eight minutes to reach our destination. One of the children's playgrounds was fixed as a party place. It was situated among the five student buildings. Three of them were couple-students houses and one was single student house. There were some reasons to select the place. The place was on one side of the student house, so there was less possibility to make chaos. At the same time, the children's playground had some toy kinds of stuff so the children will not be bored. Moreover, most Bangladeshi couples live near the place, so it is easy for them to take the food from their home.

When I reached there, I saw that some people were fixing the tables to place the food, while some were collecting food from different houses. Everyone was laughing and greeting each other with 'Eid Mubarak'. Men were wearing Punjabis. Though it was prohibited to handshake or hug, people did not seem to be bothered by that. There is a very special hug of Eid. It is known as 'KOLAKULI'. It is only for men. For this, two men stand facing each other. They hug alternatively three times. And say Eid Mubarak loudly. Whenever see anyone, they hugged happily. One even said,

'Oh bro, there is no corona today. Corona is on holiday. We will think about it from tomorrow'

After hearing this everyone burst out laughing. It is not likely that there was no corona. Rather it is a way to ask not to think about the corona and enjoy the moments. Because parents were tensed for their children. They were running to and fro. Children's world is always tension free and lively. They are just concerned about having enough fun. In the meantime, I noticed that men and women were standing separately. Women were holding hands and greeting each other. They were complementing each other's attire. Most of them wear Saree⁴-the traditional dress of Bangladesh. Though a significant difference in choosing dress has been seen throughout the gathering. It was mostly the married women group who carried the traditional dress. There is a traditional thought behind this. Let me break it down, so it can be understood how Bangladeshis are carrying their traditionality in a modern modified way. There is a specific classification to

4 A sari or saree is a women's garment from the Indian subcontinent that consists of an unstitched drape varying from 4.5 to 9 yards in length and 600 to 1,200 millimetres in breadth that is typically wrapped around the waist, with one end draped over the shoulder, partly baring the midriff.

wear a dress in Bangladesh. Children are allowed to wear anything. Teenagers mostly wear Salwar-Kameez or big gowns. Unmarried girls wear Salwar-Kameez. Married girls are bound to wear sarees. Social class doesn't matter for this. It is an unwritten law for them. People expect married women to wear saree even if they are not comfortable. It has been believed for years that a married woman cannot be fulfilled without a saree. Though unmarried women wear saree occasionally. My mother always wears a saree. My father asked her to wear Salwar-Kameez, but she denied it. There is another reason, me and my brother are so comfortable and habituated to see her in sarees that we could not imagine her without that attire. We felt like we lost our mother. This is a weird experience that is hard to explain. At this point, I would like to describe it as part of our psychology. We are trained to think about it from our childhood. So, normal things like dressing force us to differentiate between married and unmarried. More specifically mother and non-mother. Because a dress should not be a way to identify a mother or a married woman. This psychological understanding is changeable depending on the place and environment. I cannot say when I changed my mind or how did it change. But after watching the married women wearing Salwar-Kamees or western dress, I never had that question why are not they wearing sarees? I think this could be because of my mental growth and education or it could be that I have learned to take thing the way it is. As time passes, people started moving forward. The rules were less followed by society. After watching that different way of dressing and classification, I realized that the belief is not completely dead yet. They are carrying it into themselves but in a modified way. Just like married women wear sarees in the program considering their marital status. On the other hand, single students preferred to wear western dresses. It is just not a way to showcase their marital status, perhaps it is a way to satisfy their soul who wants to go back to their root.

One of them said,

'I had so many sarees, but I don't have any occasion to wear them. So, I decided to wear it today. Ah, I am feeling so good after a long time. I feel like, I am with my family. I cannot sleep last night out of excitement.'

Another person added,

'It is so true. I was waiting to meet everyone. I told my family that for the first time I am going to attend a Bangladeshi program. I was also wondering what to cook. Then I decided to make some desserts. I asked my husband to buy the ingredients, but he couldn't find them. Later we went to Grønland. We were looking for rich flour but couldn't find it. When I asked the

shopkeeper, he couldn't answer because he doesn't understand English. So, my husband translated it into Urdu. Then he understood that and told us that it is known as chaki ka atta. I was wondering why it is chaki ka atta. Whatever we bought but found that it is the different one. After that, I asked one of our Vabis (sister-in-law), and she told me that I wouldn't find the one I was looking for. She suggested to use hvetmel which is quite similar to the one I was looking for. She also told me that I will find it in Kiwi or Rema 1000. So, I tried to make our Bangladeshi pitha with that. Somehow it worked but, it was not as tasty as the one I used to make in Bangladesh. I was a bit sad about that but later my husband told me that it is enough to have Bangladeshi food on occasion though it is not the same just because of the ingredient. You don't need to be upset about this little thing, rather enjoy it.'

This situation was similar to the one I read about during one of my courses. It was about sensorial fieldwork. Where authors tasted some foods during the fieldwork and compared them with shit. Because those were not tasty. Even the host family compared the cooking of the mother and daughter-in-law. They described that their mother is always best at cooking while their daughter-in-law is bad at cooking. The author described that being a daughter-in-law is her only fault. How much she tried to make good food it is never like their mother. I observe the same situation twice. First, when single girls refused to take responsibility because it won't be like their mothers. Second, ingredients difference. It makes the ultimate difference in taste. Before going further let me tell you a common belief. In the village due to the unavailability of gas, they had the use a very special stove to cook food. It is made of clay or mud. Woods and dried leaves are used as fuel. It is known as 'Mati Chula'. People who live in the city due to make their living, always say that foods cooked in matir chula taste special. From a logical perspective, there should not be any differences due to the two different fuels. But it is their belief. Even for this thing, they travel to the village. Similarly, ingredients make differences in taste. It is true. But it is not like home. This statement carries the same belief and psychological thought. During the time of growing up, whatever is taught by our family or surroundings became our concrete beliefs. Though we learn many things along with the times, our subconscious mind nurtures those beliefs. It is an unavoidable truth. Our mind always looks for similarities between our past and present. And unavailability forces us to adapt to the new environment. It is reflected in the previous discussion. Either they accept it, or they avoid it. This statement will be clearer in the next discussion.

A lady who was standing at the corner of the gathering and wearing a black scarf with some heavy gold jewellery said,

‘It is so true that whatever we cook, we don’t get the same taste of home. I bought a lot of spices from Bangladesh. I use it while I cook red meat or chicken but still, it tastes different. I tried so many ways, so many techniques but it is not the same..... At first, when we came here, we bought jasmine rice. I cooked it as usual. But oh my god, it was completely a disaster. It was a kind of rice mud. It took a lot of time to adopt the technique of rice cooking. Now I can cook almost everything..... Sometimes, I look back, I was a pampered child of my family. when I got married, my mother-in-law never let me do anything. Life was beautiful there. Then I came to Norway almost six years ago. From that time, I am learning everything. Now I am a proper housewife. Today I cooked chicken for forty people. If it was six years ago, I wouldn’t even imagine it. Now I believe that time and situation teach everything.’

Food habit differs from country to country. So, as the availability of food ingredients. It also can be said that the availability of ingredients determines food habits. Bangladesh is agricultural land. It is a riverine country. Rice and fish are the main food of Bangladeshis. there is a proverb ‘Mache Vate Bangali’. It is an ancient saying which defines the characteristics of a Bengali. It is hard for Bengalis to quit their habits suddenly. They try hard to stay in their comfort zone while compromising with their family values. For example, Muslims are not allowed to eat haram food. So, they avoid eating pork or jelly. But there is one more thing that is very contradictory. It divides them into two groups. In Islam not only pork is prohibited, but also any animal which is not sabotaged in the Islamic way is haram. Now it is hard to identify, whether it is sabotaged properly or not. What is the proper way of sabotaging? It means it must be sabotaged by the name of Allah. In the market, one can find halal meats available. But those are very expensive. So, those who have financial issues, cannot afford it. They buy meats from other supermarkets. How are they compromising it? One of the Bangladeshis who studied in Madrasa⁵ told me ‘It is not described in the Quran that it has to be sabotaged in the name of Allah. It says that the vein which circulates blood to the brain must be cut properly. And the way of sabotaging cannot be painful. Now here you can see all the chickens are clean and there is no blood. You can eat it. The same goes for beef and lamb.’ This is one person’s opinion. Most of the people have similar judgments. There is another group who doesn’t believe this. According to them, there is nothing like this. Everything is halal, as long as you can it. It can

⁵ A Muslim school, college, or university that is often part of a mosque.

be their family values or their own views. Another group believes that they are Adam's⁶ child. So, they must abide by those rules. Otherwise, they must reply to their deeds in Akhirah⁷. It is difficult to justify who is right and who is wrong. All they are doing is to survive in their way. They are trying to make things logical and comfortable through their judgment where Islamic theory is invalid.

I heard a cheering sound from my behind. I looked back and saw one lady wearing a white dress with a charming smile coming forward. Referring to the last sentence, she said,

'That's why I came here from Lambertseter to eat.'

The lady group started laughing. She introduced herself and continued,

'Do you know, she is very dear to me. I love her. I saw her growing up. There was a time when she used to call me and cry about every small thing. Basically, our husbands are friends, that's we know each other well. I used to tell her to stay strong and told her that one day she will laugh while recalling the memories. See, she is doing it.'

The term 'Growing Up' doesn't stand for the physical grown-up. It refers to the skills and abilities she adapted over time to adapt to the situation. Support and suggestions from others help them to make their path.

When they were talking to each other, dependency on family showed up as a bigger scenario. Bangladeshis are very much connected to their families. Not only families but also people living in the same neighborhood act as a family. Parents always treat their children as a child. No matter what their age is. Bangladeshi children are grown up under strict rules. Those help them to be on the right path, but it makes them highly dependent on others. They have less opportunity to develop self-confidence and self-esteem. They are not opinionative. Their judgmental perspective on a thing is also not diversified. As a result, when they come out of their comfort zone, they become frustrated and depressed easily. I noticed that whoever said

⁶ The Holy Qur'an speaks of that Adam (peace be upon him) who was appointed as Khalifah and the first Prophet of God, and who was raised for the guidance of mankind. God appointed him a prophet and taught him the knowledge and made him the leader of men (Al Islam, n.a).

⁷ Akhirah is an Islamic term referring to the afterlife or the final destination. It is a core belief in Islam that life on earth is but a test and that we will be returning to Allah where he will decide our eternal home Jannah (paradise) or Jahanam (hellfire) (myislam, n.a).

that I don't know cooking, or I am not multi-tasking; represented them as a pampered child of their family. They use those statements to uphold themselves differently from others. This is the reason throughout the interviews the importance of support and experience have been reflected highly. Even the newcomer's expectations were reflected in the same dimension.

A lady added,

'It seems like a new chapter of life. We are learning something from each other. I never thought that I would be able to manage my family and job together. I am working four days a week. And the rest of the three days are for cooking, cleaning, and taking care of my two sons. On the off days, I want to sleep for an hour more, but it is not possible. My home looks like a garbage store. I had to clean for the next week. My husband is busy with his work and study. He doesn't have much time for us. I don't complain about that. Because I do understand that he is struggling to manage his study, work, and home. I am the one to take care of everything.....'

Suddenly someone shouted amid the conversation.

'Ai vabi, apnera ekhane. Ami apnader khujtec sei kokhon theke'(hello, sister, you are here. I am looking for you for a long time')

Everyone turned back and looked at her. As soon as they saw her, everyone started laughing.

A lady wearing a glittery saree laughed and said,

'Where have you been? We are here since we came. Someone was even asking about you. You told us to come early so we can be together. All of us came early, except you.'

She replied,

'I wanted to come early but you know that recently I have learned how to ride a cycle. Last night, I couldn't sleep out of excitement. I was riding a cycle in my dream. I was awake the whole night. Your brother asked me what happened. Why am I not sleeping? I told him that I am riding a cycle in my dream. He got angry and asked me to go out and ride it. Now tell me, what can I do? It was my dream. And finally, it came true. I am so excited. But he has no excitement. At the same time, I wanted to tell everyone about it. I feel like my belly can explode anytime out of excitement.'

Everyone busted out laughing after hearing this. I saw a girl even choked and a few people are soaking their tears with a tissue. It seemed like everyone is close to each other. It turned out

that connection among the Bangladeshis is not just about mental support. Rather it is something to learn a new surviving skill. It just did not end like this. They force and motivate each other to learn. To some, it is a whole new process of finding a better version of themselves. Though they belong to different parts of Bangladesh, here they are one family. During this event, I noticed that gradually people were separated into groups and gossiping. I was standing near the married women group and mostly they were talking about their children, husband, in-laws, working schedule, etc. They are talking about their daily life while encouraging others to adopt some skills or asking for help to learn something new. At the same time, they were taking care of their children. They were asking their children to play together and to be careful while playing. I have noticed their strong sense of duty and responsibility. They were playing the roles of housewife, mother, and friend equally. Even though they were gossiping, they were taking care of the food section with their husbands. They were supervising everything perfectly. On the other side, unmarried women seemed to have their world. Their discussions were way different from those of married girls. For a time being, I joined the unmarried girl's group. They were concerned about their personal and professional life. Talking about love life was the hot topic of discussion.

‘Hey, what about your boyfriend? How is he? Why did not you take him here?’

‘O, he is busy. I asked him to come and join but he refused. I was not comfortable taking him here. Because he is Norwegian and dating outside of the nationality was not normalized in our culture. Sometimes people comment on personal choices, I hate those. So far, I am trying to avoid everything. I haven't told my parents yet. I am so tense about their reaction. I don't even know how to tackle the situation.’

This is a significant difference between the married and unmarried girl groups. Where the married group wants to adopt the present situation within their capacity, there the unmarried girl group wants to avoid everything that is contradictory. And I think, it is because unmarried girls are like free birds. They have less responsibility to take care of. It is easy to change a decision if it is for one person. You don't have to think about others. You can make your own path. On the other side, married women are a balancing ball. They have to take care of themselves along with their families. So, they had to take every step in a calculated way.

The conversation was running but, in the middle, one girl asked about the part-time job opportunity and have some suggestions on job hunting. The conversation turned into a job-hunting seminar.

‘You came this year, right?..... Make one CV first and try to knock on as many restaurants as possible. Try to talk with their manager. Don’t just drop off your CV to the employee. It is not effective. The kitchen back job doesn’t need any Norwegian language, so it is easy to take. Try to avoid Pakistani restaurants. They don’t follow Norwegian working law and dominate their employees a lot. I know a girl who is working in a Pakistani restaurant. She is paying one hundred and twenty kroner per hour, but the standard salary is one hundred and sixty-nine. I hate Pakistanis..... Now, restaurants are looking for employees for the summer. So, try to grab the opportunity. If you are strong enough, you can also apply for Aftenposten- paper delivery. The pay is good, but you have to work at night.’

‘If you want to work, you can contact ... him. His restaurant is looking for runners. And I will inform you when my restaurant is going to hire employees. I heard that they need some people for the position of prep.’

‘You also can open an account on Finn and Time 2 Staff or staffers. You can check these regularly. There are a good number of advertisements for vacancies. But yes, try to join a good Norwegian restaurant, they don’t mistreat their employees. The working environment is good. You will enjoy it.’

Discussion about one specific nation plays a vital role here. Bangladeshis have a historical concern regarding Pakistan. Bangladesh and Pakistan fought for nine months to achieve victory. After nine months Bangladesh conquered freedom from Pakistan. During these nine months, Pakistan dominated us brutally. They killed approximately three million people and raped two lakhs women. This bloody history becomes a question of ethics for Bangladeshis when they want to work together. It is not like they are dominating but national respect becomes a part of personal ethics. And Bangladeshis are particularly strict on this matter. Whenever anyone come, there were two instructions. Try not to be friends with Pakistanis and not to do any work in Pakistani restaurants. These are not rules but it is no less than an instruction. Anyone can deny it or follow it. They strictly believe that Pakistanis are no good to Bangladeshis. And this is reflected clearly in those conversations. These kinds of information are very helpful for newcomers. Because they know a lot, as they are working for a year. This information is the pathway for newcomers to figure out their own way. At the same time, their encouragement normalizes the standard difference and makes it easy to adapt to the situation. This is the way to build a channel to survive in this unknown place. They are doing it selflessly. Senior students are not only a pathway but also an academic guiding institution. Students who

are doing Ph.D., always encourage others to concentrate. They helped them with their assignments and academic lessons. One of the seniors asked me,

‘How is your study going on? Is it too hard for you?..... if you ever need any help don’t hesitate. The education system is very different from our country. The strategy to study materials should be different. You must understand them rather memorizing them. We are always there for you. So just ask for it. And most importantly, don’t just work, work, and work. Making money is good but decentralizing from the original goal is not good. You are here to get a degree. It is a stepping-stone for you. Don’t forget it.’

No one needs to be familiar for years. If they were not familiar with each other. They were coming forward and exchanging names, addresses, etc. If they got any similar interests or backgrounds, they started gossiping about that. Sharing the same nationality makes them a group of kin. They are always there for helping and guiding selflessly. Besides this, they also help their department juniors to find summer projects.

However, time passed, and everyone got into a festive mood. Soon, the former secretary of the Bangladeshi organization⁸ invited everyone to help them with food. Everyone stood in the queue and started having food. There were all kinds of Bangladeshi dishes. Seniors were monitoring everything. There was a separate section for the Hindu religion. Because beef is prohibited for Hindus. So, the beef dishes were kept separate from other dishes. Among the food items, I noticed some foreign food items like tiramisu (an Italian dessert), Cake, and ice-cream cake. The missing item was Semai (traditional milk Bangladeshi dessert) and khir (traditional rice-milk dessert). It is an unwritten rule for the Bangladeshis to cook these desserts on traditional occasions. Though some were excited to see ‘Doi’. One of the Bangladeshis managed to make this traditional after-lunch dessert. There is a proverb in Bangla, ‘Sesh pate doi na hoile jomena’. It means the meal is not complete until you have this dessert. People were having food according to their preferences. While having the food, children and women have given priority. In the meantime, someone among the crowd asked to eat food separately like women and men. Some seemed very annoyed. The girls were very annoyed.

⁸ Bangladeshi organization is not a registered or formal organization. Rather it is a group of people who helps the newcomers by providing necessary information and a committee to action against any illegal activities or propaganda. It has an informal committee to arrange programs, unite each other, and ensure a safe community.

‘We are living in the twentieth century, but we failed to accept the harmony of both genders. Nothing but categorizing them illogically. This is unbelievable’- a girl expressed with an irritating expression.

Nevertheless, no one opposed but didn’t forget to mock themselves. But it is not a natural scenario. The person called for this is very Islamic-minded. I did not know about him, so out of curiosity, I asked my friend about his identity. She said that he is very Islamic-minded, and he thinks that it is not appropriate for boys and girls to be a friend. It is against Islam. I was very shocked after hearing this. Because I never heard about it. Later I did some research but couldn’t find any potential supporting documents. After that, I asked my father who has good knowledge about this. He told me that it is not Prohibited but it is asked not to have physical touch and laugh loudly. And he also mentioned that there are some people who are over-protective. He could be like that. I do agree with my fathers because eating food together does not share any physical contact. And when someone is considering them as elder brother or younger brother, there should not be any issue. Married women were very disciplined. They literally gathered in a group with their children and started eating. During that time, some were nostalgic. Talking about food, family, and friend. Perhaps they were happy with their present situation.

‘I am badly missing my family. today morning, I called my mom, and she was crying. I asked her not to be upset. My brothers are there, so she should be happy. Celebrating Eid outside of the country is another kind of excitement. I am meeting new people after a long time. Laughing, joking, and cuddling. It feels like I get back to my childhood.’

As soon as, people started finishing their food. They started leaving. As someone who came from far away had to leave. People were also concerned about the corona restrictions. So, all of a sudden, everyone started wrapping up. Even called everyone to help them to wrap up soon. Because someone heard that police could come anytime and charge them up to five thousand kroner. On the one hand, the former secretary asked the newcomers to clean the area and sort out the trash and throw. On the other hand, he asked the mothers to leave with their children. He also invited the boys to come to building number 901 to play cards. He casually asked the girls to join them if they want. But there was no sincerity. It reminded me of a slang that we (girls) used a lot during our undergraduate days.

‘Amra to Bhai na, chaileo pai na’- this statement is a representation of negligence. Boys have a firm idea about girls are problematic. They are sentimental so they create problems. Girls try

to handle things emotionally. Whereas boys are very logical. They understand problems and cooperate according to it. People have long debates on it. But this thing remains unsolved. From my perspective, it is just an excuse to separate boys and girls. And lead the Bangladeshi community as it is running. So far, there was no woman leader in this community. It's not like they didn't have a potential candidate, rather they don't want to hand it over officially. To some extent, they still believe that woman is not capable of leading a community. Women have voices. They can ask for anything or share their opinion. They have their rights. It is just a matter of acceptance. As usual a strong existence of patriarchal power under a veil of modernity. Where women talk but do not work.

As everyone started leaving, I also left the place shortly after the farewell.

Chapter Summary:

Sharing the same culture and nationality make them a group of kin in an unknown land. Every year a good number of people is coming to Norway. It is very hard for one to survive in an unfamiliar land without any support. Bangladeshi community organization is working to provide the necessary support to the Bangladeshis. During COVID-19, it was harder than at any other time. Existing Bangladeshis and newcomers, both suffered a lot during this time. Get-together programs like Eid, Pahela baishak (the first day of Bengali new year), etc. are an absolute opportunity for newcomers to meet with others. A get-together like this is an information session for them. Seniors help them to find new connections to get new jobs. It is hard to get a job without references. Senior students help them by referring them to different restaurants. It is easy for them to refer because they are working here for a long time. They do know the techniques of searching for jobs. At the same time, whoever is working in the academic line helps others to get into different summer projects. However, it is not only about the job, but also senior students are big support for others. Whether they need to have food or not, they are enthusiastic enough to extend the bond among the newcomers. Especially, married women who are dependent share a very strong bond with others. They are very active to build new relationships and a comfortable zone for themselves. Whether Bangladeshis know each other previously or not, as soon as they exchange the first round- introduction like name, hometown, etc. it feels like they know each other for years. The greatest thing is that everyone respects each other's privacy, choice, and space. They are very dear and supportive of themselves to live each day while upholding and maintaining every element of their origin.

Five: BTS: Citizen to Immigrants

In this chapter, we will explore the individual story of Bangladeshi married women. Before going any further, we will look at the overall migration scenario of Bangladesh. After that, we will study their life in Bangladesh. At the same time, push factors analysis of migration.

Discussion:

“Migration is the aspiration of the human aspiration for dignity, safety, and a better future.”

-Ban Ki-Moon

The term BTS stands for Behind the Scene. This chapter is going to disclose and discuss the reasons behind the migration of Bangladeshis. This research originally focuses to study the socio-cultural adaptation strategies of Bangladeshi women immigrants. But I think that it is important to take a closer look at the driving factors of migration before getting to the main point. It helps to analyze the scenario naturally and efficiently. I used the word ‘Naturally’ to look at the scenario from head to toe without making any absurd assumptions. That’s why I tried to know the reasons for the migration of my interviewees. Firstly, we will look at the current migration scenario in Bangladesh. I am giving out this statistic for a better understanding of the migration ratio over the past three years. Bangladesh is a middle-income developing country. Every year several people are migrating to other countries to study and work. Recently, the net migration rate for Bangladesh in 2022 is **-2.113** per 1000 population, a **2.18% decline** from 2021. In 2021, The net migration rate for Bangladesh in 2021 was **2.160** per 1000 population, a **2.17% decline** from 2020. When a person is migrating from their home country to the host country, there can be a lot of push factors, for example, Improvement in lifestyle, better environment, job sector, etc. (Macrotrend, n.a).

I am presenting this broad picture to explain the general nature of migration in Bangladesh. Secondly, we will go through my interviewees’ push factors that force them to migrate. I will break down the driving forces of migration through their experience. Some of the factors are similar to the general factors of migration in Bangladesh but some of them are rare; compared to the general factors.

I would like to add a special note before starting discussions. I have changed my interviewee’s name due to the privacy policy. I have also used the imaginary name of places for maintaining the confidentiality of data.

‘Freedom- not just a word to read rather want to taste it’

Karina Islam is twenty years old young lady. She moved to Norway with her husband and eleven months old child in august 2019. She moved here as a dependent. She belongs to a political background family, where a sense of justice is very strong. In Bangladesh, she used to run a business, though she completed her graduation in law. After graduation, she married her lover. After dating for four years, they got hitched. When I asked about her life in Bangladesh, she replied-

‘It was alhamdulillah good as daddy’s princess, but it changed as soon as I got married. I married my lover and thought that I will be the queen because I got the man, I cherish most after my dad. Though my marriage was no less than a war. We struggled a lot to get married. My in-laws were pure ‘DHAKAIYA’. They have their own tradition. Most of them are a businessman. And they don’t like to marry their child outside of themselves. They always look for the same family girl or boy as their daughter-in-law or son-in-law. I was the first one to get marry in my husband’s family from outside. Additionally, they are business minded. So, education does not matter to them. On the second day of my married life, my father-in-law called me and told me that I could not continue my study. At that moment, my world shattered. I accepted it for the sake of my love. My mother-in-law was a very nice person. She treated me like a daughter. But I saw her sufferings of years. Women don’t have any voice in this family. My husband was the only male child in the family who was treated like a prince. He didn’t have any job. He was asked to enjoy his life rather, than chasing his dream. My father-in-law took care of all the financial matters. Two incidents hit me bolt from the blue. Firstly, one day my mother-in-law took twenty BDT from my father-in-law’s pocket to bring something urgently. When he found out about it, he hit her. Secondly, all the family members were invited on an occasion. Women were gossiping altogether. When I entered the room, someone asked me about our family planning. I was a bit surprised because it was the fifth month of my marriage. I didn’t reply. I smirked. Then my aunt-in-law added, ‘Amader bou Hijra naki re? Ato din hoyo gelo kintu ekhono bacha ashlo na pate?’ (Is our daughter-in-law a **Hijra** (transgender)? Why didn’t she conceive yet?). Her words left me speechless. She stopped at this point. She wiped her tears. She looked a bit lost. She took a long breath and started again,

‘These two incidents completely changed my mind and life. I felt that I badly need to stand on my feet. I pushed my husband to look for a job. At least, he should earn his expenses. He refused to do that. He said that he does not want to be anyone's servant. I planned to continue

my study. I started preparing for the judiciary exam. In the meantime, I requested my father-in-law to join their business. Let me mention one thing I belong to a very well-off family. But I like to be financially independent. This was the reason I started tutoring after my higher secondary exam. My father-in-law was not ready at first, but I managed to convince him. My husband also supported me. I launched it online. It got a very good response within a very few months. Everyone was very happy. I got the first Darazz women entrepreneur award in Bangladesh. During my business, I became pregnant. A new chapter was about to start. I was dreaming of my child. At the same time, I was also scared. I did not want to welcome my baby into a sick environment. I started suffering from an inferiority complex. I badly wanted to come out of this environment. I pressured my husband to apply for higher study. He agreed but his family denied supporting him. I asked him to go for it. Whatever it takes, I was ready to go through everything. As a student of law, I was taught to fight for justice and freedom. At that time, I was desperate to bring that freedom. I wanted no longer to read freedom as a theory, rather I wanted to taste that freedom. Actually, my father had a very successful political career. He was very respected in society people. From childhood, he never differentiates between boys and girls. In the patriarchal society, the scenario was very normal to prioritize boys over girls. But my father equally treated us. He tried his best to provide the best education. He taught me not to compromise against unfairness. However, I ended up doing the same thing. In September 2018, we welcomed my son. Instead of being happy, I felt that another war has started. Just like my husband, my son was the only male child in the family. I was scared that my child will never be a human being if he lives here. An enthusiastic lady like me, who used to be vocal and active. I was kind of rotting there. My husband got the admission letter in April 2019. My in-laws became very conscious. They threatened us by not supporting us. His parents accused me of stealing their son. As soon as he got the letter, I started selling my gold jewellery and branded products to gather money. I sold all the jewellery, I got from my family. I was left without a single piece of gold. Still, I was happy to leave everything behind. I was happy to live again with my baby and husband. After being devastated for two years of my life, I was happy again. I was smiling like before; I felt like I got the old me. I cannot believe that I am a victim of household violence. Household violence doesn't have to be always physical. Having no voice to talk to, no place to share opinions, and living according to others' will are also part of household violence. A free bird like me was prisoned for two years. I could not even ask for help from my family because I chose this for myself. I left with nothing. I did not think twice when the opportunity came to me. Yes, indeed, my husband did not want to leave the country, but I pressurized him to do it for the sake of me and my baby. My university friends who live

in different countries around the world told me that foreign is not a land of a fairy tale. It is a land of reality and opportunity. For me, it is a land of opportunity to stand again and prove myself.

‘I want them to live a healthy life’

Tahrima Akter is forty years old lady and a mother of two sons. It was a challenge for me to interview her. She is an extremely busy woman. She is taking care of her family. At the same time, she is doing a job. Her husband is studying at the University of Oslo. She came to Norway as a dependent in 2020. Before coming to Norway, she lived in Qatar for six years with her husband. She had her two sons while living in Qatar. Her husband used to work in a pharmaceutical company in Qatar. They moved to Bangladesh after six years of living in Qatar. ‘Basically, I and my husband are classmates. We dated each other for four years. After graduation, we decided to get married. But our families were against our decision. They denied letting us marry. My husband decided to look for a job in a foreign country. Eventually, he managed to get one within a year, and finally, we managed to convince our families. Bangladeshis have an amazing soft corner for foreigners and those who manage to get a job in a foreign country. As soon as we get married, we moved to Qatar. He started working there. We were there for six years. The time was there, I got my two precious lifelines, my two sons. When my elder son was four years and my younger son was two years, we came back to Bangladesh. After coming back, my husband joined a pharmaceutical company. I also joined an English medium school. I lived in Dhaka with my husband and in-law. My life was not different from others. I was taking care of my family like others. My elder son started his schooling and my duty as a mother extended to his teacher. But soon I realized that I was drowning. I could not get into the common norms of society.’

Let me explain the first half of her conversation. Bangladeshi parents always consider their children as children forever. I have talked about it during my group interviews. No matter how old they are, parents expect them to obey them. Marriage or marrying someone should be the choice of the person, who is going to marry. However, this is unacceptable in Bangladesh. I found this practice is very in the South-Asian sub-continent. On the other hand, it is very unusual in the European continent. Once I was talking about this with one of my friends. He was from Spain. When he heard about this practice, he was spellbound. He started stammering and kept saying the word ‘How’ redundantly. I was very uncomfortable seeing his reaction. He kept asking me, why cannot we choose our partner? After all, it’s our life. He had a valid reason but those were not as shocking as him to me. Probably it’s because I am an insider. I was not

completely familiar but to some extent, I have the idea of the conservativeness of my society. That's why I found it very normal. Those practices were not scripted but families are following those over years. Though some families are moving forward from this. As parents consider themselves superior, they have the right to choose a partner for you. At the same time, marrying at the same age is the worst nightmare in this conservative society. According to this society, the boy has to be older than the girl. They have to belong to similar backgrounds, or the boy must be richer than the girl. Point to be noted, girls cannot be richer than boys. Because it has been believed that in that case, the girl will be dominant. And it is not acceptable in this patriarchal society. Moreover, in one of my theoretical courses, I read an article on a similar tradition. It was a paper of McKinnon and Cannell's 'The Difference Kinship Makes'. Love and money are different spheres in modern life. paternal control over the marriage evident the significance of power kinship. They want their child to marry into the upper class because kinship dominates the social structure. Economic and political status define kinship intimacy in modern society (McKinnon and Cannell, 2013). Second thing, foreign is a land of fairy-tale to the Bangladeshis. And whoever lives in a foreign country holds unbelievable power. So, when the bride's family gets an NRB (Non-residential Bangladeshi), they consider it as a golden ticket. This time education, financial condition, and social status don't matter. I encountered these two facts during the interviews.

Common Norms. I was not quite familiar with this term. I asked her to elaborate on it. She laughed and replied 'it is not anything complicated. I just try to explain it as the expected behavior of our society. Just like talking about each other's family life and the judgemental mentality of our so-called 'VABI SOMAJ'. Vabi Somaj or married women society is used as slung or to poke a group of women who judge others' family life and action. It is a kind of entertainment to them talk about people. Not necessarily, it is just a way of entertainment rather it could be a way to show off their superiority.

'I was completely fed up. I did not want to be a part of a child's game like complaining about every other thing. I don't want to end up being only a mother to my sons. I missed Qatar days badly. I had my freedom. There was no one to advise me. Though, I was lucky to have a good in-law. My mother-in-law used to take care of everything. I take care of my sons and my career.' She described with a long face.

During this conversation, her younger son was sitting with us. He was sleepy. She was making him prepared for the bed. At the same time, she took care of her elder son who was reciting the holy Quran. She asked him to finish it and go to bed. She looked exhausted but had the energy

to manage everything on her own. It looked like a robot functioning continuously according to the program without any errors. I asked her if there was any time, she felt fed up repeating the same work for years. She smiled and replied,

‘Before getting married, I was terrified of playing the role of wife and daughter-in-law. I did not know how to cook or take care of my stuff. My mother organized everything for me. At first, I drowned in responsibilities. But I learned by making mistakes. I learned to cook and take care of my stuff. Not only my stuff but to take care of everything. Yes, I was exhausted and tired. But my husband supported me a lot take my time. Then, motherhood completely changed everything. It makes me more responsible, sensible, and independent..... My children are the reason to migrate here. They were born in Qatar. It was hard for them to adapt to the mixed weather. My children were sick most of the time. They could not play because they have a dust allergy. I want them to stay healthy. Every afternoon, our society’s children played on the road. My elder son saw them playing, laughing, and giggling, holding the bars of the window. It broke my heart. But I was helpless. I could not allow him to play in the dust. I consulted with so many child specialists. Finally, one child specialist told us to change the environment. He suggested moving to a different country if possible. This advice was our last hope to bring up our children safely. My husband started doing research and I started taking care of the financial section. We had no idea about the future, we were working day and night to find a solution. Hence, we had full support from our family. In the meantime, my husband’s friend asked him to look for Norway. It is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. Living standards and income both are higher than in other countries.’

At this point, I had to stop again. Her husband came back home from work. We greeted each other and had some conversation about my thesis. In the meantime, she made the food ready for him. She asked him to eat first and then go for his academic work. We shifted from the leaving room to the bedroom to finish our conversation quickly.

She added,

‘When I think about our journey, I feel like a dream. My husband started preparing for IELTS and started collecting funds. I was also preparing mentally to support him whatever it is going to take. Our families were very supportive. His father asked him to sell their ancient land if needed. He applied and got admission. I was happy to dream a new dream. We started preparing to move. We resigned from our jobs. My husband and my elder son started learning Norwegian. Their energy gave me hope to have good times there. At the same time, we were collecting information regarding schooling, part-time job, housing, etc. Times flew in a blink of an eye. I was getting stressed thinking about my children, my family, and so on. I was feeling helpless.

I never had to take care of my children, especially my younger son. My mother-in-law took all the responsibilities. I was dead scared thinking of everything alone. Still, I was relaxed thinking one thing that my children are going to get a good future there. Being a mother, this is the only thing, I cherish from the bottom of my heart.’

most beautiful countries in the world. Living standards and income both are higher than in other countries.’

‘It is politics not policy: Death of a dream’

Selina Khatun is a thirty-two years old lady living in Norway for six years. Before I get into anything, I would like to draw good background information on her. I think it is necessary to understand the title I decided for her interview.

Selina and her husband Mohashin are a very popular couple among Bangladeshis in Norway. There are two reasons behind it. First, their outstanding academic results both in Norway and Bangladesh. Second is their welcoming nature toward the new Bangladeshis. In a conversation, I heard one mentioning them as ‘trankorta’ (life-savior) of the new students. Not only that one; my close friend one day laughed and told me, ‘Mohsin Bhai is the most dedicated and helpful person in this world. If you call him and say that Bhai I need your help. Even if his wife is dealing with delivery pain, he will come to you.’ I laughed at this point. I thought that probably it was just a part of a joke but it’s a true story. I will elaborate on this in the next chapter. Moreover, there is an open secret that added an extra soft corner to them. Both of them graduated from one of the renowned public universities of Bangladesh with distinction. Naturally, they would join their department. But teacher politics and departmental political lobbying destroyed their long-cherished dreams. Eventually, it forced them to leave the country. She described this incident precisely in her interview which I will portray at some point in this writing.

Selina Khatun is the only child in her family. she is adored by her family because of her extraordinary performance in her academic career. She STAND⁹ in both SSC and HSC. After the higher secondary exam, she was admitted into Jahangirnagar university. She chose pharmacy to pursue her further studies. She Said,

⁹ It is an academic excellence position in the public exam. To acquire this position, one had to secure 80% marks in all subjects. It changed to Golden A+ and A+ in 2000.

‘I wanted to work on medicine. I dreamt to be a doctor, but I have a blood phobia. I decided to study pharmacy. In our university, ragging¹⁰ is quite an ancient tradition. We had to obey our seniors. Political practice is very strong in my university. From the time you start your university days, you must support one of the political parties. I hated those. I focused on the study completely. In our orientation program, I met my husband. He was my senior, but he was completely different. He was standing in a corner. One of my friends told me that he is the first boy in his class. We had a trend to inherit study notes according to our ID. But my ID mate was good for nothing. So, I decided to have his notes. I asked him one day to give me his notes. He refused but I convinced him. My teachers were very helpful. From the very first time, I was able to have permission to use the lab for extra time. During lab time, I got to know more about my husband. We started going to the library together to study. We had a good image among our classmates and seniors but, there was one more group, who always criticized us for our academic performance. Some of our teachers also hated us which, was reflected in the exam. During my third year, in one course me and my friend who was my study partner. We studied together, and our study note was similar, but she got 3.79, and I got 3.29. when I got my transcript, I saw that she got better marks in all the courses. But my class assessments were better than hers. It hit me badly. I applied for reassessment. It made the situation worse. But I didn’t care about it. I want justice. I got good feedback, but I lost my place in front of that teacher. Similar things happened with my husband as well. But it was worse than mine. The teacher threatened him that he will never be able to join the faculty. Whatever, we completed our graduation with distinction. He placed first in his class. I was not first but I had a good CGPA to apply for the department. I was happy because till then I believed that as long as you have the capacity to do good, nobody can harm you, but it was just in the dream because soon I faced the reality.’

During this conversation, she paused a couple of times. She looked lost while talking with me. She took a couple of long breaths to calm herself down. It looked like she was surfing among her bitter memories. Though she was down but asked me if I need anything or not. She made some tea for refreshment and started again.

¹⁰ Ragging is a very old tradition in the public university to force newcomers to follow the chain of command of seniority. It is a kind of mental and physical torture for the newcomers to showcase the superiority of the immediate senior batch. It also includes the political practice of students forcing newcomers to join their teams.

‘After completing graduation my husband joined a pharmaceutical company. I was in my fourth year at that time. My family was pressurizing me to get married fast. I asked him to talk with my family. He told his family about me and asked them to arrange a formal meeting with my family. Actually, we didn’t face any problems like others. Because we have equal social standards and views. Our families have similar financial backgrounds. Both of us are educated with similar family values and ethics. At the same time, our qualifications match each other perfectly. Our families were flexible to respect our choices. Therefore, we got married just after my final exam in 2008. Everything was going well by the great mercy of almighty Allah. We moved to Dhaka (central Dhaka) from Savar. After three months of our wedding, the first circular for teacher recruitment was published. My husband applied for this. I was happy that finally, his long-cherished dream is going to be true. He had an excellent result. He was awarded the dean’s award for an excellent result. He has a very good notion of insight analysis. He had two good research papers. I was confident that he is going to make it. But in the end, his dream broke. In the interview, he was asked to describe the liberation history of Bangladesh. It was so absurd that I could not even find a word to reply. Tell me, why a pharmacy department teacher needs to know the history of liberation. He ended up failing. He is a strong person to cover his sorrows with a smile. Only I knew that he is dying inside. His supervisor called and asked him to have patience and try next year. There was no one to help us. We wanted to do everything to our ability. In the meant time, I joined another pharmaceutical company. We became busy but always had that dream in our hearts. The recruitment notice was published again in 2009. This time both of us applied. We did not want to, but we went against our ethics. We talked to our supervisors to support us. We tried to make an appointment with the higher officials. We did everything, we could possibly do. W successfully gave our interviews without any absurdity. We were hopeful. We believed that one of us would be successful to pass it. Alas, we failed to crack the lock. Both of us failed to succeed. I still remember that day when the result was published it was close to evening. His supervisor called and informed us. We were so shocked that we didn’t talk to each other. I was sitting in a corner of the room. I could not believe that they prioritized connection over talent and dedication. Teaching is a noble profession. For this noble position, they took someone who was politically powerful. There was no such policy to hire a political person. When we were preparing for this, we heard about this open corruption in teacher recruitment. To some extent, I believed that those were rumours. Alas, we ended up being a victim! At night he came and told me that his supervisor asked him to try something else. Potentially to go for higher studies. I couldn’t think about anything. I felt very low at that moment. The situation was getting worse because of society’s people. Their

excess concern made us pitiful. They talked behind us. Social gatherings became a mocking party for us. We stopped attending social gatherings. Our parents became an absolute target for mockery. Within a short time, we realized our position in society. We did no crime, but our failure made us regretful. Finally, we decided to move on and leave the country and live a new dream. My husband started researching different countries. We decided to apply to European countries. My husband applied to Finland and Norway. We got the result in April 2011. My husband chose Norway over Finland for economic and living standards. At the same time, we had some of our JU seniors in Norway who suggested us to come to Norway. They gave us some information regarding the job market, housing, daily expenses, etc. all those information convinced us to come to Norway. We decided that I will apply for a dependent visa. We started processing quietly. We did not want to be the gossip topic. Perhaps, our families knew that we were preparing for leaving the country. on the departure day, when we boarded the plane, I was looking outside of the window. I never dreamt about this. But due to some people's dreams, we had to sacrifice ours. I prayed to the Almighty Allah to give us justice and peace. Only he knew our heart and purpose. So, I just left everything to him and prepared to embrace everything which is decided for me by him. you can say that we came here without an unseen dream.'

Chapter Summary:

In this chapter, we saw the reasons behind their migration. Whether it is their decision or force of external power they migrated to a different land. A common finding throughout the interviews. Social status. We have observed its presence in the group discussion as well. Though this element played a hidden role here. in the first two interviews, marriage played a very influential factor in migration. Both parties struggled to get their desired person due to their social status. First, a clear social difference between the two families of the first interviewee. Her father was politically and socially strong, but her father-in-law had financial and social strength. My observation says that it creates a conflict between the two parties. Because according to social practice, a girl's family cannot be superior. They have to be under the boy's party. At the same time, her husband's family blindly treasures their family values. Naturally, they were against it. Though they manage to convince their family for their marriage, their efforts ended up being in vain. This mental dissatisfaction, black social environment, etc. led them to leave the country. Second, the second interviewee struggled because of being in the same age group. It was unacceptable in society but just because of climbing up in the social status both families went against that social norm. On the one hand, they broke the norm but

on the other hand, they follow another social deed to cover up. Though this one has nothing to do with their recent migration, it is indeed a driving factor in their first migration. One thing is common here, all of them are here with a hope of a new life. It is a second chance for them to lead a good life. They believe that migrating to a developed country will make their life better. One more thing which is noticeable here, none of them had any backup plan. When I did the interview, I specifically noticed this thing. They never mentioned that they would migrate to another country or get back to Bangladesh if it failed. NO, they never mentioned it. It is like a myth that whoever comes abroad is meant to be successful. And they are strongly believing this myth. Adding the most general and relatable cause living standard (income, secured future, better living, etc.). I would like to portray it from my point of view. It is not like they come from a poor family. All the families are well established and posed respectable positions in society. They also have strong economic support from them. So, it will be wrong to portray it as economic development. I think they refer to the living standard as freedom. Freedom of opinion, freedom of choice, freedom of life. The first and third incidents (referring to the first and third interviews) are completely about those three. They have never experienced bad economic conditions, but less freedom makes their living standard lower. They are actually looking for freedom in another land. An unknown cause still can be an impactful force factor can be the environment. The second migration scenario proves that. During this era of global warming, a liveable environment is a requirement. And this requirement is turning into a potential push factor for migration.

Six: Plan to the Path

In the previous chapter, we have seen the reasons behind the migration of Bangladeshi women. I have investigated the reasons through their experiences. We have seen that push factors behind migration were different for individuals. I have named this chapter 'Plan to the Path' to represent their adapting strategies to survive or, let us say to make a path towards betterment.

However, what happens after they move? How are they doing in the unknown land? How are they maintaining their life? What kind of strategies are they adapting to survive? In this chapter, we are going to find those answers. This chapter contains the primary purpose of this research. Moreover, this chapter will present the potential research gap identified in the literature.

Discussion:

Before I start writing, I will discuss the 'Acculturation Framework.' Barry's acculturation framework (1992) has two dimensions. One is rejecting or accepting native culture. Two is rejecting or accepting foreign culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). In this study, those two dimensions are the center of attention. I believe that knowledge is produced to reproduce new knowledge. Moreover, there is no expiration date for knowledge as long as it has logical usability. I am using this framework to describe and categorize my findings in the best possible way. In this chapter, we will see the presence of cultural shock in different phrases. Gen Nakao used four components of Berry's acculturation framework to categorize cultural shock. Marginalization refers to the non-maintenance of both cultures (native and foreign). Integration represents the hybridity of culture. It means a group value both cultures. Assimilation occurs when a group chooses a foreign culture beyond its own culture. Furthermore, separation occurs when a group chooses to maintain its own culture over a foreign culture (Nakao, 2019). We will observe the presence of these four components throughout the adaptation strategies of Bangladeshi women immigrants living in Norway. However, their strategies cannot be only defined through acculturation framework components. I have also used some anthropological studies to discuss certain situations or scenarios.

Without a strategy, it is impossible to survive. Everyone needs some way to survive, from research to life, born to die. As an anthropologist, we also need some strategies to pull off research successfully. It is an undeniable fact. Nevertheless, strategy is also an effective medium to investigate cultural action. Let us draw an exciting fact from my life. In Bangladesh, we used to address our teacher as sir or madam. We consider them the most respected person

after our parents. Even our parents respect them as much as we do. When I started my post-graduation at the University of Oslo, I found it ridiculous to call teachers by their names. I saw my classmates comfortably calling the teachers by their names, and the teachers responded naturally. First-time, it was a jaw-dropping experience. I tried to put off myself in the same shoes. However, later I just felt that I am doing a sin. So dropped the idea and started addressing them as a professor. In this way, I was satisfied with not violating my native culture. At the same time, I am communicating ideally without making myself a weird one in this different culture.

Nevertheless, the primary purpose of describing this is that calling by name or not does not affect the respect and love I have for my teacher. However, it was a question of my values. I did not want to surpass my values while living in a different culture. That is why I adopt a neutral way to hold onto my culture while respecting others' cultures.

I have met a person with a similar case. He is also a Bangladeshi and was a student at the University of Oslo. He is currently working at an IT firm. During his university life, he was a teaching assistant. He had to communicate with professors frequently. He added,

‘I cannot think of addressing my professor by their name. If my dad heard about it, he would kill me. My dad always treated my teachers as president. He does not believe that teachers can be wrong. I never argued with my professor. Whatever they said was an order to me. I could not think of criticizing their idea. I saw some of my classmates arguing with teachers. I was shocked. At that time, I could only think of my undergraduate days. I was thinking that if they were in Bangladesh and arguing like this. Either they would have to retake the exam, or they had to pass the exam with a poor grade. I do remember the first day of my meeting with my supervisor. I was nervous. It was winter and probably minus two or three degrees Celsius outside, but I was sweating. His warm welcome and smiles helped me to get control of my nerve. Later we were very friendly, but I never dared to call him by his name.’

After listening to his statement, I can only say that his values did not let him change. The fact about the argument was surprising to me. I asked him why does he think that academic grades could be affected by arguments? Well, arguments do not necessarily have to be offensive. It should be welcomed. He replied,

‘Arguments or standing against a teacher’s logic is not always welcomed. It means you doubt his judgment. You are trying to put him in the wrong position. You are trying to showcase that

you know better than him. That is why an argument against a teacher is never welcomed. If you have a question, ask it, but do not argue.’

It is an unethical practice where the teacher possesses to show his superiority. They hold a superior position in society indeed. However, the practice of showcasing superiority is questionable. Whatever; in that sense, the topic has the potential to be another research. It was initially not intended to be a part of my research. He was out of my targeted group. It was a normal conversation, and I found his statement relevant to my proposed topic. I asked him again to share his steps against the changes he faced during the academic year. He said,

‘If I look back, I was a different person three years ago. I did not want to come here. I wanted to live in Bangladesh. After I came here, I faced a whole new different world. I had to work hard to feed my family, along with studying. I, fortunately, got the teaching assistantship. It helped me a lot in my academic studies. After seeing everything, I just dropped the idea of putting myself in their shoes. Rather I tried to make my shoes. First of all, it was hard because I am an introverted person. Now it is not possible to change me overnight. So, I tried to utilize my TA ship as an opportunity to cover my courses. I had problems understanding some basic content of my coding course. My colleagues help me to solve those. Second, I had to work with bachelor’s students. I took this opportunity to revise the basic theories. Third, I had a lot of good ideas. I was good at coding, but I was weak at writing. I could not only write the analysis. I found a group where I told them that I could take charge of coding if they were willing to write. It was an excellent strategy. Because my team members successfully secured good grades. Finally, I had zero endorsements on my Linked In. I got some endorsements from them. Nevertheless, I took the biggest advantage of understanding the job market. I gathered much information regarding the job market nature of Norway. It is way different from ours. It helped me to sort out my desired companies. End of the day, I failed to do one thing. I could not make any good friends. Most of them invited me to a bar or outside party place. Nevertheless, I am a child of a Muslim. I cannot touch alcohol. Furthermore, you cannot get into their gathering without holding a beer. I cannot get my value down to enter a society..... My values are precious to me.’ While listening to him, he is very proud of himself. Moreover, the reason is legit. While living in a different cultural environment, specific cultural components made him go against his culture. Let us look at his friend issue. He has a clear boundary for his friends and colleagues. He gave up the new community (friendship) building opportunities because it was against his religious value. He clearly said that. If he wanted, he could go there. It is not mandatory to drink alcohol. However, he used it as a medium to enter a society where alcohol

is legal. Without considering any other ways, he cut it out. It symbolizes the strength of his religious belief. He prioritized his values over network building. At the same time, he built good relationships with his colleagues, though he was an introverted person. But why? Because he was very clear about his purpose. He wanted a job. He built the relationship for his educational and professional benefit. He performed there freely because it was under his capability. He pushed himself to do it. He adjusted technically, which was not his capability, just like his coding and writing strategy. His way of living is an excellent example of how outsiders modify themselves to adapt to the new cultural environment while communicating meticulously to achieve their desired result.

Cultural shock:

It is customary to face difficulties when moving from one culture to another. How we communicate, live life, or celebrate festivals; varies from culture to culture. Our culture is the most admirable to us, but it does not mean we are not respectful of different cultures. Nevertheless, living in a particular culture makes it our habit. So, the values and norms of other cultures look weird to us. It generates an uncomfortable situation which we define as cultural shock. Even the experience of cultural shock is pervasive among anthropologists. My informants experienced many cultural shock moments until they came to Norway. They have familiarized themselves with those situations by adapting well-timed strategies. When I asked my informant Karina Islam, how was her experience of cultural shock? Furthermore, how did she manage to get over it? She replied,

'I came to Norway with my little son. It was pretty scary for me to start everything from zero in this unknown land. My husband was busy with his classes. He was also looking for a part-time job. So, it was hard for me to get him by my side for 24/7. I could not trust anyone. The day I travelled from my house to the police office, I was dead scared. I could not trust anyone. I thought, what if they sent us to an unknown place and robbed us? I was standing at the bus stop and waiting for the bus. The bus stop was in front of my house. I searched for my destination on Google Maps. It asked me to walk for two minutes. I could not understand why it was asking me to walk for two minutes while standing there. I was confused because I had never used maps in Bangladesh. I was not familiar with the functionalities of Google maps. I was standing there with a long face. I wanted to cry. A woman, probably Norwegian. She was looking at me for quite some time. She asked me something. After she asked me, I looked into her eyes and took some time. She asked me the question in Norwegian. I asked her to speak in

English. She apologized and asked me if everything was okay. I described my situation to her and showed her the map. She asked me to cross the road and take the bus. I thanked her but still stood there. I thought to verify it by myself. Somehow, I could not just make my mind to follow her words. I hesitated to ask her more questions. The bus came, and I saw that the number was the same, but the name was different. After the bus left, I crossed the road and checked it. I crossed the road and started waiting for the bus. After two or three minutes, the bus came from the opposite direction, and I saw that the number was the same, but the name was different. I also noticed that the bus's name and number matched the Google maps information. I was relieved and got on the bus. Fixing the stroller was not a problem because my husband showed it earlier. I safely reached the police office. Finding the office was not a problem. My husband was waiting there. Later, I turned on the satellite mode. I watched a video on YouTube about using google maps. It helped me a lot. Satellite mode helps me to find out roads easily. When my son started going to Barnebage, I got time to explore Oslo. My husband was busy with his class, and my son was at his new school. I had a monthly transportation pass. I decided to use it. I used to take a random bus and travelled to the last stoppage. Then I took the next bus to return. I was not only on the bus but also randomly took a walk around the city center area. This way, I discovered many budget-friendly shops and groceries. I also planned to memorize these areas easily. I compared them with areas of Dhaka. Like Grønland area is very similar to the Gulistan of Dhaka. Then, I walked through the Islamic center street to the Oslo bus terminal. I found it similar to the new market area of Dhaka. This way, I familiarize myself with the central area of Oslo. I also found my first part-time job in this way. One day, I was walking randomly through a shop. Suddenly I heard someone talking in Urdu. She asked a man to find a girl for her restaurant to make nan. I did not know her previously. I just guessed that she might be a Pakistani. I could not speak Urdu, but I could speak Hindi. Urdu and Hindi are quite similar. It says that Urdu is the gentle version of Hindi. In my childhood, I used to watch a lot of Hindi dramas. I learned to speak Hindi through those dramas. I went to her and greeted her. I introduced myself to her. I told her that I was from Bangladesh and I was new here. I asked her if I could try for the job. I also mentioned my current situation. She asked me to come to the restaurant and try to work. They do not recruit anyone without trial. She proposed to give a trial for the work. If they like my work, they will hire me. I was happy and excited. I thanked her and came back home. I told my husband about it. He denied it to my face. He told me I could do anything but could not work with Pakistanis. He was not ready to compromise his morals. I understand his feeling and the reason behind them. His firm belief, Pakistanis can never be good to you. He was arguing over our liberation war. He was questioning my

moralties. Those were valid. I accepted it. Nevertheless, I needed that job. I needed to do something so that I could support my family. I was not ready to be an ideal wife by sacrificing myself this time. I would not repeat the mistake. I felt the need to be financially solvent from the core of my heart. Though those words directly hit my morality, I was ready to compromise it. I wanted to take it as a stepping stone. I wanted to start something. I was desperate to earn by myself. When you are desperate for something, morals, values, or ethics become the word of fascination. If you cannot survive, what will you do with your morality? I reasoned rather than thinking emotionally. You are living in Norway. So, you cannot survive with a typical Bengali mentality. My husband warned me that if anything happened, I would be the one to take on all responsibilities. I replied I will manage everything as long as I can.'

When she was talking about those, she slightly denied the fact of embracing different cultures while coming out of shared morals. She was much more concerned with showcasing her image as a modern girl. If we look back, Pakistanis are not trustable, and it is a shared moral. They are deceived. Bangladeshis have this firm belief in themselves due to their bitter history, which I mentioned in my group interviews. She and her husband have the same thought. Perhaps, she decided to compromise her morals for the sake of living. She is crossing her native cultural boundaries. She considers it as a part of a standard action. Why? Because it is not Bangladesh. Outside of Bangladesh, it is acceptable. No one cares about history. However, coming outside of Bangladesh neither change the country's history nor the citizens' shared morals. She consciously adapts this as a strategy to survive in a new environment. It is an excellent example of assimilation and separation. She was compromising morals and trying to think like certain (foreign cultures) people for the sake of living. On the other hand, her husband was not ready to compromise his position. He dedicatedly denied supporting her. Whether it is Bangladesh or not, it is undeniable that you are a Bangladeshi. He decided to follow his morals rather than break them to live comfortably in a foreign culture.

Nothing like home but have to go forward:

I took that line from one of my informant's interviews. My informant Selina Khatun stated that. She has been here for many years. We have already heard her story of moving here in the previous chapter. They have an outstanding reputation in the Bangladeshi community for their welcoming nature. One of their favorite activities is inviting newcomers every year. However, there is a specific group. The newcomers have to be unmarried. There is no such a year that

they skipped it. They also organized the event amid Corona. When did I ask her why they did it? She smiled and said,

'We know how painful it is to live without family. Especially when you are alone, we organize it because it is doable. This little arrangement has been made to let them know; we are here to help them. When we came here, we were also vulnerable. We did not know anything. My husband's friend helped us to find out everything. He received us from the airport and drove us to our dorm. He cooked food for us. We are very grateful to him. We were very overwhelmed by his warm welcomed. We realized the importance later when we started walking on our way. We got a family apartment in one of the student housings. It was one bedroom and leaving come kitchen unfurnished apartment. We slept on the floor on the first day. The next day my husband's friend managed a mattress for us and some cooking pans and spoons for free. He provided detailed information about websites like the Facebook marketplace, Finn.no, and stores to look for free and second-hand products. Because we were, and if we wanted to buy new stuff, it would cost us more. At first, when he told us about the giveaway. I was very shocked. Why would people give you good things for free? I could not believe it. I asked him if he was joking. He busted out laughing. He said that people have much money. They want to use something other than the old stuff. So, they buy new products and give away old ones. Later I got to know that this is a tradition in Norway. Not only a tradition but also a part of recycling. My husband and I decorated our apartment with free stuff. I could not be happier. There is nothing as good as a free thing.' She started laughing loudly. Her last sentence reminded me of a proverb. 'Bengali free pale chare naa (Bengali never let go of free stuff). Bengali students of Norway work in different restaurants. They get free food. They used to divide it among them. They call their seniors, friends, and juniors, gather in a place, and celebrate the day with great joy. It is not like they can afford it, but it is a luxury for students to spend money on expensive food. They said that the food tasted different. It is a win-win situation. It is the human mind which directs toward the ultimate satisfaction. We know that demand needs three criteria to define it as a demand: the desire for the product, willingness to pay for the product, and capability to pay for the product. They certainly meet those criteria except the willingness to pay. The opportunity to have free food makes their unwillingness stronger. The noticeable point is that they do not hesitate to have that food. Because it is an invitation, the person brought it in exchange for physical labor. So, in that sense, it is not entirely free. It is a fantastic calculation to protect their value while consuming the highest satisfaction of products. She added,

One day we noticed someone left some crockery in front of our building's main door. We were wondering what that was. Why would anyone throw anything like this? Out of curiosity, I just asked a boy standing at a distance and having a cigarette. He told me someone might have left the house and left the unused item behind. So, people can pick it according to their needs. My husband was feeling uneasy. He just wanted to end the conversation. He was looking at me frequently and pulling my scarf. However, I ignored him. I also asked the boy about the collecting process and some other stuff. After a few minutes, I thanked him and left the place. I asked my husband to take some from those, but he said that we could take those on our way home. I also agreed. Then when we returned, those were not there. Only a few pieces of spoons were there, but plates and glasses were not there. I was so angry that I did not talk to my husband the whole day. What was the problem with taking the giveaway item? That day at noon, I figured out the problem. My husband was talking with my mother. My mother asked for me. He complained that I was angry with him because he did not let me take dumpster products after hearing that my mother was so mad at me. She scolded me badly, mentioning that I am not a beggar. I did not come abroad to beg. Paradoxically, my mother asked about my family's education. I should behave myself. This situation got worst when my husband shared it with my in-law. My sister-in-law called me to mock myself over this matter. I was mentally sick by that time. I had a terrible time over this matter. Even my relationship with my husband was not healthy just because of this. Over a while, we managed to get rid of that problem. Both of us decided to respect each other opinions. I asked myself if it was necessary to pick free products over a good relationship. Later I decided to quit. It is not mandatory to follow other people. I will lead my life. I never took anything without his permission. However, yes.

We collected the necessary item from Finn. Through this collecting process, we met some excellent people. We met a polish family who lived in Biølsen. They were giving away a sofa set. We messaged them to have those. They confirmed and set a date and time to pick those. We asked them if they knew of any transfer company that could do it at a lower price. Because we were students and we were jobless. After hearing everything, they offered us that they could do it for us.

Additionally, they did not ask for any extra charge. They have a van. We were so happy that we thanked them. On the fixed day we went there, they offered us kitchen utensils. They said that they intended to throw those. Nevertheless, as we are new, so we might need those. We thanked them for those. That day I teared up. It is an unknown land. We were unknown to each other. Still, they were so kind to us. Their behavior and kindness overwhelmed me. The mug

you are having tea in, I also got it from them.’ She smiled softly. I looked at the mug. It was a white ceramic plain mug. I thought it was not a bad idea to reuse products as long as they were usable. My other informant Karina Islam faced the worst situation regarding this problem. She said,

‘.....My relationship with my husband got worst regarding this matter. When we came here, my son was only two months old. We needed some essential winter products for my son. This country has the rule to use a separate bed for the baby. We already struggled a lot to come here. We needed more money to buy various stuff for my son. The week we came here, the next week, a family was leaving. I was scrolling over Facebook. I saw their selling post on Facebook and contacted them immediately. They were leaving Norway, which is why they were giving away everything. They lived in front of my house. They agreed to give me everything when I told them about my condition. I got almost everything that a family needs to live. The day we decided to move products, my husband refused to help me. He said that he was not going to beg. I told him that it was not begging. It is a cultural practice. As we are a part of the culture, it is logical to use second-hand products. We need more money to buy new products. At the same time, we are not even earning. However, he refused to accept the fact.

Whatever, it was a golden opportunity for me. Without considering it, I called one of my Bangladeshi friends. He was very close to my husband as well. We processed our visa from Bangladesh together. Since that time, he has been very close to us. My husband and I came on the same subject, but the educational institutions differ. He also knew us very closely. I asked him to help me if he was free. He agreed to help me. He came, then he, I, and the owner transferred everything. We were lucky that we lived close to each other. Otherwise, it was impossible. Later, when I returned, the owner’s wife asked me if I would like to take their son’s cloth. She said that they have some unused clothes for their younger sons. Her son is probably one year older than my son. I thought to take those. Because those were almost new, my son can use them next year. I happily agreed to take it. They gave me two bags of clothes and two or three pairs of shoes. I thanked them again and again. I also asked them to have dinner with us. They did a lot for us. Without being familiar, they help us from their position lot. I could not even think about this in my dreams. However, they denied the invitation politely. They were busy packing and managing everything. I thanked them and left the place.’

She stopped at this point. She was playing with her fingers. She looked lost. At the same time, she was in pain. Her voice was heavy, and her eyes turned red. It looked like she wanted to cry. She started again,

‘When I came back home, I was calling my husband. I wanted him to show me clothes. He replied, “Ki hoice? Chellao keno?” (What happened? Why are you shouting). I ignored his angry mood and showed him those bags. He was furious at me. He shouted and said, “Amar pola fokir na. Ami amar polare oi gula poraite dibona, Or bape bacche ashe. Amar polar kaporer ovab hobe na. Amra tomader moto fokir naki?” (My son will not wear those. My son is not a beggar. I will not let you wear those to my son. He has his father. My son will not have a lack of clothes. We are not beggars like your family.). I was devastated after hearing these. I sacrificed so much for him, but he forgot everything. After this, he locked the bedroom door. I was standing in the living room without a word. After that day, I promised myself to do everything on my own. I do not care if it is begging or not. As long as I have the energy, I will do everything. Whatever you see here, I gathered from Finn and Facebook. It took nothing except my energy and time. He did nothing except pressurizing and mocking me. My in-laws did the same. They called me and kept asking me if I came here begging. What a shame! I am living my life. Give me money if you want me to live a luxurious life. I also do not want to lead a miserable life.’

She finished the statement while crying. She left a breath of frustration. Anyone could say that by looking at her face. It was red. Her eyes were puffy. Her hands were shaking while soaking the tears with the dress sleeve.

Tahrima Khan has a different experience regarding this. Her excitement, like a child, made me laugh. I could not hold back my laughter. End of the interview, I left with an unforgettable moment. She explained,

‘I told you that I had already experienced living outside of Bangladesh. My husband did an extraordinary job. Before we came here, he did some research. His friend, who lives in Lambeth with his family, helped him a lot. They were here for five years. He came here as a student, and his wife was his dependant. Later, he found a job here and settled here. They also have a three years old boy. He gave all the ins and out of information regarding Oslo. For example, how to find a job? How to apply for barnehage (i.e. kindergarten)? etc. He came to the airport and received us the day we came here. Hopefully, you have heard that we had twelve pieces of luggage, including cabin luggage. Four-person and twelve luggage.’ After finishing

the line, she busted out laughing. I shook my head twice from left to right. It meant that I did not hear about it. Shortly, I joined her as well. This conversation made the environment very light and refreshing. She continued,

‘Whoever heard about this. Everyone said that if we were crazy. Why so many? We actually got some extra weight. I don’t know how my husband managed those. But each person got forty KG. We had 160kg there. And we got extra like fifteen or seventeen kg. We brought everything that was allowed to carry. We brought one month of food with us. Processed meat, noodles, corn flex, spices (cardamon, cinnamon, cloves, etc.), potatoes, blanket, Katha¹¹, etc. I also brought a little pressure cooker. We also carried some plates and glasses. It worked really well. My husband’s friend invited us to his home for dinner. We had our dinner there. His wife also packed some food for us for the next day. He also drove us to our home. These hospitalities are a kind of light of hope. It encourages us to fight against all the negativities. The next day, he came early morning. He gave us some cooking pans, so we can cook some food. He also said that there will be a Loppemarked (i.e. flea market) next month. We were not familiar with the word. So, he explained it to us. He told us that he will ask her wife to take me with her. We can buy second-hand products at a cheap rate. Our housing was unfurnished family housing. We needed a freeze, micro-oven, and dishwasher badly. My husband’s friend bought a second-hand freeze before we came here. He also talked with a transfer company for the delivery. He did everything on his own. We just paid him the fees. We did not ask about individual prices. He did a lot. He took all the responsibilities without asking us. He is a blessing to us. Hopefully, you know..... brother. He gave us a micro-oven. Within one week, we organized our home with all the essential appliances. We did nothing except ask. My husband knocked on his seniors and friend, they guided him without expecting anything from him. One day a senior brother called us and invited us for an afternoon snack. We went there. We knew he has a child like my older son. We brought some chocolates for him. we went there on time. They lived in the next building to ours. When they saw chocolates. Brother laughed and asked us to leave the formalities. He added that it is not Bangladesh. Every penny is precious. Not to use them randomly. All of us know each other financial conditions. Everyone is struggling to achieve their cherished dream. Though every word is true, we felt uncomfortable. A question came into my mind, did we do anything wrong? But his wife’s smile helped us to make ourselves easy. She said that you do not have to give them a lecture. They will know by themselves. We had a

¹¹ It a traditional blanket. It is made of old clothe. During the rainy season and fall, people use it.

good time there. When I was talking with her, she was telling me about her experience. They came here the previous year. In this one year, she adapted to this new environment. She gave me some suggestions regarding household chores. Where I can find cheap food and how I can minimize expenses, that advice helped me a lot.'

She asked me to wait for a moment. Her younger child was fighting with her elder son. She went there to send them to bed. It was already ten pm. I heard she was telling them to go to bed. Otherwise, I will not give them chocolate. That time I suddenly remembered that I followed in the same manner they followed. I realized that it is a manner that we learn from an early age. So, it is in our roots. It is not a crime. Instead, it is a way to showcase your courtesy. In Bangladesh, we do not visit anyone's home without sweets. It can be traditional sweets or chocolates, or fruits. However, we do carry something with us. It is not mandatory to be something sweet. Anyone can carry any kind of food except flowers. Flowers are to congratulate people or make formal proposals like marriage or love. Following the manner represents our upbringing and family values. It represents the social standard. That is why it is imperative. Whether we are in the native culture or outside of the culture, people act according to their native culture. Because that defines who they are and where they are from. When they shift into a different culture, that time they adapt to the new cultural component according to their comfort or survival skills. They also modify their own culture compared to the new culture. It creates a comfort zone from which they communicate with everyone. Now when they ask them (my informant) not to bring anything, it is not that the new culture works like this. It is because they are here in a struggling period. They understand that it is not a time to showcase manners. That is why the gentleman asked not to spend money randomly. When I gave chocolates to my informant's children, she said to listen and you do not have to do formalities. You are single. They are earning their bread. It is hard. I know that. Please do not do it next time. I did not reply to her. Just smiled. I found that concern is not for money. This is a support and appreciation of the hard work; one is doing without family.

However, she came back after a few minutes. She took a big bag with her. She said,

'Fatema, see. I bought all these from the Loppemarked (i.e. flea market). One week ago, Ullevål Skole arranged it.' I saw that she bought one big grocery bag, a picnic basket, a tote bag, a tent for the children, and some books for her children. Those items almost looked like new. The tote bag was quite old. She told me that from the first Loppemarked (i.e. flea market). she attended with her husband's friend's wife. She bought a lot of crockeries item. Loppemarked

(i.e. flea market). goods are very cheap. It saves a lot of money. Though those were second-hand products, all were nicely used. I saw her eyes are sparkling. She was very excited. She told me that her children are very happy. They are planning to go to a tent this summer.

If we look at these three statements. We will notice that their experiences are very different. Though few things are similar. One is social tension. They are compassionate about their social status. They wanted to protect it at any cost. Let me share a moment that I experienced during COVID-19. One of our seniors called me one day. He told me that he was going back to Bangladesh. He wanted to give me his leftover groceries. I said okay and also asked him why he was hesitating. Because when he called me, he asked my permission not to mind his words. He told me that he had asked somebody else. Nevertheless, he got mad at him. Hurting him was not his intention. He did not want to waste food. Moreover, rice is a compassionate food in the Islamic religion. Furthermore, he is a very religious person. The proposed person felt very offended. He replied to him in an insulting way. I told him that I did not have any problem. It is good for me. I could save my monthly grocery bill this way. He thanked me for helping him. I also thanked him for giving me those goods. One might have this question, why did he mind? He took those words with a different meaning because he thought that he was looking down at him. During COVID days, more or less everyone suffered mentally, physically, and financially. As I mentioned, Bangladeshis are very much sensitive about their social status. They are afraid of showcasing their vulnerable side. Just like the clothing incident. Wearing a second-hand dress does not make one poor. General sense talks about that. However, the dress is a measuring indicator of social status. This one is used more or less in every country. This is a well-established indicator in Bangladeshi culture as well. For example, markets or super shops in Bangladesh are for rich people, and street markets are for people. Poor people are meant to shop on the street side. Karina Islam's husband belongs to a renowned family, which I mentioned in chapter five. That is why it was a direct hit to his ego. It was an indirect question about his financial capability. This hit turned into a nasty fight between husband and wife. Where he forgot the manner of respecting others. Moreover, disrespect his morals. However, his wife adapted it as a road to survive. She did not care about showcasing standards. When it is a question about surviving, then everything is fair there. On the one side, using used products is a way of attacking one mentally; on the other side, using them is meant to be a process of sustainability or minimizing expenditure. She is coming out from the trend of judging people through their dress. She is adopting it as a natural process of taking things. The thing remains the same. Just the hands change. Another thing is negotiating. Selina Khatun and his husband

have a similar issue to Karina Islam. She was humiliated by her family members. Her husband also took it negatively. However, here they came into a negotiation. When things are thrown away randomly, it is defined as a dumpster. Nevertheless, Loppemarked ((i.e. flea market) and Finn are the same things. The difference is that things are sorted out and organized nicely. Additionally, you have to pay for it. If you buy from Finn, sometimes you must pay a delivery charge. That little penny is a shield to protect their ego. It is saving their social status. They are not begging for anything. They are buying with money. It is not free. Not taken from the dumpster. In particular, I bought a shoe rack from one student. He was leaving the apartment. He sold it for fifty kr. I shared it with my parents. They said it is a good thing to save a small amount of money. On the contrary, I brought a coffee machine for free. Another student was giving away this one. He posted it on Facebook. I saw it there. I contacted him, and he confirmed with me. The next day I went to his home and took it. When I shared it with my parents, they asked me why I was asking for goods from people. I told him I was not calling anybody and asking for it. Rather, he posted it and asked if anyone was interested in taking it. I was interested, so I took it. My father seemed very unhappy. After that incident, I never mentioned this matter to my parents. A little penny, no, let us say a penny makes the difference. I am referring to a penny for the least amount of money. For example. One krone silver coin of Norway. That one krone adds monetary value to that product. That is why it has social acceptance. If you are spending money on a good, it is acceptable. Even if it is used. However, if you are taking it for free, it is not acceptable. My parents think and act differently because they are in a different cultural zone. I can accept it because I am living in a different culture. Where it is normal and acceptable. It is a cultural practice that is widely accepted in Norway. When some people act in the assimilation zone, others are busy marginalizing two cultures and building a common cultural zone for themselves. Let us look at Mary Douglas's (1966) 'Dirt Theory' or 'Dirt is a matter of place.' She stated that there is no such thing as absolute dirt. It is a relative term- what is dirty concerning one thing; it is clean to other. It can also be defined as a label for an object as rejected under a residual category (Pickering & Rice, 2017). Taking thrown items is a sort of violation of social values in Bangladeshi society. Because only beggars and the lowest caste are allowed to do so. Moreover, they classified the category of non-acceptance and the category of acceptance. As long as you are paying a penny (the lowest amount) for a used product is acceptable. Furthermore, once a thing is thrown, it can never return to its place. On the contrary, thrown items are welcome to be collected in Norway. Because it is a process of eliminating dirt, it is a positive movement to reorganize the environment and encourage recycling.

Language:

Language is an essential non-material component of culture. It carries one's nationality, identity, and personality. Even language is categorized into two categories. One is Verbal, and the other is nonverbal. The non-verbal category represents a person's body language, gestures, and personality. On the other hand, verbal present one's nationality and identity. Language is the medium of communication. One's language plays a vital role in expressing the person to others. Language differs from country to country. Verbal language can be similar in some countries. Non-verbal language differs from culture to culture. When a person migrates from one country to another country, the first cultural shock one gets, in general, is language. The people talking in a different language seem weird to one. The situation is very normal. My informant's situation is no longer indifferent. Since they came here, they have been learning this country's language. Trying to adapt it to survive here. During the personal interviews, I found a fascinating fact. A historical tension among my informants. Before that, let me show a bird's view of the mother language's historical background in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh achieved freedom in 1971 from Pakistan in exchange for thirty lakh martyries and two lakh women's dignity. But Bangladesh has another glorious history of sacrificing lives for the Nation's language. In 1952, when Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan and dominated by the West-Pakistani people, that time governor-general Khawaja Nazimuddin announced that Urdu will be the only language in both east and west Pakistan. But East Pakistani people protested against it. East-Pakistani people talked in Bangla. They were not ready to accept Urdu as a national and mother language. They were getting ready for a movement. The movement finally broke down on the 21st of February 1952 on the premise of the University of Dhaka. Students at the University of Dhaka started moving towards the present central Shaheed Minar. The Pakistani government ordered police to open fire. Several students were killed that day. The government reported that 29 people were killed that day. After the movement, Awami Muslim League decided to celebrate the 21st of February as 'Shaheed Dibosh', and students of Dhaka Medical College made the first 'Shaheed Smritistombho' in memory of 'Vasha Shaheed'. After the big sacrifice and strong protest and with the defeat of the Muslim League in the East Bengal assembly elections, the central government became flexible in recognizing Bengali as the state language of Pakistan along with Urdu. At least a few thousand people protested in the National Assembly on April 22 against the decision. On 7 May 1954, the constituent assembly resolved, with the Muslim League's support, to grant official status to Bengali. Bengali was adopted as the official language of Pakistan along with Urdu in article

214(1) when the first constitution of Pakistan was enacted on 29 February 1956. Later, Bangladesh sent a proposal to UNESCO to declare the 21st of February as ‘International mother language day’. On the 17th of November 1999, the proposal was supported unanimously at the 30th general conference of UNESCO (Umar, 1970), (Imam, 1986).

One day I went on grocery shopping with my informant Karina Islam. It was the first time; I went on grocery shopping in Grønland. She asked me to wait for her at Ullevål Stadion T. On the fixed day, I contacted her and took the bus from the closest bus stop to my residence. It took me eleven minutes to get there. She was standing there for me. We took the metro from there, and after five metro stops, we reached our destination. We took the closest exit near the Islamic Center of Grønland. Then we walk for approximately six minutes to reach the shop. There is a specific shop in Grønland named Norbygata. It is also named a Siddique shop. This shop is not very big. However, one can get everything here at a low price—especially Indian brands like TRS, Rin, Wheel, etc. The shop is situated just beside the Grønland Bazar. The door is very narrow. From the outside, it looks like a massive one. When one enters inside, one will be shocked. Items are organized according to the genre. This shop is trendy among Muslims. The environment is very crowded. The first portion is for dry items, the middle portion is for frozen and meat items, and the third portion is for vegetables. The place smells of powerful spices smells. Whoever has an allergy or asthma could have potential side effects. I am very allergic to any strong smell. Within a short time, I started sneezing. However, Karina Islam was shopping for some groceries. She showed me some grocery shops where we could get Indian spices. For geographical similarities, Bangladeshis’ and Indians’ food habits are very similar. She told me,

‘I never buy unnecessary items. Every week they offer certain items at a low price. I am waiting for that. They have a Facebook page. I follow that page. Every week they announce the offer there. I also follow the same method for other items. Spar, Coop Mega, etc., offer monthly cheap product deals. It helps a lot to save money. I have a baby, so I need to store a lot of baby food. Moreover, baby foods are comparatively expensive. I have to give him tiffin every day. he goes to Barnehage (i.e. kindergarten). Teachers from barnehage (i.e. kindergarten) also suggest some specific food like a vegetable mix, sausage, etc. I also give them those alternatively. If you ever feel that you want to eat something Deshi(native) street foods like Fuchka, Chotpoti, Chana Masala also known as Ghugni. You will get all the ingredients here.’

She was walking between the food rallies and showing me those ingredients. When she finished shopping, she went to the cash counter and greeted the man ‘Assalamualikum, Bhai’. She smiled at him brightly. The man replied to her with a big smile, ‘Walaikum Assalam.’ Then she started talking in Urdu. However, that was mixed of Hindi and Urdu. I saw that the man was delighted to see her. They were laughing and talking. At the end conversation, she asked for a bag, and he gave her the bag but did not charge her. We left the place. While leaving the place, she greeted him with ‘Khoda Hafez’ instead of ‘Ha det bra’ or ‘Bye’. Before I asked her anything, she said,

‘I always talk to him in Urdu. However, it is not proper Urdu. Anyone who speaks Hindi can speak Urdu as well. Urdu is the gentle version of Hindi. The man who was sitting there is from Afghanistan. His name is Rashid. He has been working here for a long time. He is accommodating. He helped a lot of Bangladeshis to get a job there. If you want to work, you can talk with him. However, the problem is that it is a Pakistani shop, and they are very deceived—another historical tension. In 1971, Pakistanis tortured and betrayed Bangladeshis. They smuggled foods and other valuable products from east Pakistan (present Bangladesh) to west Pakistan (present Pakistan). As a result, Bangladesh suffered huge food and infrastructure crisis after freedom. I am going back to the point. Pakistanis do not pay regularly. He told me about this. I got my first restaurant job here while shopping, as you know. Nobody told me about this. I came here frequently. I found that information myself. They become pleased when they meet someone who speaks Urdu. It is not a bad thing. If I get some advantage by speaking Urdu, then I have no problem. Some Bengalis do not speak Hindi or Urdu because they believe they are betraying our country. What a rubbish thought! It is a language. If you know a language, it is your skill. It is not a shame. You are speaking in English. English is not our language. Then why are not ashamed of yourself while talking in English? You are living in Norway. You are so desperate to learn Norwegian. Where is your patriotism? I do not believe those. I feel proud of myself that I can talk in a different language. They cannot speak my language; it should be their headache. I see this thing differently. I am working at an international humanitarian organization. People from different nationalities work here. I never saw anyone bothered about my language. I speak English and a small quantity of Norwegian. My co-workers are very supportive. They encourage me to learn Norwegian because it is my responsibility. When living in a foreign land, I am responsible for learning their language and being respectful of their culture. After all, everyone prefers to talk in their mother language.’

We were walking and talking to each other. While she was talking about this, I looked at her face. She looked very annoyed, and I felt that she hated this topic from the bottom of her heart. She was confident that her action was perfect. I always sense superiority in her conversation. She is very proud of herself for her strong sense of responsibility.

Her face turned red, and her eyes were narrowed down. I observed a very contradictory moment. Because my other informant Selina, she gave a very different reaction on the same topic. According to her,

'We sacrificed lives for our language. Why do we have to talk in Urdu? We are living in Norway. Either talk in Norwegian or English. You cannot talk in my language; why do I have to talk in your language? When I went to the meat shop in Grønland, I talked in English. Suddenly, the person asked me to talk in Urdu. I was so angry. I told him that it was not my language. I cannot talk in Urdu. He was laughing. He said that most Bengali could speak Urdu, but why could not I speak Urdu? I cleared that I did not intend to learn that language. Moreover, I have no interest in learning this language. He seemed very angry. I believe you are a businessman, and I am a customer. Why do I not speak Urdu or not? It should not be your matter of concern. I will give you money, and you will give me the product. Except for business, there is no relation between us. I know some people pampered them as if they were blood connected. I would not say I like those once an enemy can never be a friend. They dominated us. They killed us. Why do I have to speak their language? Even if I need a job, I will never go to them. I prefer starving over working under them. I feel disgusted around those who speak Urdu or Hindi and feel proud. It is ridiculous. How can you betray your country? How can you trade your nation's pride? I feel bad for them.'

Not only Selina Begum, but I know some Bengali students who are strictly against speaking Urdu. They are so against it that they strictly avoid those who speak this language. Whenever they meet Pakistani, they never greet even if it is for a formality. Sometimes they vilify them. Their firm belief is that if they speak Urdu, they will betray their country. They are not ready to go against their morals. However, a group also loves to act according to their culture. My informant Tahrira said that when her husband got the admission offer, he started learning Norwegian. Her two sons also started practicing Norwegian with their father. A Bangladeshi created a Facebook group. He teaches basic Norwegian. He lives in Ålesund. He does not charge any fees. The group was formed during COVID-19. There is a zoom link. They also joined a Facebook group. Every Saturday at a fixed time (the time changes depending on

members' availability. They fix the time by creating a poll.), they gather together and practice it. Before they moved to Norway, they had excellent knowledge of Norwegian. She also added that I heard that people struggle a lot due to a lack of knowledge of Norwegian. However, I never faced it. My husband managed everything. On the first day, we went to a super shop for grocery shopping. I was trying to guess everything through the picture. However, I saw that my husband and my children could read those. They were talking among themselves. I still remember I took dog food instead of chocolate cornflakes. A dog picture was on it. I thought that it was probably a cartoon. My elder son asked me, 'Mommy, why are you taking dog's food?' I was astonished at my foolishness, but I was also happy that my children were learning. I put it back. She explained that she could not manage much time after taking care of her family to learn Norwegian. She started learning it after she came here. Additionally, she must learn Norwegian because both her children are going to the barnehage. So, she needs to keep pace with her children. When I went to her place, her two sons talked in Norwegian. However, when they were talking to me, they were talking in a mix of English and Bengali. She said they speak Norwegian with her husband, but she encourages them to talk in Bangla at home. She said,

'I want them to speak in Bangla when they are at home. They are still children. If they continuously speak Norwegian, they will forget their mother language. That is why I never speak Norwegian or English at home. They need to learn their root. I also asked their father to speak in Bangla at home. They are spending a big time at barnehage. They are speaking in Norwegian there. I think that is enough. It is hard to see that my child cannot speak Bengali.'

Considering the three different scenarios, one thing is common. Everyone is facing a historical tension in their life. It is shaping their choice, whether they will accept the current change or not. If we apply the acculturation framework here, we will see that all of them are going under marginalization. While respecting their own culture, they are adapting different cultural elements. For example, speaking a different language to build networking simultaneously creates a comfort zone to act. Naturally, a place of admiration is created when one person speaks another language. When we get something familiar between the two, it helps build a strong relationship. However, they have a strong sense of personal values and morals. Just like Selina, she is firmly against speaking Urdu. A language cannot define your patriotism, but her sense of respect towards the mother language forbids her to speak Urdu.

On the other hand, Karina is a rational woman. It is not that she does not love her country, but she is prioritizing her life over her country's history. Looking back at her family background,

we can see that she belongs to a political family. Her father is a political leader. So, the sense of patriotism should be robust in her case. At the same time, it is reflected in Selina's case though it should not be. Because Selina left her motherland after being betrayed by her people, regardless, she is rooting for it because she has a legit cause to hate her culture and country. On the other note, Karina came to Norway to live an everyday life or, in other words, to have a life of her own. That is why she is entirely focused on things related to her life. Family values or shared morals (country's history) cannot significantly impact her life. She is living in the zone of assimilation. She is focused on learning about a foreign culture to survive. In all these stories, one thing is noticeable. They are not against Norwegian culture or language. Instead, they happily accept it. They practice it in their everyday life. Karina Islam is paying a good amount of money to learn Norsk. Nevertheless, Selina is also taking Facebook and YouTube lessons for Norsk. So as Tahrima. They are doing it without hesitation because it does not clash with their culture.

Bangladesh and Norway do not have any historical conflict. At one time, Norway is the host country, giving them a chance to turn the table in their life. Tahrima's case is similar except for one thing. She is taking changes positively, but she is meticulous about her culture. She is maintaining her life between two boats. When she is out of her home, she is in an empty jar to absorb new cultural elements. Once she returns to her home, she returns to her culture. She speaks her mother language; she acts like a Bengali mom who is very strict about maintaining family values. She teaches her children to greet an elder according to Islamic ritual. Use gentle words, acts appropriately, talk in a low voice, and thank the elder for visiting them. Similarly, she asked them to listen to their teacher to learn Norwegian social etiquette. She is following the integration method to nurse her children for the children and herself. They are building a cultural hybrid zone so that they can act according to the situation.

Do That I Like, Dress That I Love:

A dress or a cloth is a significant symbolic representation of culture. It represents the shift of culture over a fixed period. However, anthropology's research on cloth is not separately identifiable (Hansen, 2004). It plays a vital role in the research of culture and religion. It also can be used to study a country's economy. For example, in the remittance sector of Bangladesh, ready-made garments play an important role. So, if one wishes to study the economic structure or components driving Bangladesh's economy, she/he has to study the clothing sector. On the other hand, when we study cultural components to identify individual characteristics, the cloth

is one of those. Moreover, it is an issue to make a significant movement to achieve freedom in the contemporary world. Recently, in August 2022, Male students from leading universities in Bangladesh protested regarding the open dressing sense of women in Bangladesh. One slogan goes so far as to read, "Women who destroy national culture by adopting a western lifestyle are cultural terrorists." They also claimed that women are seducing men by wearing western dress. Women are inviting a rapist through their dress. They stated that women's dressing sense is responsible for the increasing rate of rape. Women of the University of Dhaka also protest against them after a few days. They claimed that a dress can never be a component of rape. It is the ill mentality of males that makes them rapists. They also uphold some scenarios around Bangladesh like child rape, a girl raped who wears 'Burkha'¹² and so many others. The Minister of Education, Dr. Dipu Moni has said of the incident, "When the world is advancing, society is advancing; we will now talk about robotics, we will talk about Artificial Intelligence. Now is not the time to talk about the length of women's dresses." Women also protested over social media by using the hashtag 'my body, my choice'. Though the protestors were small in number, the issue is not. It is a never-ending unsolved issue to humiliate women in society (IZA, 2022).

I presented this scenario because women here are no different from those. Before going into a program, they chose a dress after thinking twice or more. Though men migrated to a different land, they expected a similar cultural environment to Bangladesh. Some girls define it as absurd thinking. Before going any further, let me portray Bangladesh's accepted and traditional dress. Traditional dress is known as Saree. It is a long cloth that is wrapped in a specific pattern. It covers the whole body. The extra part, 'Achal' is used to cover the head. Another dress is the 'Salwar-Kamiz.' Usually, young women wear it. There are three sections of this dress. One is a Kurti or shirt. It is for the upper body. The second is Pant. The third is Dupatta or Orna. It is a big piece of cloth. It is used to cover the front area of the body along with the head. Nowadays, women are habituated to wearing Salwar-Kamiz. Unmarried women also wear a saree occasionally. A significant population of Bangladesh is Muslim. Because of that, people expect women to wear covered dresses. As time changes, women's dressing sense goes through some significant changes. They are trying different countries' patterns. Teenage girls are fascinated and highly influenced by the fashion trend in western and European countries. A significant

¹² A burqa or a burka, also known as a chadaree in Afghanistan or a paranja in Central Asia, is an enveloping outer garment that covers the body and the face that is worn by women in some Islamic traditions. The Arab version of the burqa is called the boshiya, and it is usually black (Wikipedia Contributorsb, n.a).

difference has been noticed between the married and unmarried groups of women in Norway. Unmarried are more open-minded than married. They are flexible in trying new trends. On the other hand, the married group is minimalist. They accept the change but modify it according to the Bangladeshi culture. For example, at a gathering or any event girls wear pants or shirts. Sometimes those are fitted and skin-revealing. However, they act pretty flawlessly. They adjusted themselves to the new dress code quickly. Alternatively, married women always wear dresses of knee length, full sleeves, and a dupatta to cover their heads. During a program, they wear saree but use a scarf or dupatta to cover their heads. They also use gold or golden color accessories. Moreover, married women are judgmental in the case of dress. One of my informants said,

‘I understand that Europeans are open. I saw them on television. We have watched it in movies as well. Nevertheless, why a Bangladeshi girl has to follow their style? They do not follow our culture. Why are you following them? As a daughter of Muslim parents, I think you should cover your skin at least.’

Not only her, but it is a common idea among married women. In the group interview part, I mentioned that married women are a different group. Their topic of discussion about the act is way different from the unmarried. Their perception of seeing the world is different. Married women are more attached to the typical thinking of a typical family. During my under-graduation days, one of my teachers talked about the importance of education. It says that education changes human’s notion of judgment. It helps them to consider diverse characteristics before making any judgment. However, the significant differences between the two groups cannot be defined by institutional qualification. I think it depends on morality and family value. If I break it down, married women possess more responsibility than unmarried women. Because one’s family values are different from others. So, when she married the other family and became part of a different family, she had to adapt to the new family values and get a new identity to identify herself in society. Before taking a step, she has to consider both sides.

Moreover, being a married woman, she got power. In the Bengali community, it is a very ancient practice that married women are considered to be more potent than unmarried women. Because she is already capable of calling a man her man. I have seen this in my family. I belong to a two-parent nuclear family. My grandparents and their sons (including my father) and daughters-in-law (including my mother) live together. Even after graduation, I was kept from taking part in central decision-making. On the other hand, I was allowed to attend any function,

but my aunts were not. If it is a birthday program, they said that it is for children and unmarried. Nevertheless, my aunts take active participation in weddings or baby shower programs. Similar rules are followed here in Norway. Usually, singles never throw parties. Even though they throw a party, it is for themselves. No married people are invited there. Married couple organizes different programs. They always arrange two days program. One day is for singles and the other day is for married. And potentially, no one knows the reason behind this. Considering those causes, it is because of the social belief and position of married women. Singles are freer to make a decision. They are considered to be more advanced than the married. Because after I came here, one day, we were gossiping with a group of Bangladeshi people. A Bangladeshi man was looking at me for a couple of minutes. It was an uncomfortable moment for me. I asked him if anything was wrong. He smiled and said,

‘These days, girls are courageous. I am astonished that you travelled here alone and fought for your dream. It is unbelievable.’

To replied, smiled, and shook my head slightly. I needed clarification. Was it a poke or praise? However, I was proud of myself.

Last but not least, regarding the matter of dress, where one group is integrating, another group is assimilating. Now it depends on a person what she/he wants to do. Integration means she respects other cultures while prioritizing her cultural values. Aging who are assimilating does not mean that they are disrespecting their culture. It means that they are acting according to the situation. They are prioritizing the current country’s culture over their native culture. It should be appreciated as a skill rather than criticized as an unethical act under diversity.

Religious Activity:

I have already mentioned that a major group of people are Muslim. Being a Muslim, one has to follow certain rules. Among those Namaz and Roja are very important. There are a few mosques in Oslo. Though women of Bangladesh are habituated to have their prayers at home. Because women cannot pray their prayers with men. Eid salat is different. They can have it with men, but they have to follow a few rules. Previously we have seen that there is historical tension between Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. Bangladeshis try to keep their distance from Pakistanis and asked others to follow the same. But in the case of following and performing religious activities, they are one. For instance, Bangladeshi men go to have their Friday Prayer in the Islamic center, Grønland. Friday prayer is known as Jumu’ah. They have their prayer together. But as soon as they finish their prayer, they become themselves. It is like they do not

care about themselves. Though there is an exception. Among Bangladeshis, there are two groups of Muslims. One is Sunni and AL-Hadis or Shia. Shias are very less in number. The basic difference between the two groups is: Sunni believes that Hazrat Muhammad SAT is the last prophet. On the other hand, Shia disagrees with the statement. They believe that there is one more prophet. This Shia group never joins the prayer with others except the Eid prayer. Now, that is an open secret. I heard it from one of my male juniors. He told me that Shia never admits that they are Shia. They have their prayers at home. There is no hard and fast rule that Shia and Sunni are different from each other. Because in Bangladesh they have their prayers together. People are not bothered about it, until or unless they are getting married. Shia is extremely strict and against Sunni marriage. They believe that if any of them marry Sunni, the next generation will face horrible destruction. But Shia Bangladeshis do not accept or claim that they are Shia. In the case of performing Roja, Bangladeshis face the hardest reality. My informant Tahrima and Selina are very religious. Selina Said,

‘My first Ramadan in Norway was not that bad. In Bangladesh, the fasting duration was normally fourteen to sixteen hours. It was similar here. But the time extended after one year. It is getting harder and harder. Last year (2020), we fasted nineteen hours. It was so hard. You don’t feel thirsty, but the hunger killed us. On top of that, I was babysitting. Though some of us, follow Saudi-Arab. But I don’t believe that. I think you should follow the time zone of the area; you are living. For Prayer time, I use the Muslim Pro¹³ app. I have set Azan alert. It sends a notification when it is Salat time. It also notifies the time of Iftar and Sehri. Though my husband collected a Ramadan calendar from the Norwegian Islamic center. We combined that calendar and app. It was easy for us to keep track. We got very little time between Iftar and Sehri. It was very hard for us to fast for a long time. My husband could not continue because he had classes and a job. It was not possible for him to continue both. But I tried my best to do fasting. We try to live our life according to the rules of Islam. We never eat haram and try to earn halal. It is really hard to find halal food here in Norway. Though you can get them, they are very expensive. Every three or four months we travel to Sweden. We go in a group and take a trolley with us. We buy all the Bangladeshi food from there. Beef and mutton are halal. We buy it from there. It is also cheap in Sweden. At first, we used to buy food from Grønland. We

¹³ It is a digital app which is available in android and IOS versions. It helps to keep track of prayer times. It sends a notification to the user based on the selected mode. One can also read the Quran or Hadis on it.

bought meat from the Turkish meat shop. But those were not tasty. It was a complete waste of money. Later, one of our seniors asked us if we would like to go to Sweden. They said that they always shop main groceries from Sweden. Some families do the same. After hearing all these, I wanted to give it a try. I asked my husband. He also agreed. We confirmed that senior. He asked us to take a trolley. It is easy to carry things. I told him we don't want to buy so many things at a time. Probably we don't need it. He laughed and replied that we will buy more than anyone. Because it is our first time. After hearing these, my husband told me to take the big one. There is no loss to take a big bag. We don't have to pay anything extra. We bought tickets for the bus. When we went there, we were surprised. He was right. It was a big supermarket. And the price was so cheap. My heart started dancing. I found all Bangladeshi Brands of spices there. Then all the known fish. Beef and mutton are so fresh. We bought puffed rice, Chanachur,¹⁴ and pickles. We shopped for three to four months. Other people also did the same. But we got into trouble when came back. Our refrigerator did not have enough space. We asked one of our Bangladeshi neighbours to help us. They freed one portion of their refrigerator for us. Then we shifted some of our products there. We spent a lot of money but worth it. Before all the big programs, we went there for shopping. It saves a lot of money. We also ordered Eid-UI-Adha's¹⁵ meat there. Killing animals openly is forbidden here and we do not have the equipment to do it. Financially eligible people gathered money according to their portion¹⁶ and then order meat. They prepared meat according to the order. As it is not possible to celebrate Eid on the accurate date. So, on the fixed date responsible persons (two-three) go there by car and picked it up according to the list. Then they come back and gather at a fixed place. Then they distribute it according to the list. But everyone doesn't take part. Some people prefer to do it in their home country. They send money to their family and asked them to arrange it for themselves. They share the moment over the phone. We did the same for the first time. But later we also decided to join the other Bangladeshis. Yes, it doesn't feel the same. At home, you do everything with your hands. You can touch your sacrificed animal. It let you feel that

¹⁴ It is a very popular snack. It is made of flour and deep fried in oil.

¹⁵ It is the second biggest festival of Islam. In the Islamic lunar calendar, Eid al-Adha falls on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah and lasts for four days. In the international (Gregorian) calendar, the dates vary from year to year, shifting approximately 11 days earlier each year.

¹⁶ Portion refers to the amount of meat. How much KG does one want to pay? This payment depends on their financial capability. Generally, it has been divided into seven portions for one cow. So, the total meat will be divided into seven portions.

you are close to the almighty Allah. But here you just get to touch the meat. You cannot even see that animal. You don't even know how it was sacrificed. If they have pronounced the name of Allah or not. You have to blindly believe the word 'Halal'. Halal refers to that animal's meat that is sacrificed by the name of Almighty Allah. It is all about your trust.' We have a detailed discussion about it in our previous chapter, so I am not going to elaborate on it. Bangladeshis are very particular about their action. That means they know it is not allowed but they interpret it as their incapability due to the situation. For example, Surah or alcohol is strictly forbidden in Islam. But there was a history behind it. I did not find a particular reference in the book. I heard it from people. They heard it from someone else. But no one knows the book's name or the written source. It says that drinking alcohol is allowed until you are in your right state of mind. Once you lose control over yourself, it is haram. Several Bangladeshis use this as a reference to save them from guilt. They did it to save their face from society. Even I met a Bangladeshi man who drinks alcohol in the name of Almighty Allah. I eventually asked him why you did that, he said that Allah will decide whether he is guilty or not. Human does not have any right to judge it. He also said that he is in his right state of mind, and that's why it is not a problem. Now drinking alcohol is prohibited in Bangladesh. For running an alcohol business or drinking alcohol, one needs a license. It is extremely expensive. Moreover, family values and social norms will not permit it. As a result, having alcohol for a person is nearly impossible. But in the European continent, alcohol is a part of their culture. There are no social norms or values regarding alcohol here. anyone can have it openly. According to my observation. Bangladeshis are marginalizing their religious boundary to accept a foreign culture. That practice is rooted in their heart. They subconsciously act according to the norms they are habituated to perform. There is an alternative picture as well. My informant, Tahrima's husband is a Foodora rider. He delivers foods based on the order. She mentioned it while talking about her first Ramadan. She said that,

'We don't want to earn a lot of money. We want to earn halal and eat halal. That's why I never look for a job in a restaurant. Most of the Norwegian restaurants work with alcohol. I don't want to earn haram and feed my children haram foods. It is unethical. How can I teach my children to do good work when I am not respectful of my ethics? My husband does food delivery and I work in a packaging company. Both of us earn a sufficient amount to support ourselves. Sometimes I feel guilty. I can have my prayer on time. I miss it most of the time. I do not know how I will stand in front of Allah. I just hope that he can forgive me for my deeds. We are trying our best to lead our life in a proper Islamic way. I am teaching my children the

Quran. They are learning to pray with their father. They are so devoted to Allah, that they push my husband to have Jumma prayer together on Friday. I am grateful and happy that I can teach them to follow the path of Islam. Whatever happens, end of the day they are Muslim. They have to act according to Islam.’

Everyone has their own perspective and family values to perform the religious activity. It is endless to say that religion is a place of sentiment. Along with social norms and values, religious values are also used to shape one’s lifestyle. One difference is that social norms and values are changeable depending on the shift in social structure. But religious values remain the same. Bangladeshis are adapting new skills to survive, to make themselves compatible with society. But religious values have a deep-down impact on their lives while adapting to those changes. Just like someone is working hard to make their income halal, while some are working hard for money. They are working in bars and nightclubs because of the good pay. Additionally, some people change their food habits completely to maintain religious prohibition. End of the day, they are leading their life through integration, marginalization, or assimilation. They are making it while considering their social, religious, and family values.

Chapter Summary:

In this chapter, I discussed Bangladeshi women immigrants’ life and survival strategies meticulously. I portrayed their strategies through the acculturation frameworks’ four elements. Though it is a very old framework, but the I find it suitable to discuss cultural shock using the four elements. Beside that have used Mary Douglas’ Dirt theory and some of my academic resources (articles) and personal life experiences to discuss certain phenomenon. My informants came from different parts of Bangladesh. Their family backgrounds and upbringing environment differ from one another. So as their beliefs and values. Sometimes they act against their will. They try to convince their inner self through a logical explanation of their acts. I determine those acts as survival strategies. at the same time, there are some people who prioritize their culture over a foreign culture. They want to protect their cultural values at any cost. They live lowly and still denied accepting changes. Those changes can make their life easy and comfortable. They not only denied acceptance, but they are also passing the same values to their children. They want their children to carry the same morals and values. Additionally, they are choosing different components from two cultures and integrating them to survive a certain situation. In that way, they are creating cultural hybridity. They are passing it to the coming circle. I use the word coming circle to present the group of Bangladeshi people

who are coming every year. Whenever they meet each other on occasion or at home, they share their experience with each other. In this way, they find their way to adjust to a new environment.

Seven: Discussion

Bangladeshi women's migration to Norway results from social bullying and fewer opportunities for building successful professional careers. Bangladesh is a middle-income developing country. It is continuously dealing with numerous socio-cultural, economic, and political issues. Bangladeshis who are financially solvent try to migrate to developed countries to lead better life. Informants of this study have faced different problems during their living in Bangladesh. Moving abroad was never a part of their dream. To some extent, they are forced to choose it to escape nightmares. Social taboos toward women and the lack of freedom are triggering them to migrate. Like Akhil Gupta's (1995: *Blurred Boundaries*) public culture of corruption, it becomes a public culture in Bangladesh to find happiness in foreign. They made migrating a public culture to escape their nightmares and start a new life. Those people are blurring the scope of having a healthy native environment through cultural practice. They have generalized the idea of foreign life as an ideal life. Additionally, social and political domination, discrimination in professional fields, the need for a healthy environment, and the beckoning of a secure future forced them to leave their motherland. Not only those but also the social myth of upgrading social status is another reason for migration. However, these causes or reasons potentially impact their life once they migrate. Does it solve their problems? What is the aftermath of migration? I tried to explore answers to these questions.

After moving to a different country, they faced several changes and some potential threats. They experience cultural shock, different lifestyles, a sudden change in the social order, religious differences, etc. At the same time, the new culture and social environment become a dream door to achieve their dreams. Boasian anthropologists have retheorized this idea of cultural boundaries. Cultural boundaries do not interpret boundaries as barriers or obstacles. They use it to differentiate one from another. They drew distinctions between folk (native) and analytic (foreign) cultural boundaries. As soon as people enter the foreign culture zone, they forget about the origin and start functioning within the culture. While thinking about cultural boundaries, culture is open and incomplete. So, one culture can only help one from some perspectives. Kirin Narayan observed a similar thing. All of us belong to several communities. That is why one must be analytical or accept foreign culture to fulfill expectations or desires (Bashkow, 2004). As soon as Bangladeshis started living in the Norwegian culture, they started differentiating between their native and Norwegian culture. To put it simply, native and foreign cultures incorporate each other and make a hybrid. When one moves to a different culture, s/he

tries to fill up her emptiness. For example, Bangladeshi women suffered for freedom and were desperate to have it. They adopt it as soon as they find it in a foreign culture. They do not look for their origin.

Previously, I have mentioned social order in Bangladesh. Iliana Gershon defined social order as porous. Power and perspective define Porous boundaries. Social order can be created or re-created by people, and one can maintain multiple social orders. In Bangladesh, social order in power relations is evident in every sphere of society. The form of power can be economical or political. People who live in foreign countries are considered to be under powerful economic and social order. It is a public culture to consider them economically solvent. At the same time, the political background family holds the most powerful family. They consider being a noble family. It is a generalized idea that members of political family backgrounds have good genealogical features. Those features make a different social order. Now a person with a solid economic background can have a political background. Which one s/he is going to consider; is up to her/him. Nevertheless, those orders do not have anything to do outside the country. Outside of the country, social orders are re-created by their status. For example, students are from one social order, and skilled or white-collar job holders belong to another social order. They are interconnected through their nationality. Both social orders have their boundaries, and they communicate with each other within that boundaries. Additionally, both social orders can be merged and create a new social order through their shared values or religion (Gershon, 2019).

Bangladeshi women's position in a new society is as vulnerable as a drop of water on a leaf. It is a highly challenging situation for Bangladeshi women. The social structure of Bangladesh is very supportive. Because in the social structure, family bonding is powerful. Similarly, the values of relationships are highly noticeable. When a girl is married, she finds herself in different relationships. Expectations and responsibilities build a net of demand around her. She is expected to follow in those footsteps like her ancestors. However, as soon as she crosses those boundaries, she finds a new world. In this world, she is responsible for looking after herself and her family. No one is there for her. She has to deal with her problem by herself. The situation is similar to the fish out of water. She is allowed to go anywhere or do whatever. Nevertheless, her social and cultural values create an invisible algorithm for her. She judges her surroundings according to that algorithm. From food to dress, networking communication filters everything. In this situation, she makes a zone of action. Zone of action stands for an active position where she can act spontaneously. She assimilates or separates essential and

threatening cultural components while staying in this zone. For example, one person is compassionate about maintaining halal life. She chooses not to work and live on vegetarian or halal food, though it costs more. But living with religious values is more important for her. Saving money for the future or working hard to live a good life does not matter to her. On the contrary, another person is very liberal. She loves to make rational decisions. She likes to act according to the situation. Native socio-cultural and religious values do not bother her. She does not care about halal and haram. Earning money and gaining economic solvency is her ultimate goal. As her native values no longer matter, she is adapting new cultural values and other elements like language, food, dress, etc. Noticeably, there is also another group of people who are valued their culture and respectful of other's cultures. In this case, they are integrating and marginalizing two cultures. They are creating a hybrid zone. They are paring both cultural values (foreign and native) as a strategy to survive. Bangladeshi women are very protective of their families. To some extent, they were very concerned during interviews. They presented their action with logic. They tried to put them in a position of better judgment. They criticized each other choices while considering theirs the best. They faced intense historical tensions. However, they crossed the historical boundary in their needs. They showcase them as a modern citizen of neutral judgment. They put their individual needs first and then shared values which was the liberation history of their country. They did not have regret. Instead, they are proud of their action. While talking about shared values, some considered their religious values as obstacles. Those cut out their religious thoughts yet disagree to accept that. They stand for their own belief, far from the religious ones. They use their belief as a reference for their action. Bangladeshi women who have their kids in Norway are conscious of their children's upbringing. Not only as a person but also Bangladeshi community organization is actively taking the initiative to uphold Bangladeshi culture and passing it to the next generation. Married women with kids have a different community. During get-together parties, the organization arranges cultural programs for the children. They are encouraged to learn Bangladeshi songs, poems, dances, jokes, etc. Throughout the program, they performed those. They got prizes to inspire them to know their culture. Bangladeshi organization is like a godmother to newcomers. This organization is the outcome of the two cultures' integration. The main functionality of this organization is to bind Bangladeshis together. Arrange cultural and religious festivals so that one can feel the taste of home. Religious and cultural festivals represent the social and cultural values of a country. The goal of this organization is to stick to its cultural root. Bangladeshi organization also runs humanitarian activities for Bangladesh during calamities. Additionally, this organization helps newcomers to fix their tax deduction cards and visa renewals. They

provide legal information regarding residence permits during their stay in Norway. It tries its best to keep the community safe and sound. This organization has no formal or official base, but it has its interim committee. Anyone with a good sense of responsibility can be a member. Newcomers are highly dependent on this organization. Even the organization is working dedicatedly for them. They arrange a get-together program as an opportunity to meet seniors. Newcomers are very active in grabbing that opportunity. They ask questions regarding part-time jobs, education, etc. Bangladeshi organization helps newcomers to find jobs. Even seniors sometimes refer them to their known institutions. Nevertheless, this type of gathering creates a lot of small groups based on their shared values or interests. However, the functionalities of these groups have nothing to do with the organization. These groups are influential when building networks to find jobs or accommodations. Regardless of social class and economic background, Bangladeshis are very close to each other. Despite the religious binding of men and women, people are close to each other to support them on their bad days. Furthermore, this is the specialty, along with one of the goals of this organization. It makes the organization admirable to the Bangladeshis.

Eight: Conclusion

The economy of Bangladesh is highly dependent on foreign remittance. Foreign remittances are contributing directly and indirectly to the economy of Bangladesh. Each year a lot of Bangladeshis are migrating to foreign permanently or temporarily. However, there are categories. One group leaves the country for work and the other group leaves for study. In the recent time, a lot of pupils are leaving the country for higher study. Almost 90 percent of them prefer to settle abroad once they leave the country (Islam & Arefin, 2008). They completed their study and find skilled jobs and later apply for citizenship. Though the ratio of males and females is highly different. One study shows that male prefers to marry their native girl over a foreign girl due to high cultural differences. Similarly, highly educated girls or strong financial backgrounds girls prefer abroad settled males.

According to the Bangladeshi population and housing census in 2022, the female population is 83.34m of the total population (Dhaka Tribune, 2022). Bangladesh has been dealing with female education to develop a social structure and to make them a useful asset to the country. To reach that goal, the Bangladesh government is working according to MDGs and SDGs. Bangladesh successfully achieved MDGs. They assured mandatory primary education for girls. After that Bangladesh is working on sustainable development goals. Though the social environment is very hard for Bangladeshi girls. Due to the patriarchal social structure, women are meant to be dominated by men. Not only domination but also social abuses like rape, racism, etc. According to a report, a total of 1321 women were raped in 2021. Several rape victims were also killed (Haque, 2022). Because of these incidents, women's families let them marry at an early age. They were also not allowed to join every sphere of society as men. Although the scenario is developing slowly. Women are much more concerned about their rights. They are breaking their cultural boundaries. Still, it is a challenge for them. Social and family values make a special boundary of domination for women.

Although we have seen different family and social situations throughout the study. They faced social bullying and abuse in their previous life. They were dominated to have freedom. Despite being educated, they were the weakest pillars of their family. They were afraid that their family could be bullied by themselves. To draw the end of nightmares, they left the country to lead a new life to fulfill their dream. They took their native life as a lesson and wanted to correct them. From the time they came to Norway, they faced difficulties like cultural shock, livelihood, sudden change of social status, religious practice, etc. Being a country of a different culture,

people's values and morals are naturally different. Their ways of interaction, language, priorities, and social structure differ. Bangladeshi women struggled like fish out of water. However, they started making strategies to adapt to the environment. during this strategy making, either they are assimilating or separating their cultural values or marginalizing them with the new cultural values. It is needless to say that they are prioritizing their socio-cultural values over the foreign culture. Throughout this process, they are adapting different skills and building connections, and learning tricks. Nevertheless, Bangladeshi community organization is playing an important role in helping newcomers every year. They arrange get-together parties and festivals to introduce newcomers to seniors. It is not only a get-together party but also an information session. Seniors shared their experiences and help them to find a better way of leaving life. Bangladeshi community organization is also working on upholding their culture by organizing different cultural activities in foreign. Additionally, this organization runs humanitarian activities. They raise funds during catastrophes in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi people and organization are supporting each other to survive in this foreign. Bangladeshi women are using their social-cultural values and conservative notion to make a scale of judgment. To some extent, they are presenting themselves exceptionally while making a strategy. Neither they are following word to word, nor they are throwing completely. They are creating a zone of hybridity where one can sense the essence of both cultures. Their strategies represent the priorities, dedication, and passion they have to achieve their dreams.

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