

SOCIAL STUDIES OF GENDER



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**GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE GLOBAL LABOR MARKET: A CASE
STUDY ON BANGLADESHI FEMALE IMMIGRANTS IN LONDON**

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ABSTRACT

The thesis aims to explore and understand gender inequality that exists in the global labour market in general and for the Bangladeshi female immigrants in particular. It emphasises feminization of employment in relation to state-market-family relations. The thesis also discusses the ways and to what extent Bangladeshi female immigrant's roles are sources of entitlement to the provision of UK's labor market, their status on the labor market, their limits, possibilities and their ability to negotiate changes in these roles in terms of gender relations. The research is qualitative and based on empirical findings from a field study conducted on Bangladeshi immigrant women in London. Findings reveal that the increasing rate of feminization of employment is not coinciding with the elimination of gender disparities to any larger extent. Labor markets continue to be characterized by horizontal and vertical segregation even where there has been a long history of equal opportunity policies. The research finds sufficient evidence to support that the labor market participation and occupational distribution of Bangladeshi women in UK neither resembles that of their male counterparts nor that of the British and other ethnic groups. The study shows that Bangladeshi immigrant women's transnational settlement has portrayed the coexistence and intersections of multiple gender disparities, within male-dominated power structures. Empirical evidences bear a clear mark of culturally reproduced notions of femininity, masculinity and patriarchy among Bangladeshi communities; although some in the young generation was found in contradictions and negotiations against this stereotyping. It is concluded that beliefs and attitudes about differences between the sexes, grounded in Bengali cultural values contribute to the persistence of sex segregation. Findings further suggest that responsibility for the daily care of family members is one of the major setbacks for Bangladeshi female immigrants, both regarding entry and professional development in UK's labor market. Moreover, women remain under pressure to maintain the conformity with their own religious, cultural and social values which also affect their underrepresentation on the labor market. Empirical evidence further fails to support the argument of neoliberal economic development, global capitalism and free market economy that women's occupational outcomes result primarily from free choices that they make in an open market. Rather it suggests that women face discrimination in terms of job segregation by sex, wage disparities, ethnic minority and religious rigidities. The study concludes that Bangladeshi female immigrant's entry to the UK' labor market remain at such a low level in terms of occupational diversity, earnings and positions that it does not signal to any major breakthrough in their professional achievement.

KEY WORDS: Gender Inequality, Labor Market, Globalization, Feminization of Employment, Neoliberal Economy, United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Migration, Bangladeshi Female Immigrant, Sex Segregation of Labor, Patriarchy, Masculinity, Public and Private Sphere.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BMET	Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
ILO	International Labor Organization
INSTRAW	United Nations International Research & Training Centre for the Advancement of Women
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MFA	Migration Forum Asia
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OKUP	Ovibashi Karmi Unaayan Program
ONS	Office for National Statistics
RMMRU	Refugee and Migratory Movements Unit
SAP	Structural Adjustment Policies
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION AIM and RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Feminization of employment is one of the most discussed issues (Ball, 2008:53) that have been featured as one of the products of globalization and the new geography of economy mostly caused by a high rate of migration during the last decades. This process of globalization and the new liberal economy encapsulate the transformation of economic and social relations across the globe at the end of 20th century and beginning of the 21st century (Perrons, 2004:1; Acker, 2004:18). People and places are increasingly interlinked through the organization of work, exchange of ideas (Perrons, 2004:1) and the flows of goods and services, capital and even labor (Stiglitz, 2006:4). However, one of the conspicuous outbursts of these global interlinks is the growing number of female migrants and their increasing participation rate in the global labor market. But this relocation of gender-based labor in the case of immigrant women in the context of globalization and neo-liberal economy has aggravated the gender relations in most cases rather than to minimize it (Mills, 2003:42). Bayes et al. (2001:4) argues that the impact of globalization on women throughout the world has been both negative and undemocratic and positive and liberating. While some educated women in developed countries have prospered, larger number of women in the world has become poorer. Globalization and the new economy has led to the polarization of the labor market (Perrons, 2004:14), as the new marketization and commercialization of women's services seem to initiate increased social and economic differentiation in terms of gender relations (Isaksen, 2007:44).

Although nearly fifty percent of the women around the world are officially on the formal labor market and women constitute approximately one-third of all workers, most of them are not equally paid, and women's work is valued less than men's and they are usually engaged in low-paid jobs following the traditional division of labor (Ross-Sheriff, 2011:234; Tzannatos, 1999:551). England (2003:35) has

argued that laws, cultural beliefs and discriminatory practices have excluded most women from political office, religious leadership, military positions and traditionally male crafts and professions within paid employment. These exclusions are significant for women since activities traditionally regarded as male include those associated with the largest rewards of status, power and money. As a result, the contemporary world is characterized by difference rather than uniformity and widening rather than narrowing inequality; while some people and places are involved in highly interactive global networks others are largely excluded, creating new and reinforcing old patterns of uneven development in general and gender disparities in particular (Perrons, 2004:1).

During the last few decades' new economic multifaceted characteristics (Mills, 2003:41) along with new divisions of labor that are reinforcing the gender inequalities has undergone lots of discussion and criticism, mainly by feminist scholars (Neumayer and Soysa, 2011: 1065). Though women participation in the global labor market has received some attention in policy formulation, labor-based inequalities are still unfocused. As Ball (2008:54) argues that "scholarship regarding the effects of the economic reforms and growth of the last twenty-five years has focused on female labor force participation and feminization of the labor force, while less attention has been given to global trends in job segregation by sex". However, the most common critiques¹ have been generalizing these features of gender inequalities in the labor market, the traditional and widespread masculine ethics and practices (Mills, 2003:54; Wichterich, 2000:167) together with the patriarchal nature of society, which tend to favor status quo in most cases of unequal gender-relations (Hutchings et al., 2011:6). Moreover, immigration laws, decisive citizenship (fake husband-wife), unequal share and practice of power, multicultural barriers, intersectional discrimination and cultural lag are the most common among other factors that are considered responsible for gender inequalities in the labor market for immigrant women (Lutz, 1997:96-98). Gender

¹ See more in Acker, Joan. (1990; 2004), Braidotti, Rosi (2003), Connell, R.W. (2005b); Hutchings et al. (2011), Lewis, Gail (2000; 2006), Perrons, Diane (2004; 2010), Neumayer, Eric and Soysa, Indra De. (2011)

inequalities on the labor market are espoused by multiple realities that have to be faced by the immigrants' women in their daily lives, both in the personal and professional arena, both in the family and at the workplace, both in formal and informal sectors in a variety of ways (Phizacklea, 1983:2). Mills (2003:42) has argued that gender inequalities operate simultaneously, but not identically, as systems of dominant meanings and symbolism; as structured social relations, roles, and practices; and as lived experiences of personal identity. Gender analysis has increasingly widened its scope to reveal the ways in which gender inequality is constructed and reproduced in diverse institutional settings, including those pertaining to markets and macroeconomic flows.

1.2. AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this thesis is to understand gender inequality that exists in the global labour market in general and for the Bangladeshi female immigrants in particular. Focus will be given to the new character and feminization of employment in the current global economic development in relation to state-market-family relations. The analysis will be accompanied by references to globalization, migration, transnationalization and modernization processes taking place during the last few decades and its relation to immigrant female workers. I will also discuss the ways and the extent to what Bangladeshi immigrant women's roles are sources of entitlement to the provision of UK's labor market, their status on the labor market, their limits, possibilities and their ability to negotiate changes in these roles in terms of gender relations. The following are the specific research questions for this study:

- i) How do immigrant women adapt to the global labor market in their trans-border migration?*
- ii) What challenges and problems do immigrant women encounter in their personal and professional lives in relation to their labor market participation?*
- iii) How and why immigrant women are discriminated in the global labor market?*
- iv) How does global feminization of employment related to immigrant women's native country's socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds?*

v) *What are the limits and possibilities for immigrant women as workers in the host society?*

1.3. WOMEN AND GLOBAL LABOR MARKET: A BRIEF BACKGROUND NOTE

More women are coming out on the labor market², but gender-equal norms still remains a far reaching goal. The participation of women in today's economic functions is not only astounding in number but also inevitable for economic sustainability. Reskin and Hartmann (1986:1) states that, "women's employment, like men's plays a vital role in our economy". The current global environment of open economies, new trade regimes and competitive export industries, and global accumulation relies heavily on the work of women, both waged and unwaged, in the informal sectors and in the home, in manufacturing and public and private services (Moghadam 2005:51). But do these feminizations of employment around the globe envisage the equal access and rights in the global labor market in terms of gender equality? The basic attempt of this dissertation is to seek the answers of these queries. True enough, women access to the labor market has been accelerated during the last few decades around the world (Perrons, 2004:89), but most significantly in low-paid jobs, where they have to face greater social problems, more competition and sexist violence, a conservative roadblock (i.e. sexual division of labor), a new culture of consumerism, and a quest for new identities amid growing social inequality (Wichterich, 2002: ix). Women have remained disadvantaged in the new labor market, in terms of wages, training and occupational segregation (Moghadam, 2005:7). Moreover, labor markets continue to be characterized by horizontal and vertical segregation to the disadvantage of women, even where there has been a long history of equal opportunities policies. So even when female participation are similar to men's, gender inequality remains (Perrons, 2004:884). Thus the current trends toward marketization have far-reaching gender implications which present both a crisis (inequality) and an opportunity (employment) for women worldwide (Einhorn, 1995:1). The process of globalization and the trend of neoliberal economy have skewed gender

² See more in Acker Joan, (2004), Kelly et al. (2001), Mogahdam, Valentine M. (2005), Wichterich, Christina (2002), Perrons Diane (2010), Walby, Sylvia (2009), Peterson Spike V. & Runyan, Anne S.(2010)

inequality more pervasively rather than curving. Weston (2002:2) has stated that “Gender has proven to be impressively malleable, adapting to new circumstances rather than withering away in response to demands for change”.

The focus of this dissertation is not one-dimensional, rather to go into the more diversified inequalities that are associated with gender inequalities, i.e., ethnicity, racialization, nation, religion, sexual orientation, age, generation, linguistic community etc. (Walby, 2009:18). Gender inequalities represent one dynamic within a global labor force that, among other factors, is also segmented by class, ethnicity and race, nationality and region (Mills, 2003:42). However, the general point of departure of this study is to shed light on the gender inequalities of the global labor market and the particular point of departure is to examine the case of Bangladeshi immigrants’ women and their working lives in UK in consideration of gender relations.

1.4. THE STRUCTURE OF STUDY

The thesis is divided into five chapters. *Chapter one* provides the reader with introduction, research aims and questions and a background notes to the forthcoming text. *Chapter two* deal with conceptual and theoretical framework where I look into the conceptual analysis and theoretical application. *Chapter three* gives an overview of methodological consideration applied for this research. *In chapter four* I present the empirical materials to answer the research questions which constitute the main part of analysis of my findings. Finally *Chapter five* provide the reader with summery and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER-2

CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

The primary theoretical approaches that I want to use in this study is the feminist approaches focusing on women's working life and gender inequality, mostly featured by postcolonial and postmodern feminists. I will limit my discussion to the feminists' theoretical approaches towards gender inequalities in the labor market (sexism, patriarchy, masculinity, public and private sphere, etc.), taking into consideration migration, feminization of employment, modernization, globalization and neoliberal economy.

2.2. GENDER ASPECTS OF GLOBALIZATION

There is increasing reference in the globalization literature to a 'local-global' paradox, usually taken to mean local adaption by various social forces of globalization processes (Goodman, 2002:150). In this light, my analysis will focus on the feminist scholarship on globalization and at least two perspectives may be identified within it: feminist political economy and feminist postmodernism (basically on the contextures of epistemological changes) (Moghadam, 2005:17). The approach that I take in this study may be described as materialist, or Marxist-feminist or feminist political economy. The conceptual point of departure is that the nexus of capital, class and gender determines how women and men are involved in and affected by the economic, political and cultural dimension of globalization in various parts of the world. Though this approach can be compatible with theories such as world-system analysis, dependency theory and comparative political economy, it is a corrective to these largely gender-blind theories, while new feminist political economy has given much importance to sexual division of labor, the exploitation of female labor and its contribution to the accumulation of capital, as well as to the ways in which the sexual division of labor and gender ideologies shape definitions of skills, allocation of resources, occupational distribution , modes of remuneration and the relative value of male and female labor (ibid, p. 17-18). A key difference between the Classical Marxist-

feminist approach of the 1970s and the newer analyses of globalization is that the latter made an attempt to examine the gender relations in labor market not only within national borders but also across them. The sexual division of labor remains pertinent within the households and at the labor market, but the new approach has given more emphasis on its dynamics globally in terms of the way it informs commodity chains, formal and informal markets, the so-called global assembly line, migration outflows, as well as decisions about FDI and structural adjustment policies (SAP) (Moghadam, 2005:18). This new approach furthermore give importance to the gender dynamics of economic globalization to show the worldwide expansion of the female labor force, the role of paid and unpaid female labor in the global economy and the persistence of social and gender inequalities. This new feminist approach takes gender seriously in understanding the effects of globalization on gender (i.e. global labor market, feminization of employment and the traffic in women) and the effects of gender on globalization (i.e. the sexual division of labor, male bias and masculine priorities, gender symbolic representations of the globalization project) and vice versa (ibid, p. 18).

Studying globalization from a cultural anthropologist perspective Appadurai (2008:97-98) has called special attention to the radical disjunctive “-escapes,” in which global cultural and political economies take shape and are transformed. In the same vein she noted the intersections of the local and the global in relation to the disjuncture in the world economy, changing social, territorial and cultural reproduction of group identity in this age of modernity at large (cited in Tam, et al. 2002.p.x). Perrons (2004:3) has provided an overview of critical studies on globalization which I have found pertinent. Generalizing the phenomenon of contemporary global economy, she has conceived of globalization as a frame within which the interconnectedness of places and people as well as contextual changes in economic, political, social, and cultural processes are explored. She argues that while the framework of globalization can be interpreted as a kind of “new meta-narrative,” it does not impose deterministic structures or explanations. It is rather seen as an open space for intellectual reflections (ibid, 2004:5).

Apart from these overviews discussed in the above section, there are many more discourses among the feminist approaches that have tried to synthesize the impact of globalization on gender relations. Hall (2000:213-215) makes a crucial point that the process of globalization contains a contradictory logic, because certain effects such as the growing inter dependencies and the weakening of state power are common across all societies and nations, yet this process is uneven and it both intensifies earlier patterns of inequality while engendering new ones. Whereas Bayes et al. (2001:3) states that, globalization represents a set of economic forces that changes division of labor between the sexes in many different contexts as well as the nature of the state creates disruption and dislocation. The impacts of globalization have led to labor displacement and relocation of labor market has resulted in gender disparities between male and female. The neoliberal market policy is another shadow of the patriarchal nature of the state which has been organized by the players backstage (male-dominated groups of politicians, economists, businessmen, diplomats etc.) in the process of globalization as Lourdes Beneria has stated-

“At the global level, these developments have been symbolized by the spirit of the ‘Davos Man’³, whose influence in the global marketplace, according to the neoliberal weekly The Economist, has replaced that of the ‘Chatham House Man’⁴. In this view, the Davos Man includes businessmen, bankers, officials, and intellectuals who, ‘hold university degree, work with words and numbers, speak some English and share beliefs in individualism, market economics and democracy. They control many of the world’s governments, and the bulk of its economic and military capabilities’. The Davos Man does not ‘butter up the politicians; it is the other way around’. Written as a critique of Samuel Huntington’s thesis in The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order, the praise of Davos Man by The Economist was also an ode to the contemporary global version of economic man. The Davos Man, symbolizing rational economic man gone global, is expected, through the magic power of the market, to bring people together (Beneria, 2003:121)”.

Thus globalization has led to hegemonic takeover of a masculine ethic from the local to the global where women’s position in the labor market just crossed the borders but remained the same, with its unique exploitation and subordination (Peterson and Runyan, 2010: 183). Globalization-a process of internationalization

³ The reference is to the annual economic forum in Davos, Switzerland (In the Praise of the Davos Man, 1997) of ‘people who run the world’.

⁴ The elegant Chatham House of the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

of economic, political, social and cultural practices are considered as a mixed blessing for the world community. The most common discourse for its economic process is that major portions of the cake are grasped by the rich countries and poor countries continue to supply the cake. Gender-based disparities (i.e. sex segregation, wage gap etc.) are still a common feature of the global labor market (Neumayer and Soysa, 2011:1065).

2.3. GENDER ASPECTS OF MIGRATION: PITFALL IN THEORIZING

The human history has been characterized by migration since its beginning, but there are few if any parallels to the accelerated growth and scope of international migration in the last decades of the twentieth century (Chincilla, 2005:167). Castles and Miller (1998:3) predicted that the closing years of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twentieth-first century will be ‘an age of migration’. Although the number of immigrants has been increasing rapidly, a theoretical analysis of gender aspects of migration and immigration is still largely lacking. Massey (1994:700-1) has stated that social scientists do not approach the study of immigration from a shared paradigm, but from a variety of competing theoretical viewpoints, fragmented across disciplines, regions and ideologies. As a result research on the subject tends to be narrow, often inefficient and characterized by duplication, miscommunication, reinvention and bickering about fundamentals. Theories developed over the last two decades also failed to incorporate gender as a prime issue into these interdisciplinary theories of migration, because these theories have emphasized questions such as who migrates, but have often failed to adequately address gender-specific migration experiences (Boyd and Grieco, 2003:1). In the following section I will try to make an overview on the shortcomings of these interdisciplinary theories in exploring the gender aspects of migration.

Why do women migrate to other countries or why do they become immigrants? Until the 1970s the most influential theories were those proffered by neo-classical theorists who viewed individual migration decisions as a result of push and pull factors. They located decision making in individuals, rather than within wider social units, but also conceptualized the reasons for migration within a reductive

economistic framework (Kofman et al. 2001:22; Brettell and Holifield, 2000:9). These neo-classical views suggested a rational choice, made by individuals who weigh the costs and benefits that ensure their economic returns on migration (Faist, 1997:249). But the definition of this 'individual' was gendered; the involvement of women in migratory decision making was ignored and left out of theoretical thinking⁵. In this paradigm, the experience of women migrants were fitted into models developed to understand, explain and predict male migration, thus assuming that women have the same reasons for migrating as men. Agency in these accounts was never viewed within the context of resisting oppressive and exploitative structures. The assumption was that men and women would act in exactly the same way and have the same relation to those structures (Kofman et al. 2001:22-23). This theoretical miss-fitting masked the gender aspects of migration to a large extent.

From the mid to late 1970s there was a wave of theorizing that drew heavily on Marxist political economy, dependency theory and world system theory. At the heart of these historical political economy accounts was a focus on the unequal distribution of economic and political power on a world-wide basis and the way in which migration is a mechanism for mobilizing cheap labor for capital (Kofman, et al. 2001:23). The prime focus of these theories was to understand the politics that resulted in economic domination. According to these theories migration was the result of state politics and policies where the developed countries used the poor countries and their overpopulation as a source of cheap labor suited to their business. The basic supposition of these theories was that migration was a process that denotes the global inequality in general. But through this assumption the role of human agency was ignored in favor of the collective-the global working class. But the role of agency is vital for a gendered account of migration, because it is often assumed that women simply follow the men and that their role in migration is very reactive rather proactive. Moreover, these theoretical approaches emphasize only economic factors, but there are many non-economic factors

⁵ See more in Todaro , Michael P. (1969, 1976)

(marriage, divorce, violence, dependency etc.) which cause the influx of migration (Kofman, 2001:23).

2.4. FEMINIST THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF WORK

2.4.1. SEX DIFFERENCE AND WORK

Sexuality has become a prime concern to almost all feminist scholars. Moi (1999:03) has stated that “the sex/gender distinction provides the basic framework for a great deal of feminist theories, and it has become widely accepted in society at large”. Sexuality as an influential cause of gender disparities has left and has been leaving longstanding and widespread impacts in the context of work and organization irrespective of local and global labor market. Sex differentiation usually exists as part of a system of gender inequality-a gender hierarchy that favors males over females (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:3). More or less every individual experiences this difference as gender roles are integrated into the personality at an early stage, and the gender roles serve various functions in the individuals’ psychodynamic system (Holter, 1970:10).

The categorization and identification of females largely depends on sexual difference. This symbolic representation determines the types of job for male and female both at home and at the workplace. The categorization of women in terms of sex difference is often described as body politics. Men who assign value to human activities tend to take male activities as the standard and see other activities as inferior-regardless of the importance of these activities for a society’s survival (Schur, 1983: 35-46).

The other dimension of sexual difference that exists in the labor market lies in social practices. Society produces and maintains gender differences through several social processes: socialization, the actions of social institutions and interaction among people (West and Zimmerman, 1987:141). Gender roles are assigned from the very beginning of a child’s life and are embedded in the way major institutions (including the workplace) are organized (Lorber, 1992:748). Male and female children are introduced to different gender roles. These different gender roles are perpetuated through symbolic ways in their playing games (i.e a male child plays with cars, whereas a female child plays with dolls), in their

action (i.e. a female teenager helps her mother in household chores, whereas a male teenager helps his father in outdoor activities), in their representation (i.e. the role play) and later in their adult stage these gender segregated roles create the hierarchy in the workplace. Thus social practices define the role for males and females and these practices become visualized through different organizational procedures and practices (social, economic cultural and political). Rubin (2006:90) has argued that every society has a sex/gender system-a set of arrangements by which the biological raw materials of human sex and procreation is shaped by human, social intervention and satisfied in a conventional manner, no matter how bizarre some of the conventions may be. However, a primary reason for gendering human actions is to maintain male advantage. Reskin and Padavic (1994:5) argues that gender roles and gender organizations institutionalize the favored positions of men as group; in other words play a fundamental role in establishing a sex-gender hierarchy that favors men over women and individual men then enjoy the benefits of being male without doing anything special to obtain those benefits.

2.4.2. MASCULINITY AND WORK

Through the practice of masculinity males create their supremacy over female. A definition of masculinity is provided by Connell (2005:71): “masculinity is simultaneously a place in gender relations, in practices through which men and women engage that place in gender and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture”. The first wave feminism (structuralist) used masculinity only on the basis of sexual difference, but the second and third wave feminism (post-structuralist) has given importance both to sexuality as well as normativity and performativity (Edwards, 2006:2-3). Masculinity as a system of male dominance is perpetuated into various categories i.e. the hegemonic masculinities, the complicit masculinities, the subordinate masculinities and the marginalized masculinities (Connell, 2005:73). In masculine practices male norms are considered as the principle and oppose female’s equal access and rights in work. The hard, physically demanding work is understood and interpreted by working-class men as being heroic and requiring physical and mental bravery

(Haywood and Ghail, 2003:29). The wage package according to Willis (1979:197) becomes the 'prize' of masculinity at work, a symbol of strength and endurance.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the notion of the breadwinner bringing home the 'family wage' had a major impact on employment strategies. Women's employment was frequently deemed as a supplement, often sustained through low pay and poor working conditions (Walby, 1997). As a result work and men became synonymous. As Acker (1992:257) has stated that the abstract worker transformed into a concrete worker turns out to be a man whose work is his life and whose wife takes care of everything else. The concept of work is gendered in spite of its presentation as gender neutral, because only a male worker can meet its implicit demands. The masculine practices create the male norms suited to their work while women are subordinated, devalued in the same situation. Alvesson and Billing (1997:90) point to a gender symbolism in discussing the relationship between masculinity and work. They argue that gendered work is deeper than sex typing meaning that not only is a job openly viewed as women's or men's work, but that it refers also to non-explicit meanings, unconscious fantasies and associations (ibid, p. 91). Other fields of masculine manifestations are the unequal exercise of power and sexual harassment/violence in the workplace. As Edwards (2006:44) has stated, "it remains a sad yet well-known fact that crimes of violence are still a significant, if not often growing, problem in many contemporary societies and that the vast majority of violent acts across the world, past and present, are committed by men".

'Masculinity' as a universal practice can be traced to the history of modern globalization and neoliberal economy (Acker, 2004:28-29). Following two earlier globally gendered stages (imperialism and colonialism), the modern and current global stage has been marked by political decolonization, economic neocolonialism and the current growth of world markets and structure of financial control, and has seen gender divisions of labor remade on a massive scale in the 'global factory' (Connell, 1998:8). In this changing context of neoliberal economy and global gender order (ibid, p. 12), the practice of masculinity is more visible in the global labor market than in the local in creating a work hierarchy (Acker,

1990: 135). The 'new economy' is emerging in a form that is as male-dominated as the 'old-economy' (Acker, 2004:31). Although 'hegemonic masculinity' is considered as the prime cause of gender inequality in global labor market (Connell, 2005), other types of masculinity also fuels these disparities. The cross-border working line has shaped the male domination, where women's subordination associated with other types of masculinities have just crossed national borders but has not disappeared (Elias & and Beasley, 2009:283). In the same vein, Brittan (1989: 2) argues that "while it is apparent that style of masculinity alters in relatively short time spans, the substance of male power does not".

The global labor market tends to use gendered images in various sectors of international capital to construct desirable workers and desired behaviors (Acker, 2004:34). Through these gendered images the migrated women, mostly from third world countries, are often seen as docile, cheap to employ, and able to endure boring, repetitive work, whether or not women see themselves in this way. Thus the worldwide 'feminization of labor' is strongly regulated by a masculine ethic-which continue to help shape sex segregation, the continuing gender stereotyping of jobs, and the symbolic construction of desirable workers (ibid p.34). Finally, we see that the majority of the migrated women are concentrated in some particular professions which are strongly categorized into the ethic of femininity and masculinity. For instance, care work-which includes all the work of the household: cooking, cleaning, shopping, washing, sewing, serving at table, ironing and maybe extended to cover gardening, chopping wood, washing car, feeding, walking and caring for pets, performing intimate services for their employers such as toweling them dry after a bath, care of children, disabled and elderly (Anderson, 1997:38). The ranking of all these women's job is often justified on the basis of women's identification with childbearing and domestic life (Acker 1990:152). The process of gender-globalization reinforces these activities for women in the global market rather than to make them free from this stereotypical sex segregation. However, the global masculine practice does not work only for sex segregation of jobs but also push women into a vulnerable position in many respects. Acker (2004:29) has stated that "in today's organizing

for globalization, we can see the emergence of a hegemonic hyper-masculinity that is aggressive, ruthless, competitive, and adversarial”.

2.4.3. PATRIARCHY AND WORK

In general patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women (Walby, 1990:20). Ebert (1988: 19) defines patriarchy “as the organization and division of all practices and signification in culture in terms of gender and the privileging of one gender over the other, giving males’ control over female sexuality, fertility, and labor”. Patriarchy as a concept is an essential tool in the analysis of gender relations (Walby, 1989: 213), which carries a freight of a historical ‘baggage’ (Hunnicut, 2009:554) and has a history of usage among earlier social scientists, such as Weber (1974) who used it to refer to a system of government in which men ruled societies through their position as heads of households. Prior to Weberian philosophy, patriarchy was used to mean ‘the rule of the father’ as it is featured in the Old Testament (LeGates, 2001:11-12). In the modern era patriarchy has become a major concern to almost all of the feminists’ trends because of its widespread and effective role in generating gender stratification, although they vary in their essentialization (Kandiyoti, 1998: 274). For instance, socialist feminists have mainly analyzed the relationship between patriarchy and class under capitalism, while radical feminists apply it to any form or instance of male domination (ibid, p.274). Thus ‘patriarchy’ as a concept is especially useful for theory building because the term evokes images of gender hierarchies, dominance, and power arrangements (Hunnicut, 2009:554).

Jonasdittor (1994:229) has stated that “the concept of marriage society should be tested as partial successor to patriarchy”. The viability of this heterosexual marriage institution, perpetuated in the kinship system, depends on patriarchal exercise-the primary site for the ideological construction of individuals as gendered subjects (Ebert, 1988:19) which is conflated with a patriarchal mode of production (Walby, 1989:221). The defining feature is the relations of production under which the work is performed (husband-wife, father-daughter) rather than the tasks which constitute the work (Delphy, 1984:95). Hartmann (1979:207) has stated that before capitalism a patriarchal system prevailed where men controlled

the labor of women and children in the family. In these relations of production the housewife is engaged in labor for her husband, who expropriates it and she is not rewarded with money for this labor, merely for maintenance (Walby, 1989:221). Thus patriarchy naturalizes sexual identity by producing the female subject as complemented and completed by her relation to a male partner and thereby continually reproducing women in a subordinate position (Ebert, 1988:19).

Capitalism is considered as the extension of this household mode of production, shifted from domestic to market economy closely linked with paid work-the second form of the patriarchal structure at the economic level (Walby, 1989:223). In the capitalist market economy the kinship relations and exchange of women characterizing previous patriarchal societies are replaced by new class relations and commodity exchange (Mitchel, 1974: 376-81). In the market economy men's superiority is maintained through sexual segregation of labor which resulted in a limitation of professions for women (i.e. care work) and lower wages in the labor market. Moreover, the male breadwinner model gives them the scope to escape from the burden of domestic chores but the female is confined in the household as before. Thus men become the full contender of the capitalist system. As Pateman (1988:131) has stated that the construction of the 'worker' presupposes that he is a man who has a woman, a (house) wife, to take care of his daily needs. Thus the functionality and continuity of capitalism is heavily dependent on patriarchy because the goal of this system is to accumulate capital and it cannot be achieved if patriarchal relations are not maintained or reconstructed (Mies, 1986: 38). In the same vein Hartmann (1981: 21-22) has commented that there was 'partnership' between the interests of capital and the interests of patriarchy in constructing modern forms of women's subordination. However, Walby (1990:21) has tried to give a complete overview of patriarchy which are exercised through a range of structures that include almost all of our social entities of working lives i.e. i) women's household labor is expropriated by their husband or cohabitantes; ii) within the economic area patriarchal relations are connected with paid work; iii) the state is patriarchal as well as being capitalist and racist; iv) male violence against women v) patriarchy creates compulsory heterosexuality; vi) the

domination through cultural institutions (i.e. religion, law, education and media). Thus patriarchy has long-standing and widespread effects in generating gender inequality.

2.4.4. FORMAL (PUBLIC) AND INFORMAL (PRIVATE) ASPECTS OF WORK

The public/private sphere divide has been critically analyzed by many feminist theorists, since the domestic sphere is positioned primarily as a women's space, and her access to the public sphere is sometimes seen exceptional, even in the twenty-first century (Mills, 2005:32). The public/private discourse is important to feminist analysis because of its strong correlation with other gender-taxonomic processes. Davidoff (1995:227) has stated that "a central platform of feminist critique and attempted revision of mainstream thought has focused on the construction and boundaries of classifications: of femininity and masculinity, women and men, woman and man. These classifications have been in turn, linked to the construction of other highly significant categories, the complicated-and slippery-notions of public and private. Although the main application of public/private sphere is used in delimiting the women's political participation, the gendered segregation of work is also an important consequence of this process.

Carole Pateman (1988) has studied classical theories of 'the social contract', which are widely influential and have laid the foundation for common sense understandings of western social and political order. These theories divide the spheres of civil society into the public and private domains. The boundary line between public and private domains has been drawn primarily on the basis of sexual difference. Women's political participation as well as political rights was marginalized within the notion of public and private domain. Women are located in the private domain, which is not seen as politically relevant (Yuval-Davis, 1997:2). Rebecca Grant (1991) has an interesting explanation of why women were located outside the relevant political domain. She claims that the theories of both Hobbes and Rousseau portray the transition from the imagined state of nature into orderly society exclusively in terms of what they both assume to be natural male characteristics—the aggressive nature of man (Hobbes) and capacity for reason in men (Rousseau). These classical theories meant that males were ideal for politics

and females irrelevant. As Connell (1995:65) expresses it: “public politics on almost any definition is men’s politics”. Thus women’s exclusion from political participation creates man’s political identity, because identity and alienation are strongly correlated (Zizek, 1989:24).

The political ideology of public/private sphere resulted in the distinction of work line between male and female. Perrons (2004:241) has stated that private property was considered sacrosanct, and women and children were considered to be male property. They were largely confined to the home or the private sphere where gender inequality was the norm. Historically, therefore, the state developed as a patriarchal state, which for the most part concerned itself with public issues such as international affairs and the reproduction of the economy. This process led to the division of domestic service and market economy. As Gail Lewis (Lewis, 2000:32) comments that “the social’ came to occupy the space between private families living in the households and public domain of the market and the state”.

CHAPTER-3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3. RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.1.1. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Method is a way to show the structure of a study. There should be a dialectic relationship between the research question and the method since they are dependent of each other (Alveson & Deetz, 2000). According to Gubrium and Holstein, “Method implies a way of knowing as much as techniques for gathering information” (1997:5), while methodology refers to an overall strategy to study research topics. It includes the whole process of methods of data collection and data analysis and governs which methods are used and how they are used (Silverman, 2005:109). In fact, which method that is to be used in a study depends on what will be studied, but primarily on the research questions.

My interest in this study is to explore and understand respondents’ own experience and subjective reality. This study is qualitative in nature and non-experimental. As Denzin & Lincoln, (1994:2) states, qualitative research is a diverse enterprise and its imperative to understand the subjective views of the respondents (Mertens, 1998), in accordance with the ethno-methodological theoretical approach with interpretive analysis (e.g. participant observation, interviewing, role-playing, in-depth interview, focus group discussion etc.). Denzin and Lincoln further states that qualitative research has multi-methods in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (cited in Creswell (1998:15). The ontological position is constructionism, which means that the researcher presents a particular version of social reality, instead of presenting a version which can be regarded as definitive (Bryman, 2004). The aim of this qualitative research is to provide a picture of the current scene that can be used for understanding or reflecting and exploring how gender relations affect and are affected by the global labor market in general and how Bangladeshi immigrants’ women incorporate themselves in the UK’s labor market in particular, in terms of gender relations.

I have also used some secondary analysis of recent censuses and social surveys, as well as data from the statistical yearbooks and other public sources, such as series of macro-level demographic and economic indicators, time series, micro-level data from specific surveys, and register data, to get an overview of gender aspects of Bangladeshi female immigrants in their migration. Among the available sources I use documents and their analysis as a complimentary strategy to other methods (Flick, 2006:246). For this purpose I have used mainly some comparisons of longitudinal data (in case of migration outflow between male and female of Bangladesh), a method which is non-obtrusive, not implying the interaction between the researcher and the subject (Margeian, 2000), non-interactive and mainly quantitative.

3.1.2. EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: FEMINIST STANDPOINT THEORY

From the view point of epistemological background this study is dominated by feminist standpoint theories. Feminist theories of social science is characterized by a critique of existing social science theory and are often questioning its 'objectivity' in general and "ability of these social sciences to account for their reality" (Wallerstein, 1995:51) in particular. The feminist lens often goes with underpinning the question, "*how is it possible to get the 'truth/objective knowledge' from a theory* (including feminist theory, as cited by Haraway (1988: 575) *that stands without a clear standpoint?* As a result, a new wave in feminist philosophy, '*the feminist standpoint theory*', has emerged during 1970s-1980s, chiefly led by Sandra Harding, Patricia Hill Collins, Nancy Hartsock, Susanne Hekman and Dorothy Smith.

Hekman (1997:341-342) in her article "*Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited*" has featured the feminist standpoint theory through the following stages: 1) Nancy Hartsock (1983) in "Money, Sex, and Power" criticized positivism and tried to "define the nature of the truth claims that feminists advance and to provide a methodological grounding that will validate those claims"; 2) Dorothy Smith unfolded the sociological method from the "standpoint of women" ; 3) Sandra Harding formalized the scientific grounds for standpoint theory; 4) black feminist standpoint was articulated by Patricia Hill Collins; 5) in

late 1980s and early 1990s the criticisms of standpoint theory mounted; 6) in the late 1990s feminist standpoint theory occupies a much less prominent position (i.e. discredit of Marxism, opposing postmodernism and post-structuralism).

The feminist standpoint theory “expresses female experience at a particular time and place, located within a particular set of social relations” (Hartsok, 1983b:303). Hartsok distinguished between the truth of women and men, but tried to avoid the idea of multiplicity and hence relativity of truth (Hekman, 1997:343). She pointed out that material life structures our understanding and stressed that the dominant group in society decides what is ‘real’. From a common ground it is impossible to understand the women situation. As this study is about women realities that they experience in their lives, feminist standpoint theory will help in understanding the phenomena. Because the special position of women gives them a special epistemological standpoint which can construct a view of the world that is more reliable and less distorted. On the other hand, Harding argues not for epistemological but sociological relativism: some accounts of the world are better than others. But there are different accounts of the world rooted in distinct and objective positions. As a response Haraway argues that objectivity from a feminist approach should instead be perceived as “situated knowledge”. With situated knowledge is meant that all research is done by someone, with a specific perspective, in a specific historical and social context. Hence, objectivity from this approach is not about its neutrality but how to handle the context and the perspective from which the research is derived from (Haraway 1988: 581, 583). Collins (1997:377) advocacy for standpoint theory indicates the problematic power relations. She says that “standpoint theory argues that groups who share common placement in hierarchical power relations also share common experiences in such power relations. Such shared angles of vision lead those in similar social locations to be predisposed to interpret these experiences in a comparable fashion”. Thus feminist standpoint theory is very imperative in locating as well as understanding women’s position more actively and accurately.

3.1.3. CASE STUDY AS A QUALITATIVE METHOD

In one sense all research is a case study: there is always some unit, or set of units, in relation to which data are collected and/or analyzed (Gomm et. al: 2007:2). Case study is the most common and useful method for qualitative enquires, though there has been considerable debate on the use of case studies in academic research⁶. However, case studies can capture the process under study in a detailed and exact way (Flick, 2006: 134). Merriam (1998: xiii) states that “a qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit”. There are three options for how we can use case study method: to test a hypothesis or theory, to develop a new theory, and to describe, explore and/or explain a particular situation for its own sake (Gomm et al., 2007). The general point of departure of this study is to understand gender inequality on the global labour market, focusing on Bangladeshi immigrants’ women. I decided to use a case study method for this study as case studies are used by researchers to explore a single entity, process, or phenomenon (Creswell, 2003:15).

In this study Bangladeshi immigrants’ women is a single phenomenon, through which gender inequality on the global labor market could be understandable. Case study is effective to investigate an issue in-depth and provide an explanation that can reveal the complexity and subtlety of real life situations. In this study I have used a single case to ground theoretical debates in the material practices of everyday life of Bangladeshi immigrants’ women living in London. For this I have studied the case inductively, beginning with the case study and then examining some of the issues which emerge from it. The case may thus be seen holistically, as a microcosm of social life as Connolly (1998:124) has suggested that detailed description can ‘uncover the meaning’ people ‘attach’ to their own and others’ behavior, and thereby ‘begin to unravel the causes of individual’s or a group’s behavior’.

There has, in academic circles, been a long-standing debate concerning the ability/appropriateness to generalize case study findings (Hammersley et al.,

⁶ See more in Hamel, Jacques (1992) ; Stake, Robert (1994)

2007: 234). But the case selected for study need not claim to be statistically representative of all other cases in the study because when the case is described properly, readers can make naturalistic generalizations between similar cases (Stake, 1995: 23). “Naturalistic generalization” is the main strength of the case study method whereby generalization of the analysis primarily lies with the reader (Lincoln and Guba. 2007: 36). The Bangladeshi immigrants’ women about whom this paper is written was not representative of all other cases. But some of the issues highlighted through the use of the case are, however, analytically generalizable as they relate back to broader theory. Thus I have used this single case to analyse some of the factors of gender inequalities that face Bangladeshi immigrants’ women that are related to gender inequality in the global labour market.

3.2. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

3.2.1. CONSTITUTING THE FIELD

Basically the research aims and questions shape the selection of place and a people or program to study. I have selected London as the location of my fieldwork for this research. There are Bangladeshi immigrants in other parts of United Kingdom, apart from London, but I have chosen this location because of two fundamental reasons. Firstly, Bangladeshi immigrant is the most geographically concentrated of all ethnic groups in London, living in a single borough, Tower Hamlets (Piggott 2004). The borough has been termed by Eade and Garbin (2005) as the ‘center’ of the UK Bangladeshi population, comprising 22.8% of the Bangladeshi population of UK and 33 % of the total population of Tower Hamlets. Secondly, Bangladeshi immigrants are settled well in London in terms of business, employment and other economic activities. Because of these advantages, this geographical location helped me to be integrated in this research. As Michael Stein states, the role of the geographical space in which the study is conducted is crucial to the way interactions between the informants/the people studied and me as a researcher play out (Stein, 2006:60-61).

3.2.2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Before entering into the field and conducting interviews, an interview guide is necessary (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Preparing and framing the interview carefully is an important component in the research process (Kvale, 1997:123-126). I wanted to get as much useful information from my interviews as possible, and therefore I constructed an interview guide to prepare questions which would cover the themes I wanted to discuss under the interviews (see appendix). In my interview guide, I first formulated questions about the interviewee's background and education, and then I formulated questions which involved four themes: about their migrations process, exposure to labor market, integration between work and family lives and exposure to the host country. I deliberately formulated the questions by first asking, for instance, *what* were the reasons for their migrations to UK, *how* they enter into the labor market, *what* are their main responsibilities of at work, *what* are the difficulties they face in their job in terms of gender relations, *how* they cope with the work and family responsibilities, *what* are the limits and possibilities in their working lives, *how* they deal with complexities they face in their every day's lives, *what* incentives they receive from the host country in getting the job opportunities and *what* are the differences between the native women and immigrants women in the UK labor market.

3.2.3. SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS: SAMPLING CRITERION

The series of interviews were conducted during a period of field research in London for around three weeks, from March 5 to March 21, 2012. Regarding selections of respondents in qualitative interviews, it is important to stress that representativity is neither achievable nor desired. Understanding of respondents and communities within a field is not possible to combine with the large number that generalization demands, for example. Rather, a wide selection of informants is wanted (Small, 2009:27). The persons of interest in this study were 'Bangladeshi immigrants' women living in London. This means that respondents were selected from Bangladeshi female immigrants of all sorts of categories but involved in jobs (as the study is about women's labor market): employed, old,

young, highly trained, skilled, unskilled, part-time, full time etc., from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. In fact, finding people to interview is always a tricky project. My main method was hence a combination of the snowball method and convenience sample (Patton,1987:56) according to ‘informational consideration’ (Mikkelsen,1995:193). Thus the sampling method was theoretical, but the strategy involves “select (ing) respondents according to concrete criteria concerning their content instead of using abstract methodological criteria” (Flick 2006: 128). In consideration of the above criterion a total of forty respondents were selected for this study. Respondents’ age ranges between 23 years to 55 years. Among them one was divorced, one was widow, two was unmarried, and rest of the all respondents was married.

3.4. ENTERING INTO THE FIELD

Before entering into the field I made some initial contact with some known persons (a colleague and students) who live in London. My position in relation to the field was marked both by my access to it and by my personal and professional background. Because of geographical proximity of the respondents I confirmed my accommodation at Whitechapel, as I decided earlier to delimit my field area basically to East London. First I met with some of my previously known persons (one of my colleagues, my two ex-student, but they were not included in the respondents). On the day after my arrival to London they introduced me to some key informants (3 males and 1 female they were not also included in the respondents). I have spent considerable time with the key informants explaining the objectives I had with the research and its framework as well as getting their impressions about the process on how to make the interviews with Bangladeshi immigrants women. Regarding my personal background, being a Bangladeshi I managed the language and most of the cultural codes used by the participants. These aspects greatly facilitated the dialogue. Though I did not belong to the same social class as the participants, due to my level of education, profession, socioeconomic situation and locality of our home country, it was not very problematic as we share more or less the same cultural tradition with our ethnicity as Bangladeshi.

3.5. PERFORMING THE INTERVIEWS

The interview method was at the heart of data collection in order to get holistic understanding of the respondents' views and experiences. We interpret the world subjectively, individual attributions to meanings are made, and different values shape our norms. Within feminist epistemology, knowledge is generated and validated through individual experience and my field work has indeed been guided by the act of doing and of being there and letting the immigrants' women speak, something that permeates my experiences. Crewe and Maruna (2006:122) states that "in order to understand why people behave the way they do, it is important to understand the personal myths by which they live". By interviewing Bangladeshi female immigrants', their representations of the phenomenon of gender relations in their working lives have been disclosed and a better understanding of the practice is presented. Furthermore, the interview is "focused on the subjective experiences of the person" and leads to "*their definition of the situation*" (Kendall, 1990: 3), mostly in terms of work and gender relations. The depth interview, as one kind of interview, offers the researcher information of deepness and complexity for further theoretical analysis of how individuals see a special theme (i.e. working life, gender relations, post-immigrants settlement complexities etc.).

Following a semi-structured form of interview technique the interviews involved a mixture of 'open questions' and 'theory-driven' questions⁷. The open questions allowed respondents to present their subjective perceptions, views and conceptualization (Becker: 1996:321), while theory driven questions provided the structure to express their views in contrast or as a complement to theoretical assumptions (Flick 2006: 159). The other reason that I used a semi-structured interview was to be able to control the conversation to get answers to my questions but at the same time get a deep insight. The questionnaire that I used was fulfilling the task of a guideline, so that the conversation would stick to the research theme. To begin with I conducted semi-structured interviews and

⁷ See the Appendix :Interview Guide

collected life histories some of them in form of in-depth interview lasting between one and one and a half hour. The interviews enabled me to receive answers to my questions while at the same time offering interaction with the interview person which could lead to additional questions previously not reflected upon. The interview method also made it possible to validate the gathered information as well as minimizing misinterpretations through a dialogue (Patton, 1987: 11).

3.6. ANALYSIS OF DATA

The goal of the interviews was to get a greater understanding of Bangladeshi female immigrants' personal, professional and domestic lives in terms of gender relations, especially in a foreign cultural, linguistic and religious milieu. My intention was to communicate as much as possible of the women's versions of reality, as they have been expressed in the interviews. I use the transcriptions conventions suggested by Potter (1996: 233-234) to get part of the shades of the oral expression in written language. The objective of the research project was disclosed to all informants before the interview was conducted. The *unit of analysis* in this study was individual women, their families/partners and work organizations. Most of the interviews were recorded. Interviews were performed both in English and Bengali depending on the respondents' language skills. I have transcribed the interviews thoroughly using my digital recordings. I chose to transcribe the whole interviews word by word, instead of choosing the parts I found to be most interesting, to avoid the risk losing any relevant information. The interviews were not edited, only translated into English. I made, however, a few footnotes in certain cases, which I thought could be relevant when I would begin to analyze the material. Most of the interviewees requested specifically that their anonymity be guaranteed. I was aware of the fact that I had to conceal the interview persons' identity. As Kvale (1997) points out, the researcher must handle the interview material in a confidential way and therefore it is important to hide the interviewees' identity during the transcription process. These transcripts were then the basis for my work and analysis of my empirical material.

The data collected from the interviews have been used exclusively as supplementary examples to the larger theoretical argument and the relevant

secondary sources published by international and national bodies. When I was writing my presentation of the empirical results I decided not to present each and every interview, rather I aimed at finding as many strategies as possible and present them as mutual strategies for the whole group under a specific subheading. Therefore, I have presented similar answers within a certain category as a whole. However, I have followed three different stages (Kvale, 1997) in my interpretations of the empirical data. The first one involves presenting the way the interview persons understand their own reality (i.e. describing how they see and interpret their world). The second stage involves presenting how I, as an interviewer and researcher, understand and interpret what the interview subjects tell me. These two stages are partly twined together and presented in my chapter on empirical results. The third stage is to be found in my chapter on analysis, where I analyze how empirical data and interpretations agree with earlier research on related matters.

3.7. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity and reliability should be taken into consideration to maintain the good quality in research. During or after a study, qualitative researchers ask, “Did we get it right (Stake, 1995:107)?” or “Did we publish a ‘wrong’ or inaccurate account (Thomas, 1993:39)?”. To maintain reliability I have tried to adopt Flicks notion of reliability in this study, that is, during the interview I have always asked for consent and provided the copies they wanted. I have made sure to be relevant to my research questions and tried not to make any interference. Thus I left no stone unturned to be precise to avoid i) to see a phenomenon that *does not* exist, ii) to miss noting a phenomenon that *does* exist, iii) and to ask the wrong questions (Flick, 2006:371). I therefore consider the authenticity to be good. On the other hand, validity of the research depends upon the accuracy of the findings. Merriam (1998) states that, validity in a qualitative study concerns whether the result is credible to the person that was the origin of the data. To maintain the good validity of the research I have tried constantly to reflect on the research problem taken for this study (Patel & Davidson, 2003) and have tried to make the findings interesting so that these can enrich the academic field with something

new that has not been captured by earlier models, theories or perspectives, or the results can capture already identified phenomenon in a better or more interesting way than has been done in earlier theory.

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

In fact, it is difficult to make the research value-free in social science, As Haraway (1988) comments, no research is 'objective' and 'bias-free'. At the time of asking question or listening in the interview sessions I have tried to be bias-free so that this does not mirror my previous knowledge and prejudices. I have given importance to the rapport-building with the interviewees to make a fair and free environment, keeping a distance to my own positionality (Merriam, 1988) and previous professional and academic background. Selecting the interview places was basically according to the respondents' choice without any pressure, as issues of place affect social research throughout the process (Stein, 2006:59). Upon the interviewees consent the interviews were recorded and in the original text their anonymity was granted as they requested it. The literature reviews (reports, articles and books) and other secondary data were used according to authentic sources and are listed in the reference list.

3.9. LIMITATIONS AND POPOSAL FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite some strengths of this research in broadening knowledge about gender inequality on the global labor market in general and of Bangladeshi immigrant women in particular, the research does have some limitations which might be addressed in future research. **First**, I acknowledge that my research area was limited to only one city of UK and it only includes a small number of respondents, so I could not explore in detail the complexity of gender disparities. Future research undertaken with a larger sample size and in other areas would be more insightful; allowing for analysis of spatial differences of UK's labor market. **Second**, the sample taken for this study may reflect a bias as it includes only women. Future research might examine both partners' perspectives and consider how challenges fall differently on women in accessing equal opportunities in the labor market. **Third**, the length of the field study was around three weeks only, due to the constraints of time and budget, which was not sufficient to explore the

problem in detail. I find it important and interesting to conduct a longer period of field study on the issue which might be able to provide a holistic picture of the similar problems in general.

CHAPTER-4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

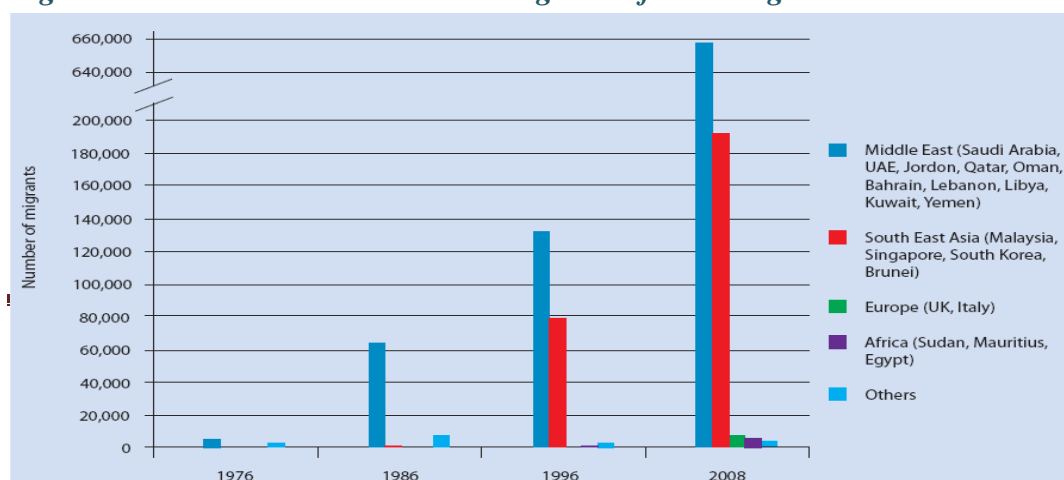
4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4. 1. BACKGROUND STUDY

4.1.1. COUNTRY PROFILE AND GENERAL TREND OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Located in South Asia, Bangladesh is a small deltaic country with a total land area of 145,035 sq.km (Banglapedia, 2006). Currently it is the eighth largest populated country in the world (UNFPA, 2011) with a total population of 142 million (BBS, 2011). Given its large population (8th in the world) in comparison to its area (90th in the world), migration beyond national border has long been an important livelihood strategy for the people of Bangladesh (ILO, 2011:8). Migration and choice of destinations also has increased in recent decades. As (Islam, 1995:360) has stated, apart from two traditional destinations of Bangladeshi migrants, the Middle East and the UK, the following receiving countries have also recently become popular: the USA, Canada, Japan, Germany, Italy, South Korea, Taiwan, Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, France, Sweden, Pakistan and India. However, the choice of destination and levels of benefits and risks vary significantly, according to the economic and social power of the migrants (Siddiqui, 2003:1). Currently two types of voluntary international migration occur from Bangladesh. One takes place mostly to the industrialized West and the other to Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian countries. Although there are different kinds of voluntary migration to the industrialized West, they are usually perceived as long-term or permanent emigration, while migration to the Middle East and Southeast Asia is defined as short-term contract migration (ibid, p. 1). The following figure shows the destination of migration that took place from Bangladesh from 1976 to 2008.

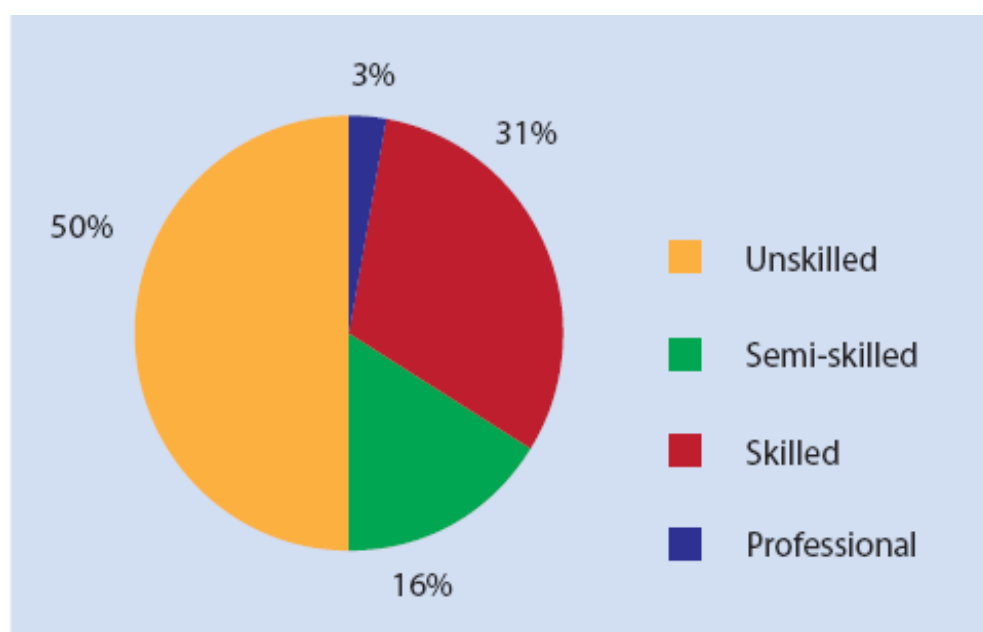
Figure 1: Destination Countries and Migration from Bangladesh



Source: BMET, 2009

Though international labor migration varies in terms of occupations, Bangladeshi migrants are limited to some certain categories. According to BMET, labor migration from Bangladesh is broadly classified into four categories: professional, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled. *Professional workers* include doctors, engineers, teachers, and nurses; *skilled workers* include manufacturing or garment workers, drivers, computer operators, and electricians; *semiskilled workers* include tailors and masons; and *unskilled workers* include housemaids, agricultural workers, hotel workers, and such basic laborers as cleaners, cart loaders, and cotton pickers (BMET, 2009 cited in UNDP, 2010:27)⁸. The following figure presents an overview of migrants according to their occupation.

Figure 2: Overseas Employment by Category from 1976 to 2009



Source: BMET, 2009

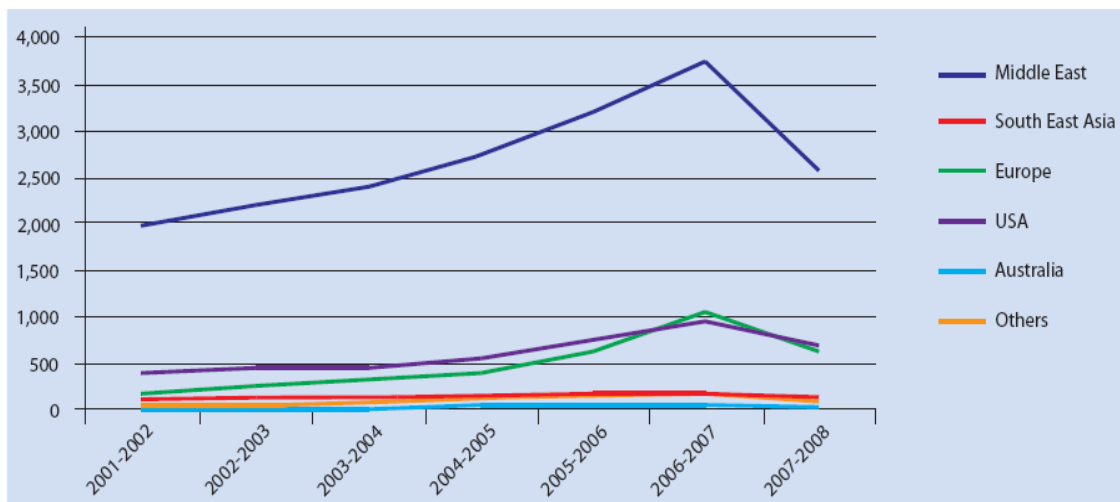
4.1.2. MIGRATION: AN OVERVIEW FROM A GENDER LENS

According to an estimate of the state-run Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET, 2009), the cumulative number of migrant workers leaving the country legally for overseas jobs from 1976 to 2009 is 6,741,187. Official data reveals that most Bangladeshi migrants are men (UNDP and OKUP, 2009:4).At

⁸ UNDP (2010:27) report on 'Regional HIV, Health and Development Programme for Asia and the Pacific', published by UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, Bangkok

the very outset of its inception during the 1980s the government of Bangladesh boosted the migration of men to the Middle East and Southeast Asian countries, for work in construction and low-wage service sectors, mainly for the purpose to find employment for surplus agricultural labor (Pyle, and Ward, 2003:475). This was also a follow-up to join the labor migration originating from South Asia (India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan), East Asia (Korea) and Southeast Asia (Philippines, Thailand) to the oil-rich Gulf countries in the 1970s (Asis,2003:2). This transnational labor market was dominated by male migrants, who were in demand for the many infrastructure projects launched by the Gulf countries. During this period, female migration was only 15% of some 146,400 Asian workers who took up overseas employment; their share increased to 27% in the next decade (Abella, 1995:241).The representation of Bangladeshi female migrants in the international labor market is the thinnest among all the countries in Asia, although the share of women in the total economically active population is 39 percent (Ullah, 2007:4). Reports show that until 2004 only 1 percent of Bangladeshi labor migrants were female, which has increased to 5 percent in 2009 (CEDAW, 2010). The following figure gives an overview of the volume and destinations of Bangladeshi female immigrants' from 2001 to 2007.

Figure 3: Female Migration by Destination from 2001 to 2008



Source: BMET, 2009

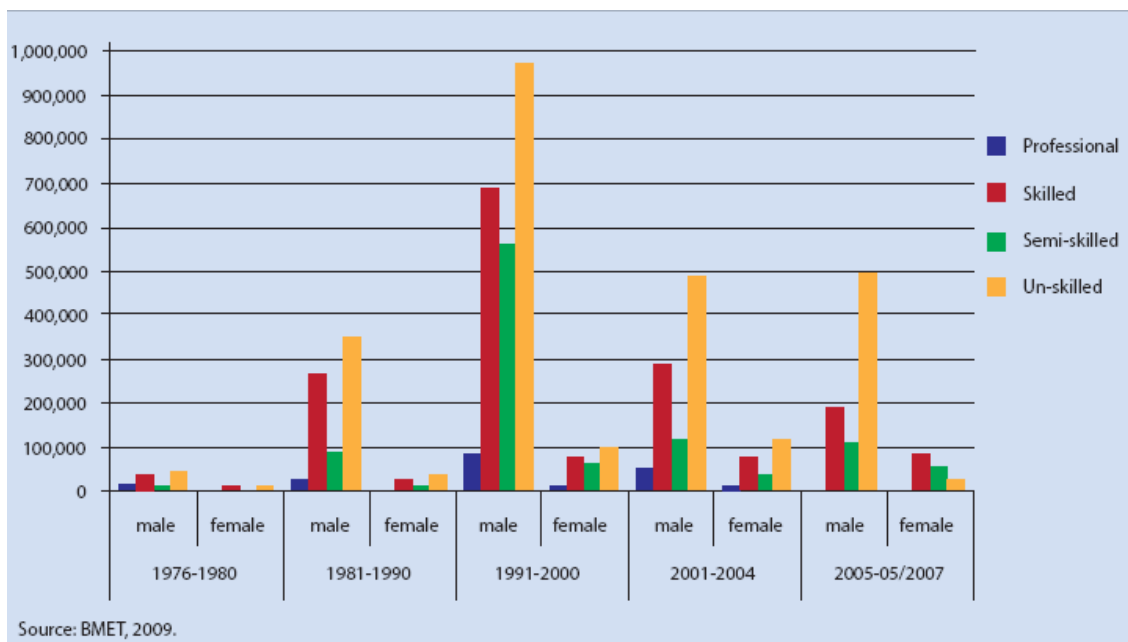
Unlike other labor surplus countries, the incorporation of women from Bangladesh into the global market was not equal to men mainly because of its

patriarchal nature, where male is assumed to be the principal breadwinner of the family. Bangladeshi female emigrants lag behind because of two main major factors: policy and social factors. Current policies in Bangladesh do not account underlying social causes of gender inequity and inequality (CEDAW, 2010). The entrenched patriarchy of Bangladeshi society constraints employment choices, stigmatize female migrants and serves to place women in precarious and exploitative situations throughout the migration process. Moreover, training facilities and curricula established by the Government of Bangladesh are inadequate in equipping women for creating a niche in the overseas labor market (CEDAW, 2010). The factors of Bangladeshi female's underrepresentation in international labor migration are also revealed by other reports. Siddiqui (2001), for instance, in her research found that inappropriate state policies, legislation and administrative restrictions have led women's labor migration to be inhibited by patriarchal values concerned by protecting the women and maintain their dignity (cited in Ullah, 2007:10). Moreover, the government of Bangladesh repeatedly banned and restricted female labor migration from 1981 to 2003 (UNDP-OKUP, 2009:8) because of their vulnerability to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse in their work environment, mainly low skilled, unrecognized, care-centered jobs in the service sector, such as domestic work or entertainment etc.(UNDP, 2010:7). But this ban and restrictions could neither stop the female migration nor their vulnerability to abuse; it rather increased the clandestine and undocumented female migration to a large extent (IOM, 2008). The economic vulnerability often pushes them to take the decision for overseas jobs, although abuses including gender discrimination are their ultimate fate. In contrast to official statistics, a large number of women migrate from Bangladesh to work abroad, but estimates on the actual number vary from 10 times to as much as 50 times the official figures (IOM, 2008, INSTRAW, 2003 in UNDP,2010).

Being a predominantly Muslim (87%) country (Ellicson, 2000:198) along with its patriarchal nature of society, the incorporation of women into the international labor market has been neglected through decades. As the male partner is assumed to be the head of the household and the principal breadwinner of the family and

religious restrictions for their presence in the public sphere (Ullah, 2007:10), females are restricted in fostering qualities and skills. The consequence is that women are lagging behind in entering into the labor market, comprising 9.7% women and 93.3% men directly engaged in the national labor market (BBS, 2009:5)⁹, which also accentuate their low representation in the international labor market. The following figure presents the under-representation of female migrants in the international labor market in terms of skills between male and female.

Figure 4: Overseas Employment by Category and Gender from 1976 to May, 2007



Another important factor associated to the lower number of female labor migration is due to the reckless practices of human trafficking. According to a report published by UNDP (2010:29) Bangladesh is a major source country for women, young women, and children trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation, bonded labor, and other forms of involuntary servitude. The women and children of Bangladesh are severely affected by human trafficking which take place through 20 main points in 16 south/south-western districts of Bangladesh near the Indian border, where the trade and main trafficking route is the Dhaka-Mumbai-Karachi-Dubai route (Chowdhury, 2004:8). An average of at least 70-80

⁹ See more in 'Gender Statistics of Bangladesh 2008', published by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), May 2009

women and children are trafficked daily from Bangladesh to other countries (ibid, p.8). Many NGOs' reports reveal that women's vulnerability to trafficking schemes occurs mainly due to poverty and gender-based discrimination in social protection, where males play the pivotal role to mislead them by giving false promises (promises of better life/jobs, and marriage proposal or fake marriage). Kidnapping and outright trade (sale done by people known to the victims such as relatives) is common (ibid, p. 9).

4.1.3. BANGLADESHI MIGRATION TO UK: AN OVERALL BACKGROUND

Today Bangladeshis is considered as one of the largest immigrant communities in the United Kingdom with around 500000 Bangladeshi immigrants which equates 0.27% of the British population (BBC, 2005 cited in Alexander et al. 2010:1). Bangladeshis migration to United Kingdom started from Britain's colonial expansion into the Indian subcontinent in the early 17th century (Islam, 1989:107). At the very outset of its colonial rule lots of *lascars*¹⁰ (seaman), a majority from a particular district of Bangladesh, *Sylhet*¹¹. They got the opportunity to work for the British bound ships of the East India Company, and later on started to settle in the United Kingdom, aspiring for a better future (Adams, 1987). Migration to Britain is an overwhelmingly Sylheti phenomenon (Gardner, 1999:489) and this particular district comprise 90 percent of the total Bangladeshi immigrants in the UK (Islam, 1995: 360). This migration to UK was accelerated, following a chain migration¹² from the aforesaid district (Sylhet) during both the 1st and 2nd world wars and this trend continued (Eade and Garbin, 2005). Most of them have settled in major industrial cities and towns i.e. Birmingham, Luton, Bedford, Oldham, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool, Sunderland and Tower Hamlets, particularly around Spitalfields and Brick Lane (Gillan, 2002-07-21). But noticeably, Bangladeshi immigrant communities are overwhelmingly

¹⁰ Lascar is a Bengali word is used to denote the labor who works in the ship for various purposes (loading and unloading materials of the ship help in cooking etc.)

¹¹ Sylhet is a division and a major city of Bangladesh situated in the northeastern regions of the country.

¹² Chain migration refers to the process by which individuals are able to immigrate and gain residence by virtue of kinship links to previous adult immigrants with citizenship status.

concentrated in London, 55% of them living in the greater London area and 45% in the rest of the UK (Kyambi, 2005: 76).

This outflow of Bangladeshi immigrants to the UK was the result of their success in the catering business, other petty businesses (i.e. grocery), services and factory work that started at the very outset of their settlement in the UK (Gardner, 1999:489-91). Subsequently, the period from the early 1970s to the 1980s, a further shift in migration patterns occurred, with a move towards family reunification and the formation of more permanent communities in the UK. From this period a dramatic re-gendering of Bangladeshi migration patterns also took place. As Kabir (2000) has stated, during the 1960s the ratio of men to women was estimated as being 40:1, and by the end of the 1980s the ratio was 2:1 (see also other sources)¹³. Though there is a decrease in the recent rate of migration to UK from Bangladesh, the young age of the Bangladeshi community and the continued practice of marrying ‘back home’, means that large numbers will be reaching marriage age and will be reflected in an increased rate of migration from Bangladesh to UK for days to come (Samad & Eade, 2002).

4.2. FEMALE MIGRATION TO UK: HOW DOES IT AFFECT GENDER RELATIONS

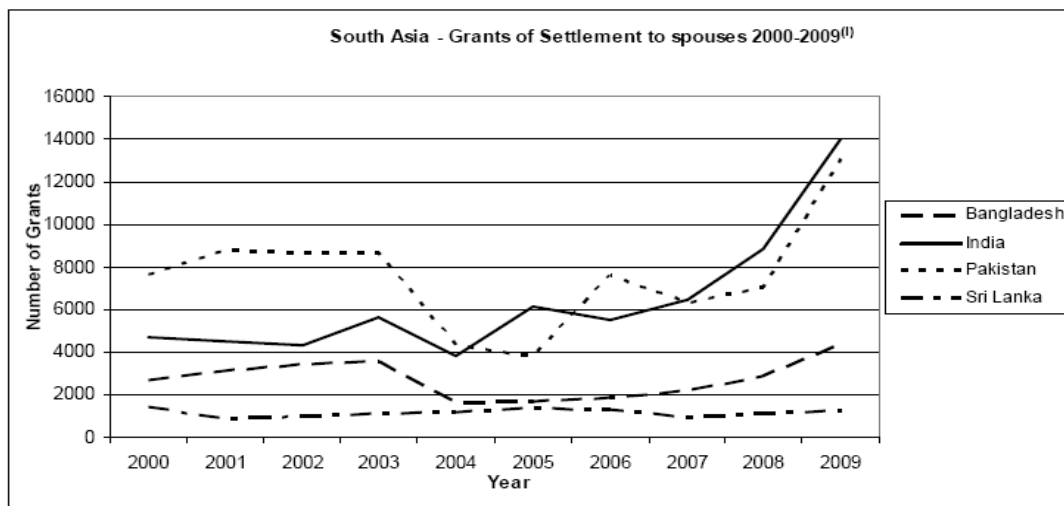
A historically Bangladeshi immigrant in UK has been primarily male, which also has meant that the situation of female immigrants has not been addressed, and under-researched (Alexander et al., 2000:17). The little research¹⁴ that has been done on Bangladeshi diaspora in UK shows that the reasons for male migrants was to search better economic prospects while the reason for female migrants was mainly for family reunification and formation of a household in their post-settlement period to the host country. In most cases female immigrants are considered as their male dependents. As Gardner (2002) has stated, Bangladeshi women are viewed officially as ‘dependents’ and this implies passivity, which is reflected in their own and their husbands’ accounts. The family/spousal migration

¹³ The 2001 census shows almost parity (102:100) in the age range 15-29 (although the ratio is more disparate in the 30-44 age range (150:100) (Samad & Eade 2002).

¹⁴ See more in Alexander et. al (2010), Begum (2008), Gardner (2002), Samad and Eade (2002), Kabeer (2000), Desai (1999), Keith (1995 & 2005) and Khanum (2001 &1994).

trend is extensive for Bangladeshi immigrants in UK, scoring fourth place among both South Asian and other countries, as the figures from UK home office reveals.

Figure 5: Bangladeshi spousal migration to UK from 2000 to 2009



⁽¹⁾ Initial figures for 2009, with final release due August 2011.

Source: Home office (2011:8) on Marriage-related migration to the UK

From a broader theoretical perspective this influx of Bangladeshi females can be defined within the push factor, while for the male both push and pull factors. Addressing their position in a relation, migration theories are situated mainly within a reductive economic framework represented by classical and neoclassical economic theories (Brettell and Holifield, 2000:9). For instance, rational choices regarding economic returns are made only by the male partners, while the female is dependent on the male partner and the economic factors are not fundamental for their migration. The underlying causes for female migration was thus ignored by these theoretical approaches, as they have been following the ‘myth’ that it is solely a male issue (Green, 1995:33), where the reasons for women migration were analyzed on the basis of their male partner (Kofman et al. 2001:22-23).

Najmun, age 33, married: In most cases my position, status and opportunity vary from my husband. I became UK immigrant through my husband after marrying him. I can't take any decision independently. But I think my contribution in the family is not less than him. He just works outside, while I work both in the outside and also I manage most of the household activities. (March 9, 2012).

Najmun's experience is not uncommon among other respondents. 85 percent (34) of the respondents said that 'family reunion' was the reason to become an immigrant to the UK. More or less all of them said that their position in the labor market as well as in the family are considered as a position of dependency, which marginalize them in the labor market as less qualified, less stable, less suitable and less competent. Though 'family reunification' is an important mode of entry, migrant women often enter as wives and dependents of men who sponsor their admission, but as a dependent category immigrant women face a gender-stratified labor market where they frequently find themselves in the bottom strata (Piper, 2005:2). As another women state:

Monika, age 36, married: I never thought to be dependent on my life partner for any reason, nor did I want to marry someone who settled in other county. But as he (husband) was my cousin, my parent basically my father, compelled me to marry him with the condition to settle with him in UK. Because their idea is that to be a citizen of UK is a big opportunity regarding economic and social status. But after living here for the last 13 years I am really exhausted as I am not independent for any reason, both at home and outside. When I differ with them for any reason I am desperate, I am bad. As a woman I need to comply with certain customs. (March 14, 2012).

Monika's experience emphasizes her pre-migration situation. These empirical evidences reveal that Bangladeshi female migration to UK is not simply guided by economic factors; rather it involves many other non-economic factors, i.e. power, kinship, marriage, dependency etc. A large number of such marriages take place between cousins, usually within the patrilineage among the Bangladeshi UK immigrants (Gardner, 1999:498). Here migration decisions for females are taken by their male counterpart (husband, father), which is permeated by male dominance in the practice of power, compulsory heterosexuality (marriage) and the survival of the system (kinship). On the one hand Britain is used as a source of material power (Gardner, 1999:496), and on the other hand women are used as a means to gain this opportunity and in either case woman are victims of unequal power exercise, patriarchal dominance etc. The settlement of Bangladeshi female migrants in UK is featured within the discourse of the patriarchal nature of their home country, where male is assumed as the principal gatekeeper for both maintenance and decision making in pre-migration and post-migration. As Alexander et al. (2010:17) has stated: "This is reflected in a very gendered

narrative form when discussing migration, with men representing themselves as active and mobile providers, focusing on issues of work and the ability to overcome obstacles, and a nostalgic account of early days of settlement, and women, by contrast, focusing on their familial roles-as wife, mother and daughters-in-law-and the performance of culturally reproduced notions of femininity”.

However, the above discussion shows that the mainstream theories fail to address gender issues adequately regarding migration/immigration processes, as well as of the labor market. Considerations of feminist theories are very imperative in exploring and understanding gender inequalities on the global labor market more effectively and adequately.

4.3. SEX SEGREGATION OF LABOR: THE MAJOR OBSTACLE FOR WOMEN

Although global trends in job segregation by sex are a major concern, less attention has been given by researchers to the effects of the economic reforms and growth over the last twenty-five years (Ball, 2008:54). But the role allocation by sex provides clear basis for distributing tasks which might otherwise be difficult to allocate (Holter, 1970:213–214). The concentration of women and men in different jobs has led to a high degree of gender segregation in the labor market (Reskin and Hartmen, 1986:1). On an average Bangladeshi immigrant women participation in UK labor market is low compared to both native women and other ethnic groups. Research conducted by Communities and Local Government (2009:33) shows that while employment rates for women have been gradually rising in all ethnic groups over previous decades, the employment rate gap between Pakistani and Bangladeshi women and white women has remained static. Another study shows that Bangladeshi women have the highest unemployment (24%) among all ethnic groups and six times higher than that of white women (4%) (Alexander, et al., 2010:5). In the following sections I will try to deepen understanding of the processes that give rise to sex segregation in their post-settlement labor market in UK, and to assess the aspects of sex segregation that are considered as obstacles in their working lives. With the help of interviews I have made an attempt to shed the light on various causes of sex segregation in the

workplace for Bangladeshi immigrants' women, to understand its extent, future direction and persistence.

4.3.1. FREEDOM/LIMITATION IN THE CHOICE OF WORK: AN ENDLESS NIGHTMARE

In general, for Bangladeshi immigrants in London, despite some increasing similarities in women's and men's work lives, significant areas of difference remain-in particular regarding earnings and occupations which are the direct result of sex segregation in the labor market. The overall findings demonstrate that the majority of women interviewed work in a small number of occupations in which the workers are predominantly women. Men work primarily in occupations that are predominantly male, although the number of occupations is larger and more dynamic. An explorative question was asked to all respondents: What are the most common problems that they perceive in the labor market? Some of the respondents' answers are given here below as extracts.

Rima, age 33, married: It seems to me gender discrimination of UK's labor market is an acute problem .As an immigrant our many rights are masked by the host society, as a woman I am marginalized at home and outside. I did a service job in a multinational company at my home country (Bangladesh) but here I am working just as a school teacher in elementary level. I tried to get at least a service job but failed. Once I was selected in TESCO (super market), but I could not join that job because they asked me whether I can work for both day and night shifts. I asked my husband and he said to work at night shift is problematic and better to try for teaching related job. Thus we are confronted both by the family and by the employer and the ultimate result is that we have to surrender to our fate. I can't go beyond my fate because I am a woman. (March 7, 2012).

This type of example is not uncommon among the Bangladeshi female immigrants whom I have interviewed. It seems that women's choice of profession is heavily influenced by their male partner. They cannot take a decision independently as they need to be loyal to their husband, to their family and they have to conform with the societies' norms and values. Immigrant women are often in a challenging situation to construct their new identities in the host country, which create a dilemma between modernity and tradition in their personal and professional lives. On the one hand they are used as cheap labor by the modern capitalist because of their cultural tradition of submissiveness (Elson, 1983: 6-10, cited in Kabir, 2000:12). On the other hand they are urged by their ethnic group to maintain their own traditions, i.e. veiling practices (Begum, 2008:3). For their

male partner Britain is important as a source of material power but not the British culture (Gardner, 1999:496), as women's culture is strongly regulated and is characterized by sexual difference. The term sex segregation is used to connote many different phenomena. It has often been used to describe situations involving physical and social separation of members of different socially identifiable groups in a given context (Reskin and Hartman, 1986:5). Another woman state. (*Former Assistant Director of UK Local Govt. and now works as a social activist, age 54, married*).

There are many reasons for why women are not allowed to work outside at night, you can say these are biological, social and psychological. From biological point of view women are always assumed to be vulnerable for sexual abuse, from sociological view point it is a social stigma. Bangladesh is a predominantly Muslim country and its social norms and values are strongly structured among male and female. From psychological point of view you can say, it is the premonition of male's domination over female, it is an expected norm among our male members that their wives are under their control, they are not prone to make extra martial relations, they will remain loyal to their husbands etc. (March 8, 2012).

This extract envisages that women's choice of work is associated with traditional practices and no matter whether they live at home or abroad, whether they are in the global or local labor market, as gender hierarchies are firmly embedded in everyday cultural and organizational practices (Hutchings et al., 2011:6). The conformation of this normativity is these expectation only relate to women and not men. Women's working lives are strongly regulated and are a result of social, cultural and psychological practices. As Reskin and Hartman (1986:5) has stated: "sex segregation in the workplace, which takes both physical and social forms, is almost certainly the result of both restriction and choices". Their restriction in choosing career is a nightmare, because although they are living in a modern, secular country like the UK, their position are connected to their traditional society where sexual difference, religion, traditional values regulate their possibilities. As Kinias and Kim (2011:89-90) has stated, in many cultures, men and women are not only treated unequally (which is still the case in most parts of the world), but such inequality is also sanctioned by custom and law.

Another respondent stated that women are not free to choose profession as they like because they have to bear in mind that working outside is not mandatory,

rather it is optional for them, and the choice of profession is based on their family relation and responsibilities. Their first and foremost duty is to maintain the family.

Samia, age 34, married: I work in a nursery school on part time basis, because I have three children, I have to give them much time including taking them from home to school and school to home. As my husband work hard on full time basis he don't get much time, so I have to do also other all types of family works including cooking food, take care of the child, making grocery shopping etc. (March 11, 2012).

Working few hours per week and in the lower levels of the organization is a common feature among Bangladeshi female immigrant in UK. Maintenance of the family' responsibility is more important than working outside for them.

Sexual difference matters in getting job as well as in promotion in their work place. Many women said that they are asked how many children they have, whether they will have a baby in the near future, whether they are able to give hard labor and whether they can adjust to a tight work schedule and so on. As one respondent state:

Marina, age 28, married: Once in an interview employer asked me within how many years I will have a baby. I was embarrassed and I think this is the injustice over us. Can they ask this stupid question to a male employee? I replied the employer that I am not interested to do their job. (March 12, 2012).

Also a male felt ashamed hearing this story. This is happening around the world because the capitalist character of work means to get maximum profit and maintaining the gender gap gives employers access to cheap labor. A study on conducted by EOC (2007) reveals that ethnic minority women (including Bangladeshi) were three times more likely than white women to be asked at job interviews about their plans for marriage and children illustrating how negative stereotyping can lead to discrimination by employers (cited in Alexander, et al., 2010:23).

The gender difference also affects the possibilities of promotion as another respondent state:

Naznin Hakim, age 36, married: Employer common psychology is that women have less potential to manage the managerial positions, they are prone to emotional activities, they are less adaptive to adjust with managerial stress etc. For last four years I am working as shift leader, while within this same duration my other male colleague have become assistant manager and manager also. (March 16, 2012).

Employers' attitude are that male employees can take managerial responsibility better than female employees (Kvande, 2010:2122) and in this way the organization policy creates and reinforces stereotypes that are gendered (Trautner and Kwan, 2010:128).

4.3.2. WAGE DISPARITIES

Sex differences in earnings occur in virtually every occupation and in every country throughout the world (Smith, 1987:43) and women's earnings typically average around two-thirds of men's (Tzannatos, 1999:551). Britain passed a minimum-wage law in 1909, but the new law set a lower minimum wage for women than men (Westover, 1986:60) and in the mid-19th (1950s) century nearly 30% of women were economically active (Tzannatos, 1999:552). The spread of industrialization and later globalization processes and neoliberal economy increased the labor displacement around the world, but women's position remained static in terms of sex segregation and wage disparities. Migrated women, basically from the east to the west, have been suffering wage discrimination based on both their race and their sex (Kessler-Harris, 1990: 16). A study conducted during the 1970s, that with a mainstream economic approach measured human capital (education, training, experience, continuity of workforce participation), found that these factors played a role for the pay gap, but most recent studies indicate that sex difference in education, continuity of workplace participation and effort play little role for the pay gap (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:112-13). Rather, all societies have a shared set of beliefs that justify why some workers should earn more than others. Wage discrimination between male and female cloaked in gender ideology was prevailed in the Bangladeshi immigrant community in London. As one respondent states:

Farhana, age, 31, married: It is very rare among the Bangladeshi female immigrants to outearn their male partner. Most of our jobs are devalued in terms of sex difference. I work in a primary school for five days per week. Although I spend more time than my husband, my income is three times less than him who works as chef in a restaurant for four days per week. If you think the utility value of these two jobs my one should be more valuable than him. But the truth is that my work is undervalued in terms of wages and utility. I suppose I would not get more priority if it would be other way around that my husband would work in school and I am in the restaurant. (March 6, 2012).

Saima's narrative is not uncommon among the women in this study. Out of forty respondents only one woman said that she earns more than her husband. Three women said their income is equal more or less with their husbands, although their job is valued differently in relation to their partner in terms of principal breadwinner and decision maker of the family. In fact, Bangladesh is predominantly a male breadwinner society (Siddiqui, 2003:13). Also this study shows that this gender ideology among the immigrant community has not changed in the context of global labor and in their relocation from an agro-based, tradition-bound underdeveloped country to an industrialized developed society. Bangladeshi immigrant women are lagging behind regarding participation on the mainstream labor market, wage disparities in relation to their male partner, British males and females, and other ethnic groups as well. In the same vein, some studies conducted on Bangladeshi immigrants have revealed that women from Bangladesh remained among the most excluded and lowest paid sections of the labor force (Bagguley and Hussain, 2003). Their employment rate is very low compared to Bangladeshi men because of traditional and religious attitudes of this predominately Muslim community (Clarke and Drinkwater, 2007). Another study, conducted by Dale et al. (2001b), shows an economic activity rate of 20% for Bangladeshi women aged 16-59, compared with 74% for British women.

Wage disparities between sexes are induced for many reasons. 'Meritocracy' is one common ideology subscribed to by many classical theorists, which favors higher pay for people who are better workers (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:112-13). But this ideology was turned down by the feminists' critiques who blamed the gender-biased traditions for pay discrimination, the assumption that men's needs are greater than women's, the belief in female dependency and the tendency to devalue women's work. As Schur (1983:35-440) has stated, men who assign value to human activities (as pay setters for example) tend to take male activities as standard and see other activities as inferior-regardless of the importance of these activities for a society. The effects of this traditional gender ideology also were revealed from the respondents' experiences in this study. As another respondent argues:

Sanjida, age 36 married: Both husband and wife is of equal quality. We work in the same institution (School). But there are the differences between our job responsibilities. My responsibilities are only teaching but my husband's responsibility is both teaching and administrative task. He spends more time and gets more salary than me. But the question is why? Because you know in our society female's outside works are considered as the optional work as male is assumed to be the principal breadwinner of the family. Moreover, I have three children, now who will take care of the children, who will do the other household chores? In our society it is out of imagination that woman will work outside and man will take care of the child and will do other domestic tasks. Since, even if we have equal quality we have to compromise with our job. (March 20, 2012).

These narratives suggest that despite male and female's equal quality; women do not get equal opportunity in the labor market. The prevailing gender construction suggests that men are superior to women and women are dependent on their husband. Wage discrimination does not occur only because of female's dependency on their husband but also because of employer's policy and assumptions, which make them treat women less favorably than men. Assumptions such as cultural beliefs, gender stereotypes, the tendency to devalue women's work, and men's impulse to preserve their advantaged status are to induce women to perform domestic tasks (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:112-13).

Very few respondents had an opinion that challenged contemporary feminist views. They were found in contradictions to support the opinions of earlier respondents, rather they envisage that the difference between male and female are somewhat natural, but should be tenable to some respects i.e. all the work are not equally suited to both sexes, male and female are not equally qualified, male are suitable to work outside whereas female should give more time in the family and take care of the children and do other household work. As one respondent argues:

Jaheda, age 38, married: I don't see any problem for wage disparities between my husband and me. He earns three times more than me. I get lump sum money from my job and I spend it for my children and sometimes for my shopping. As he gives more labor outside, I manage the household activities including the take care of the children. If both husband and wife emphasize for income then the children face problems. Moreover, in our Bangladeshi community husband is always more qualified than wife, since he will earn more money it is very usual. Moreover, when my husband burns in the sun and keep me under the roof, she should get much priority in our relations. (March 15, 2012).

Although she did not clarify why women in Bangladeshi society are less qualified than their male partners, her disposition is clear to support the traditional division of work, wage disparities and that the man is the breadwinner. In Bangladeshi

society girls are considered as liabilities and boys are regarded as assets (Chowdhury, 2009:606), because after a certain time she will marry someone and will leave the parent's house permanently, while investing in boys (i.e. for education, training etc.) is given higher priority.

4.3.3. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE: LIVING WITH A SHADOW

Sexual harassment is usual at the workplace (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:129). There are many forms of sexual harassment, manifested in a variety of ways, including physical, verbal, gestural, written, graphical or emotional harassment (Haspels, et al. 2001:35). Although all the interviewees admitted that sexual harassment is a very common phenomenon in the work place, only two women out of forty shared with me their direct experience of sexual harassment. The other respondents said that they have heard about it from other female colleagues but did not report any such own experiences. Almost all of the interviewees felt shy to talk about sexual harassment. Given the highly patriarchal nature of society, Bangladeshi females often tend to hide sexual harassment. As Huda (2004:54) has stated in her research: "The reality of patriarchal domination and female subordination exacerbates the situation to such an extent that for women it is difficult to acknowledge that they are victims of sexual harassment". Female also feels less interest to disclose their harassment because their husband or other family member/relatives indirectly blame them for such types of occurrences, and disclosure of their harassment also brings much social disgrace in their personal, social and professional lives (Green, 1998). Most women do not publicize the cases but rather tend to hide it or accept harassment as a fact of life which they have to live with. Thus they are living with its shadow; they can neither avoid it, nor wither way it. As one respondent state:

Humaira, age 33, divorced: I work in a sweetmeat shop. I prepare the sweetmeat as a principal chef. I have some male co-workers who help me preparing the sweetmeats. But it does not matter I am the senior or junior to them. As a female I am sexually harassed by almost every male colleague. Usually I don't give my personal cell number to any colleague, but I don't know where they get my number. Very often during my off time they give me call and give unusual offer, try to talk about sexual matters, give many erotic messages unanimously. Same is in the workplace. It is really horrible. In my earlier job I have reported my boss (owner of the shop) about one colleague who offered me to make sexual relations with him, although he has his wife and two kids. But boss did not take

actions rather he said this is not a problem to that extent, it may happen between the colleagues. I left that job. But in my new job the situation is same. Now how many jobs I will change, it is also not so easy to get job here. Now I have become used to it, I try to protect myself because I have no ways but to live with this shadow. (March 14, 2012).

She is a divorced woman who left her one baby to her mother in Bangladesh. She thought UK is a better country for women prospects. She has spent a lot of money to come to UK. But dreams have been shattered as I understood from our further conversation. A female's economic, social and cultural life is very much affected by sexual ideology that keeps them vulnerable and in fear of losing status and acceptability (Azim, 2002). Another respondent state:

Yeasmin, age 29, unmarried: I work in an event management organization. Once, my supervisor gave me an offer to go to Scotland with him as we need to stay there for one week to manage an event offered by a Scottish company. I agreed with his offer as it is my job responsibilities. But one female colleague warned me not to go with him. She said supervisor intention is not good and behind this offer he has ill motive. Then she informed me about some other examples that happened before. However, on the following day I said him that I can't go because of my personal problem. But he was not happy hearing this and few days later I lost my job in that organization.(March 18, 2012).

4.4. MODERNIZATION OF THE KITCHEN: MODERNIZATION AND THE DEATH OF PARADISE

Being an immigrant for Bangladeshi people is highly prestigious to the people of their home country in terms of its economic value and social status (Gardner, 1999:492, 495). To many families and even to many girls (though sometime they are compelled to agree with the proposal by the pressure of the family) it is a handsome offer to marry someone who has the red passport (British passport). As Islam (1995:365) has argued, "...migration have emerged as attractive suitors for marriage", and a considerable number of Bangladeshi female immigrants belong to this category. Their dreams are to have the opportunity to live in paradise-in a highly industrialized and modern and secular society. But after a couple of years their dreams fade as many of become housewife, rather than to be part of this modern culture. Thus, the definitions of femininity are embedded within the discourse of domesticity. This section aims to explore the relationship between globalization, modernization and domesticity-as discourse and as experience-to see how, and with what success, the immigrant women could develop in the job market in London instead of being a good house wife in the kitchen.

Sakila, age 39, married: When I left Bangladesh with my husband 13 years ago, I dreamt to be part of a modern, industrialized western society where the possibilities is more than the limits for a young university graduate like me, as I was promised by my life partner and her relatives. But after these 13 years people (mostly my relatives) know me more as a dedicated and perfect housewife instead of a good professional in the labor market. Now I am working, but in a sense you cannot say this is work, 6 hours a week to look after a disabled woman of 75 years. Most of my time, apart from the sleeping period, I have to invest to manage the household activities for a family consisting of 8 members including my three children. Thus I am mostly better introduced with the modern kitchen (as it far better than Bangladesh household kitchen) rather than a modern society.(March 19, 2012)

More or less this is the same experience for other female immigrants whom I have interviewed. All the females, except three out of forty, said that their husband never share the kitchen and other domestic lore with them. In Bangladeshi culture kitchen and household work is strongly related with femininity. Doing household work and cooking in the kitchen is considered as a matter of disgrace for males. Thus the traditional gendered roles are defining womanhood and manhood irrespective of the introduction of modernity in their lifestyles. The place of women are not dominated by modernity, rather it is shielded stereotypically. As Duchen (1994) has argued, a woman in the kitchen is in her right place and they are unremarkable: not too young nor too old, neither beautiful nor ugly and she is assumed to be married, a mother and a housewife. Most interviewees argued that even though they are living in a modern, globalized first world country, the gender norms are still intangible both at home and at the workplace. In some respects they could change their material positions but not the attitude towards the work that still makes difference between male and female. Thus modernization has led not only to feminization of labor but also a marginalization of women from equal access on the labor market (Boserup, 1970). Women are promised by their male partner that modernity will ease their hard work in the home because of the availability of many modern home appliances (washing machine, vacuum cleaner etc.), but the promise is not working as it was desired. Although they have many appliances in their homes now, the domestic machinery still do not do the work without her, and nobody actually want or expect women to abandon household altogether. Thus the domestic work may have lightened the work and improved the conditions in which women are living, but have not reduced the time

it takes to accomplish their different household tasks. Their desire to live in paradise is thwarted in many ways, including the paramount pressure of kitchen work. As another respondent state:

Nahida, age 37, married: It is true that my kitchen is full of modern appliances. It is far better than Bangladesh. Availability of gas, electricity, water and disposal of rubbish is better than Bangladesh. But these opportunities could neither create my exit way from kitchen to labor market, nor could reduce my time in the kitchen. Rather I could become a perfect housewife whose duty to feed every one of the family and relatives with delicious dishes. (March 20, 2012).

Nahida's narratives demonstrate that modernity failed to incorporate women into the labor market, although women were promised modernity, exemplified by organization of time and space and technological innovation (Duchen, 1994). The exit of women from the kitchen to the labor market has remained an unfulfilled dream irrespective of their relocation from a traditional society to a modern one. The kitchen is represented mostly as a place of for work women, but it is also the hub of the household, the heart of the home, the kitchen has become a metaphor for family life (Craik, 1989: 48).

4.5. CROSS BORDER TRANSFORMATION OF PATRIARCHY

Given its religious and other socio-cultural rigidity, Bangladesh is considered as a highly patriarchal country (Hadi, 2005: 182). According to Cain et al. (1979: 406) "In Bangladesh, patriarchy describes a distribution of power and resources within families such that men maintain power and control of resources, and women are powerless and dependent on men. The material base of patriarchy is men's control of property, income, and women's labor. The structural elements of patriarchal control are reinforcing and include aspects of the kinship system, political system, and religion". Women's identities both in the family and outside are constructed within these patriarchal norms and are legitimized by the religious codes, conventional laws and customs (Hadi, 2005:182). The interviews with the immigrant women reveal a mixed opinion about the patriarchal norms and practices, both in the household and workplace-something that denotes their contradictory positions of both victim and savior. Contemporary Bangladeshi women, including immigrants, are witnessing a shift in the representation of ideal

womanhood, away from the models of earlier anti-colonialist and nationalist era when the middle class woman was considered the epitome of spirituality, domesticity and the essentially non-Western core of an authentic Indian culture (Chatterjee 1989, 240-43). Young women find themselves in contradictions and bargain with their male counterpart about the practice of patriarchal domination, while the older women was found less active in bargaining, rather to admit its widespread prevalence. As one respondent states:

Marzia, age 47, married: I don't see any basic changes among our male partners in terms of patriarchal dominance. I have seen my mother who would be controlled by my father and now same is for me. Our male partners like to keep their wives, daughter under their supervision and control which strongly affect our working lives. We are easily identifiable in the street, in the workplace, in the home because our attitude and dress is different from other communities. Maintaining these differences is not by choice for many of us, rather the manifestation of men's control over women, you can say. (March 21, 2012).

Marzia's experience is very common as it is the same experience for many other interviewees, but for not all. The social context in which Bangladeshi immigrants' women are situated reflects a complex set of issues revolving around patriarchy, as norms and values underlying and affecting gender relations such as 'patriarchy' or 'tradition' are constructed and reconstructed as women and men enact them in their individual lives, and through institutions and cultural and social processes (Guhathakurta, 2004:195). Immigrant women find themselves in this new context but they have to deal with the old tradition from their native country each and every moment, both in the domestic arena and in the market place. Interviews with other immigrants' women reveal that in some respects male dominance is more than that of their Bangladeshi bedfellow. Because their male partner/family male member is afraid of the modernity, free culture and other openness for women, women are always under the microscope. Their movements and activities are strongly controlled and regulated by their male partner/family members. In this same vein a study conducted on Bangladeshi Muslim community of UK reveals that:

"Bangladeshi women are culturally oppressed. Women are seldom heard or seen. There are not enough women's organizations otherwise women would be empowered and be visible in society. Patriarchy and tyranny exists in the

community and this is largely why women are oppressed (DCLG, 2009:49¹⁵).

Thus the immigrant women's subordination is an illustration of the patriarchal practices and attitudes of men, derived from socially and culturally determined concepts of gender roles which prevent women from becoming self-reliant: for example, belief in purdah (Islamic code of dress), sticking to their own cultural rigidity, reduces female mobility and the scope for full participation in the labor market (Murshed, 1995: 124). Another respondent has stated:

Jahanara, age 42: I think the prevalence of male's dominance is more complex for us in UK than that of our bedfellow in Bangladesh. We working women are confronted by both our partner/family member and by the employers. For example, I have been working in a multinational company for last two years as an accountant. On the one hand my partner wants decency in my dress (i.e. put on hijab) but my company management has an aversion to this Islamic traditions. Moreover, sometime they invite me to attend the party which often takes place at night. But my husband doesn't like this type of outgoing and hanging with the colleagues. But actually what I like that is ignored by both parties. Frankly to say, I like both the family and the job. Because I need both money and love, I need both family and work. I don't think that a female's morality, honesty depend on choosing a dress or to hang around the party. But how we the female will cross the border of patriarchal norms? Since, I have to go very often with this dilemma; sometime it seems to me very exhaustive, though I am trying to manage both the office and house, but I am not sure how long days I can go with this situation. (March 10, 2012).

From these narratives we witness that Sonia, a young woman, together with other Bangladeshi female immigrant workers, faces many trials and try to overcome difficulties with regard to family, workplace, community, economic hardship, love-romance and gender inequality. The global labor market offers a window into the changing social and economic landscape for immigrant women and the complex negotiations of power and inequality across gender, class and community. Immigrant women, oppressed by their native patriarchal religious and cultural practices (Kenny, 1995), both physically and functionally (Cain et al. 1979), are challenged by the integration of global capitalist labor market and modern organizations (Andaleev and Wolford, 2004:2004). On the one hand, capitalism uses them as cheap labor but rejects their freedom (wearing of hijab); on the other their husband/father also impose their patriarchal domination in the freedom of their working lives. Thus immigrant women in their changing context

¹⁵ Report on The Bangladeshi Muslim Community in England: Understanding Muslim Ethnic Communities, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, London.

have to fight both within the family and on the labor market against the unique nature of patriarchal domination. Moreover, the patriarchal nature of capitalism strongly shapes the nature of women's jobs. As Mies (1986:34) has argued, the goal of capitalism is to accumulate capital where women are used as the optimal labor force. She further argues that capitalism cannot function without patriarchy and male dominance does not mean only the rule of fathers, but also rule of husbands, male bosses and the ruling men of society, politics and economy (ibid, p.34). The viability of capitalism depends on retaining the patriarchal practice. As Eisenstein (1979:27) has pointed out, patriarchy and capitalism depend on each other and gender division is more fundamental to human society than the economic class division that has changed historically with the changes in economic organizations.

On the other hand, following the chain migration, the extension of kinship among the Bangladeshi immigrants' families has been also found. This extension of kinship occurred mainly in the practice of patriarchal dominated marriage system which has adverse impacts on the entry of female immigrants in the labor market.

As another respondent has stated:

Munira, age 31, married: Although at the time of my marriage with my cousin I urged for further study and to develop my career and accordingly I was also promised but after coming to UK my dreams have been withered away. There was a growing pressure on me from my husband as well as from his family to take the offspring just on the fowling year of my marriage and consequently now I am a mother of 3 children. Now I am doing a part time job in a nursery school. My husband and his father's logic is that we have enough money, we are also earning a lot, so you need not to be passionate to earn money, and rather you should give all your labor and patience to take care of your children, husband and the family.(March 17, 2012).

Though Munira is quite dissatisfied with her unfulfilled dream, there is no way to cross this wall of patriarchy. The field investigation further reveals that in this marital process the bride has the right to like or dislike the groom and to accept or reject the proposal whereas the groom has no rights to dislike or reject the proposal. As another woman states, once her proposal of marriage was denied because she did not comply with the bride precondition that after marriage she cannot work outside. Thus, in most cases women are seen to play the passive role in the marital process. As Chowdhury (2010:306) has stated: "Women are field

for men to plough. It doesn't matter which man ploughs the field because women are only recognized for how good a harvest they are able to produce.”

Before marriage Bangladeshi female immigrants remain under the control of their father while after marriage this authority is transferred to her husband and his family (Cain et al., 1979:407). Female subjugation to their male partner starts at the very outset of their conjugal life. In this process women are badly affected to be independent economically, as in most cases they are either discouraged or forced not to develop a good career but to have more children and perform the household activities.

Although not many, but in some cases young Bangladeshi women, basically second and third generation, were found in confrontation and contestation with patriarchal norms, though their relationship to the social structure is marked as external and adversarial rather than as integral. The global labor market offers a window into the changing social and economic landscape of contemporary Bangladeshi female immigrants in UK and the complex negotiations of power and inequality across gender and community. The exploration of the representations of gender norms allows us to understand how these intersect with larger pervasive social and economic structures like globalization, neoliberal development and post-modern feminist discourses. As another respondent states:

Afsana, age 24, unmarried: I am a British born Bangladeshi female. I have been working in a college as a receptionist. I see lots of difference among different generations. For me, I can say you that I also feel some pressure from my parent and relatives sometimes. But I don't bother with their traditions. Sometime I am criticized by Bangladeshi community (both male and female), but who cares, or why to care? This is my life, decision is mine what shall I do? Living in London if you follow Bangladesh, then you would be always in dilemma. Why we need to go with the fanaticism of Bangladeshi traditions, where religion and superstitious cloudy your lives. I don't think we should make any difference between male and female in household, in labor market and in other representation. (March 7, 2012).

Like Zaria, some other interviewees also have similar narratives that contradict the mainstream culture of the Bangladeshi immigrant community in terms of gender relations. As another study conducted on Bangladeshi immigrant reveals, there are reported tensions between the first and second and third generations based on different cultural understandings (DCLG, 2009:45). The study further

argues that while the older generation is more concerned about retaining its cultural heritage, the younger people suggest that they do not necessarily want to retain this cultural identity but want to focus on their life and circumstances in Britain (ibid, p. 45).

4.6. UNIVERSAL PRACTICE OF MASCULINITY

‘Man and masculinity’ is another prime concern in understanding gender inequality in the context of work and organizations. A wide range of feminist scholars have envisaged how practices of masculinities are implicated in the processes of neoliberal policies and globalization, that has resulted in gender inequalities in economic activities (Acker, 2004:20). Connell (2005: xxii) argues that globalization and global politics are not gender-free but are rooted in the privileging of certain forms of masculinity within what Connell terms a ‘world gender order’. Whilst ‘most studies of globalization have little or nothing to say about gender’ (Connell, 2005: xxi), masculinity studies scholars make visible the gendered character, for example, of the rhetorically gender-neutral neoliberal market agenda in global politics, diplomacy, international institutions and economic policymaking (Elias and Beasley, 2009:283). Although there is an exertion of equal opportunities legislation and feminist critique, power and ‘masculine’ values continues to be pervasive and persistent in contemporary organizations (Collinson and Hearn, 1994: 3). Women’s position in the organization is always like fish out of water, affected by the cultural construction and practices of multiple masculinities. Collinson and Hearn (1994: 3) has stated that “Where men see humor, teasing, camaraderie and strength, for example, women often perceive crude, specifically masculine aggression, competition, harassment, intimidation and misogyny”. As one respondent state:

Natasha, age 32, married: I am working as a customer service trainee in a super market (AZDA). We female colleagues most often are teased and sometimes harassed by our male colleagues. For example verbal abuse is a common practice. Making comments on women’s figure, dress and fashion seems to be their very exciting entertainment. Sometimes it happens on the basis of sexual difference, sometimes psychologically but sometimes simultaneously. Sometimes the supervisor distributes the duties in this way that we the female workers can remain very near to him. Their motive tends to be to make an informal relation with female colleagues by giving proposal to hang outside of the office, shopping, pleasure trips etc. (March 19, 2012).

These typical narratives demonstrate that women's adaptability in the workplace is greatly hampered by the tendency of excessive 'informalism'-a wide pervasive masculine discourse as argued by, for instance, Collinson and Hearn (1994: 14). Masculinities in the workplace are reproduced through various organizational practices, social interaction, and through images, ideals, myths or representations of behaviors and emotions (Acker, 2004:28). Maddock and Parkin (1993:5) refers to this informalism as the '*Locker Room Culture*' that tends to exclude and subordinate women, and all women irrespective of their positions in the workplace are subjected to this '*Locker Room Culture*'. Women's presence in the workplace is always encountered with masculine practice both regarding their professional achievement and environmental adjustment, because of their strong religiosity and attachment with traditional culture. Bangladeshi female workers are massively affected by this *locker room culture*. On the one hand they face masculine pressure in the workplace for more informalism and more exposure to modernism, on the other hand their husband/father and ethnic group's masculine ethic pressure them to be more conservative. The construction of women's gender-free identity is precarious because of this universal practice of masculinity. Moreover, in some cases masculine practices in the form of informalism leads to sexual harassment and the reduction of women in the organization to sexual objects, undermining of their competence on the grounds that they must have to use their sexuality to secure hierarchical advancement (Collinson and Hearn, 1994: 15).

Male dominance over the female worker in the form of 'authoritarianism' is also a very common feature in the work organizations (Collinson and Hearn, 1994: 13).

As another respondent argues:

Papiya, age 27, married: I am working in Macdonald in customer service. Very often the operation manager (who is a male) compelled or forced me to work out of my schedule. His dictatorship over juniors (both on male and female, very often on female) is very coercive in nature. Once he told me to make up for someone's scheduled work, but when I told him about my problem on that day, he replied me from the next month I have to think about your job newly. Thus always we female are under pressure in the workplace by the male boss. (March 13, 2012).

This typical experience often reflects the power relations between male and female workers, where male are found in a dominating role over female. As Collinson and Hearn (1994: 13) points out, authoritarian masculine practices can be featured by an intolerance of dissent or difference, a rejection of dialogue and debate and a preference for coercive power relations based on dictatorial control and unquestioning obedience. Maddock & Parkin (1993) refer to this as the '*barrack yard culture*', highlighting the way in which aggressive masculinity is deeply embedded in such autocratic practices. Male managers or superior male officers of the organization often use bullying or fear as their masculine instrument over the subordinate female worker in the name of management control. By contrast, '*paternalism*'-another type of masculine ethic, attempts to rationalize coercion and exercise of power by emphasizing the moral basis of cooperation and the importance of personal trust relations-the protective nature of their authority (Collinson and Hearn, 1994: 14). While pretense of equality is used as the gaining tool by paternalism, masculinity highlights the interdependent nature of hierarchical order (Kerfoot and Knights, 1993:670). This type of masculine discourse allows men to demonstrate that they are better than, and different from women (Chodorow, 1978), while women are assumed to be subordinate, delicate and loyal. As one respondent state:

Bably, age 31, married: I work in a multinational company as junior trainee officer. But as a female we need to show andact more than our job responsibility. With senior male colleagues our relation works as their subordinate. This is not only for official duty but also when we go to party our male colleagues expect service from us i.e. we should take care of their food, we be free with them and so on. A usual assumption works among male and female worker that manhood is superior to womanhood in any respects.(March 11, 2012).

On the other hand, the world corporate culture are regulated with the practice of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2000:47), which works at the center of global economic power and prestige (Mills, 2003:54). In this regulation certain men make the organizational decisions that drive and shape what is called 'globalization' and the 'new economy' (Acker, 2004:29). Humphrey (2002: 178) maintains that the entrepreneurial and higher-paying segment of the emerging private sector is often linked with a new sense of globalized masculinity, whereas

lower-waged jobs and much of the public sector increasingly represent a domain of feminized and devalued labor. This gendered entrepreneurialism tends to exclude women from the senior and managerial positions within the discourse that woman lacks managerial qualities (i.e. performance levels, budget targets, penetrating new markets that run organization fast and profitable (Collinson and Hearn, 1994: 14). As another respondent explains:

Wasima, age, 35: For the last 8 years I was dedicated to my profession, but I was promoted up to a certain level from customer care to unit supervisor, that's it. But many of my male colleagues have become full managers within this time. Any top position for female irrespective of their equal quality compared to male is undermined because of their female identity. (March 10, 2012).

Immigrant women are randomly marginalized in their entry as well as when it comes to holding high positions in the labor market, because of the assumption that they are less skilled. As Phizacklea (1983:3) argues, much of this assumption is made up of migrant women's 'language deficiencies', 'cultural preferences' and 'lack of recognized skills' when explaining their subordinate positions in the labor market. But this so-called 'disadvantage' migrant women bring with them in the labor market (ibid, p.3) has its root in the masculine practice of the global labor market, because women are marginalized irrespective of their equal quality and nationalities. For example, many British women are also marginalized in regards to holding top positions as well as getting equal access in the labor market. As argued by Lewis (1992:78-79) in a study conducted on British women, "...the most striking characteristics of women's paid jobs have remained low pay and low status. While the pattern of sexual segregation varied, it was rare not to see a clear dividing line between women's and men's jobs, within occupations, between women's and men's process. Where women were engaged in exactly the same process as men, they still usually received lower pay".

4.7. PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPHERE: PLAYING THE BACKGROUND ROLE

The public/private divide and the unequal gender relations operating in both have often been seen as the main source of women's subordination in society (Einhorn, 1995:4). The tendency to confine women to the private sphere and strongly monitor women's public vigilance, works to discourage women's participation in the labor market among Bangladeshi female immigrants in UK (Alexander et al.,

2010: 17). My fieldwork for this research was basically limited to east London, where the largest part of the Bangladeshi community lives, comprising 36% of the population in East London. It was very rare to see a Bangladeshi woman in the streets of Whitechapel, Commercial road, Brick Lane (known as Bangla town) who did not wear a hijab. In this respect Begum (2008:1)¹⁶ points out that there are new challenges to place-based constructions like 'Bangla town', that show such places to be masculine and subtly prohibitive for Bangladeshi women. However, I was really surprised to see this frequency of wearing hijab because even in Dhaka (The Capital city of Bangladesh) such frequency of wearing hijab among women is rare in the streets. As one respondent argues:

Sonia, age 33, married: In Bangladesh I was not wearing a hijab but when I come here I have seen most of the Bangladeshi women wear hijab. If I don't wear it, I feel guilty myself. Moreover, my husband also likes it. When I tried to work outside my husband has shown very less interest, though I lastly managed him. But the condition was to wear hijab and to work in any women related profession i.e. school, care related. Now I have been working in a school but the payment is very poor. But personally I don't find any reason for this seclusion. Sometimes I think I should revolt these traditions. But it is not possible because of two reasons: going against traditions is considered as the desperatism of women, and lack of unity among women. (March 15, 2012).

Sonia's experience is not unusual. To challenge the traditional religious of values by female members is always considered as unusual, unrespectable, unacceptable, un-expectable. This male-biased tendencies are often rationalized within the discourse of 'ideal family lives' where males are for the public/formal activities (politics, market, representation of civil society) and females are for the private/informal activities (household work, reproduction, nursing and bearing of children, and taking care of elderly and other family members as required). This is not necessarily embedded only within the eastern traditional communities like Bangladeshi, but is also traced in many western communities including UK. As Davidoff and Hall (1987:365-7) has stated, a major factor for women's lower participation in the labor market was the doctrine of a separate sphere and this

¹⁶ See more in Halima Begum (2008), Geographies of Inclusion/Exclusion: British Muslim Women in the East End of London

doctrine originated from the English upper-middle class, called the separation of work and family life. It held that a women's proper place was in the home and not in the workplace; a man's natural sphere was in the world of commerce-or, at any rate, at his job and not at home (ibid, p. 366-7). Reinforcing these beliefs were stereotypes of men as strong, aggressive and competitive and of women as frail, virtuous, and nurturing, images that depicted men as naturally suited to the highly competitive nineteenth-century workplace and women as too delicate for the world of commerce (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:21).

Thus women are largely excluded from the labor market, both for religious reasons and sexual division of work within the divide between public and private sphere. Some other reasons are also embedded in marginalizing women's public visibility i.e. 'fear of public space', 'security of women' etc. Although most crimes committed against women occur in the domestic sphere, yet the common perception is that women are more at risk outside the home (Begum, 2008). A cumulative feminist literature¹⁷, including feminist geographies of spaces, has demonstrated how public spaces can be simultaneously threatening and easing for women at the same time. Especially the streets are contradictory sites for many women as they represent both danger and potential spaces for liberation from stereotypical gender roles (Watson and Bridge 2000: 370). The field investigation done for this research demonstrates that although Bangladeshi female immigrants are living in a secular, modern and developed country like UK, their participation into the labor market is still highly marginalized in terms of public and private domain. On the other hand, for those among Bangladeshi women who could come to the labor market, their participation has not translated into gains in levels of representation in the public spheres or led to more sensitive gender planning in the built environment (Begum, 2008:9).

¹⁷ See more in Watson and Bridge (2000); MacDowell (1999); Yuval-Davis (1997); Wilson (1991)

CHAPTER-5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The question throughout this study was to explore and understand gender inequality in the context of the global labor market. The findings on this *general point of departure* demonstrate that though the *feminization of employment* has increased sharply during the last few decades, reduction of gender disparities has not occurred to that extent. On the one hand, *modernization* has led to some material changes and development for the immigrant women who come from underdeveloped countries to the developed; but on the other hand marginalization of women has led to the reinforcement of the traditional gender roles. For example, though more females are now working outside the household, at the same time the number of males is not increasing in sharing the domestic work. And women's participation in the labor market compared to their male counterparts still remains much lower. Part of the explanation for women's rising participation rates lies in the continued growth of service sector employment (including a large number of care workers)¹⁸ which is considered at the bottom end of the labor market (MacDowell, 2001:449). Though the *neoliberal development* and *global capitalism* of current post-fordism era has intensified female labor placement beyond national borders, *gender inequality* in the global labor market has remained the same and in some cases has become worse. The corporate *masculinity* along with *patriarchal norms* and value influence the use of women as a source of cheap and flexible labor for the continuity and sustainability of the global labor market. Wichterich (2000:167) has rightly pointed out that *globalized woman* is burnt up as a natural fuel.

The empirical evidences, analyses and discussion in this study show that Bangladeshi immigrant women's transnational settlement has portrayed the

¹⁸ See more in Anderson, Bridget (1997); Hochschild, Arlie Russell (2000); Kilkey, Majella (2010); Salazar Parreñas, Rhacel (2005); Yeates, Nicola (2004; 2009)

coexistence and intersections of multiple gender disparities within male-dominated power structures. The findings demonstrate that the labor market participation and occupational distribution of Bangladeshi women in this foreign milieu neither resemble that of their male counterparts nor that of the British and other ethnic groups. Some earlier studies conducted on the Bangladeshi immigrant community in UK show that the percentage of economically active females and males are 76.6% and 38.3% respectively (ONS, 2005). According to DCLG (2009:48) “Bangladeshi women have the lowest level of participation in the formal labor market of any major ethnic group in the UK”.

Findings demonstrate that Bangladeshi immigrant women’s entry to the UK’ labor market remained at such a level in terms of occupational diversity, earnings and positions that it does not signal any major breakthrough in their professional achievement. Only one female said that she earns more than her husband. One woman said she was promoted up to a mid-level position in her job in UK’ local Govt. Rest of all the interviewed women said that they don’t hold any mid-level or higher positions in the organization where they work. Most of the women interviewed for this study (around 71%) work in the education sector, but they basically teach in nursery and primary schools. Many of these educational institutions are owned by Bangladeshi immigrants and the students are predominantly from the Bangladeshi community. Empirical evidence further fails to support the argument of neoliberal economic development, global capitalism and free market economy that women’s occupational outcomes result primarily from free choices that they make in an open market. Rather it suggests that women face discrimination in terms of job *segregation by sex, wage disparities, ethnic minority* and religious rigidities. Although some women said that skills, efficiency and education background play an important role in getting good jobs, many other disagreed with them and said that even the British women can only come up to a certain level and very seldom hold the top positions. Same contradiction was also revealed regarding the role of the *host country* in providing job facilitates for immigrant women. Some said it has been fair and provided some information service (i.e. job center) and a language efficiency course, while

others said it discriminates in the labor market on the basis of sexual difference, ethnicity and religious grounds. But personally I feel that the UK government maintains a hands-off approach towards the immigrant population, which tends to maintain the status quo of gender discrimination.

Empirical evidence bears a clear mark of a culturally reproduced notion of *femininity* and *masculinity* and *patriarchy* among Bangladeshi communities, although some in young generation was found in contradiction and negotiation against this stereotyping. However, beliefs and attitudes about differences between the sexes that are grounded in Bengali cultural values contribute to the persistence of *sex segregation*. Almost all of the interviewed women said that their male partners think that doing household activities and take care of the children and older people is a disgrace for them. Providing this domestic service is associated with womanhood and working outside is associated with manhood. These beliefs are taken as axiomatic, that women's *primary sphere* is the home and that of men is the workplace. The burden of household work often leads women to work on a part time and temporary basis. Some earlier studies show that Bangladeshi households were the largest in the UK, with an average of 4.7 members (ONS, 2002). According to Ahmed et al. (2001), 88% of Bangladeshi couples have children and over 42% have 4 or more children (compared with 49% and 4% of white couples respectively). Findings suggests that responsibility for the daily care of family members is one of the major setbacks for Bangladeshi female immigrants both for entry and professional growth in UK's labor market. Moreover, women are under pressure to maintain the conformity with their own religious, cultural and social values which also greatly affect their underrepresentation on the labor market. Deviation to any of these prescribed gender norms may lead to domestic violence to women. Human activist Halen Robin stated that every one woman out of five is victim of family violence in the Bangladeshi community of Britain (Weekly Bangladesh, March 16, 2012).

The empirical findings together with literature reviews suggest that Bangladeshi women in this new context could not be a strong agent for their own development. Although the old generation is still the epitome of spirituality and domesticity,

many in the young generation are making progress. For example, *Rushanara Ali*, a young woman in the Bangladeshi community in 2010 was elected as a parliament member from the constituency of Bethnal Green and Bow, East London. Some earlier studies also show that girls are doing better than boys in education and employment in some areas (Ahmed et al. 2001). But these changes and progress are not necessarily very significant, as after marriage they again become subject to male control and expectations that limit their freedom and mobility as well as their chances to participate in the wider society (DCLG, 2009:49). However, I suppose, the hopes of gender equality may spur with the changes of gender roles in accordance with the shifting of generation. But again, it is really difficult to say how long time it will take to see a gender neutral world, as the gender aspect is still an overseen issue of globalization and modernization.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide/Questionnaire

Certification: Participation for this interview is voluntary. Information will be used only for academic purpose and is fully confidential. The author of this research would be responsible solely, if any anomaly happen. Thanks for your kind cooperation and patience.

SL.	Name:	Location:	Date:
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Q#	Questions	Categories & Explanation
A. Demographic Background		
1	Age of the respondent (write age in full years)	
2	Sex of the respondent	
3	Civil status	
4	What is your religion (if any)?	
5	Education	
B. Exposure to Migration/immigration		
6	For how many years have you been living in UK?	
7	What was the basic reason (s) for your migration to UK?	
8	What is your experience as an immigrant that is different from your male partner/other family members? (i.e. in daily life, work, social relations etc.).	
9	According to your experience what are difference between male and female immigrants in accessing immigrant related support (policy, social security etc.)	
10	How immigrant status influence female and male in terms of honor, power, social and economic positions etc.	
C. Exposure to Labor Market		
11	What is your main occupation and what kinds of tasks do you normally do?	
12	How many hours do you normally work per week and how you spend your rest of the time?	
13	Which are the factors influence your profession/job?	

14	How much do you earn per month on an average and how much does it contribute to the family income?
15	What are the differences between your job and your partner/other male members of your family (i.e. regarding income, duration, types of work etc.)?
16	According to your experience what are the most common problems for immigrant female workers? (i.e. from family/partner/host country/employer etc.)
17	What are the differences, in your opinion; between male and female immigrant workers regarding jobs that employer offer?
18	Have you experienced any discrimination in your working life as an immigrant woman? If yes, please describe.
19	What are the differences, experience, between male and female immigrant workers regarding work tasks?
20	According to your experience what are the reasons for gender-segregation of labor market in UK?
21	Do you know about any example of sexual harassment/abuse of women in the workplace?
22	In your experience what changes have occurred in family relations when women are working outside family?
23	According to your experience, how do political and rules and regulations in the UK/London affects favor/disfavor women in the labor market?
24	In your opinion, how do cultural (religious beliefs, social ideology, prejudice etc.) affect immigrants women's working lives?
25	What are the positive/negative aspects of your current job?
D. Integration between Work and Family Life	
26	How you and your male partner/other male member of the family divide outside work and household work (i.e. household chores, child bearing and take care, preparing food etc.)
27	Because of your outside work, do you face any problem in your family? How and why?
28	What factors do you consider for choosing a job? Does your partner/family influence your choice?
29	How much do you contribute to your family income compared to your partner/other family members and does this contribution affect other family matter (i.e. decision making, spending, entertainment etc.
30	Do you think that man and woman are equally qualified for different kinds of tasks at work and in the household or do you think there are differences? In what way and why?

E. Exposure to Host Country

31	In your opinion, what are differences between native and immigrants women in labor market?
32	What is your experience as immigrant women of adapting to this host society?
33	According to your experience, what is the difference between you and other immigrants of nationalities (African, Asian, and European) in the labor market (i.e. in getting a job, salary, etc.)?
34	Do you know any special support/program (s) for immigrant women in getting job? (if yes pls. state)