



**LUNDS**  
UNIVERSITET

**Unfold the Untold Stories,  
Journey of Permanent Resident, Bangladeshi Migrant Student in Sweden.**

**Master's Thesis**

**Department of Social Anthropology**

**Submitted by**

**Supervisor**

**Submitted to**

Md Raihan Khandaker

Professor Simon Turner

Tova Höjdestrand

**SANMO5 Masters's thesis: Department of Social Anthropology.**

**Submitted: 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2024**

## Abstract

This study investigates the experiences of Bangladeshi migrant students who have obtained permanent residency (PR) status in Sweden. This study examines the Bangladeshi migrant students' aspirations and achievements, daily experiences, and challenges in maintaining their transnational identities in Sweden. Given this context, this study is based on ethnographic observation, examining empirical data obtained through in-depth interviews. Data was gathered from a group of eighteen Bangladeshi migrant students whom the Swedish government has given permanent residency permits (PR).

The comprehensive interviews and ethnographic field observations were conducted between September, 2023 to November, 2023. For this study, the concept of transnationalism is used to analyze the network activities of Bangladeshi student migrants in Sweden and to understand the life patterns that involve both their host and home cultures. They lead transnational lives, bridging two distinct societies within a shared social sphere.

I have divided the chronology of the Bangladesh migrant students' settlement process in Sweden into three stages. The first pertains to their desire to pursue education in Sweden, the second concerns their practical encounter with obtaining a work permit, and the final one delves into their transnational identity, examining how it has influenced their present situation and whether it deviates from their initial aspirations. Throughout these stages, I observed various variations and differences in their social connections, family engagements, ways of life, and decision-making processes. Eventually, I acquired a comprehension of the structure and characteristics of transnational identity.

In the lives of Bangladeshi student migrants in Sweden, there is a strong and interconnected "spider net" connections between the family and the home country. Upon that "spider net" connections there are two identity patterns known as 'retaining Bangladeshi culture first' and 'Bangladeshi type mixed culture' involving Sweden and Bangladesh. The majority of my respondents prioritize maintaining their Bangladeshi identity over their Swedish identity. Transnationalism has established familial, social, religious, and economic connections between the countries of residence and origin. Following the work permit phase and acquisition of a permanent residence permit, Bangladeshi students encounter varying experiences contingent upon their job types and legal challenges associated with the Migrationsverket, ultimately resulting in significant psychological distress. Post-permanent residency (PR), this situation remains relatively unchanged. However, PR facilitates migrant students in seeking improved employment opportunities and obtaining financial assistance, education, and familial support. Nevertheless, they encounter "hidden barriers" when seeking employment in a specialized field, and their challenges persist in various aspects as they strive to integrate themselves socio-culturally into mainstream Swedish society.

### Keywords

Aspirations and achievements of migrant students, Transnationalism and Bangladeshi student migrants in Sweden, Social anthropology, Socio-cultural challenges for migrant students in host countries, Spider net connections, and hidden barriers.

## **Acknowledgment**

I want to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Simon Turner, for his guidance and supervision. Without his guidance, I would not have been able to complete this study.

I would also like to thank my respondents for their invaluable support and cooperation. Their participation was essential in making this study possible.

Lastly, I want to thank my wife and children's for their unwavering support and encouragement during the challenging report-writing phase. I would also like to give special thanks to my mentors, Dr. Bazlul Bari Bhuiyan and K.M Rakibul Islam Bhai, for their continuous support and guidance throughout the completion of this thesis.

## **List of Abbreviations**

BMET Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training

EEA European Economic Area

EMN European Migration Network

EU European Union

HP Higher education credit

ILO International Labour Organization

IOM International Organization for Migration

MV Migrationsverket

PR Permanent residency

SEK Currency code for the Swedish krona

SMA Swedish Migration Authority

SWEA Swedish Work Environment Authority

USA The United States of America

UK The United Kingdom

# Contents

Unfold the untold stories.

## Journey of Permanent Resident, Bangladeshi migrant student in Sweden

Content	Page number
Abstract	2
Acknowledgment	3
List of Abbreviations	4
<b>Chapter one: Introduction</b>	<b>8 -13</b>
1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 Background of the study	9
1.3 Aims and Purpose of the study	10
1.4 International student migration in Sweden	10
1.5 Scope of work permit visa	11
1.6 Scope of the study and justification	12
1.7 Research questions	13
1.8 Arrangement of the thesis	13
<b>Chapter two: Historical overview of Bangladeshi migration</b>	<b>14-18</b>
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Migrants and Immigrants	14
2.3 Permanent Residency (PR)	14
2.4 Overview of Bengali migration back to the future	15
2.5 Bangladeshi Government Initiatives Regarding Migration	17
2.6 Conclusion	18
<b>Chapter Three: Literature review on transnational migration</b>	<b>19-28</b>
3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 International migration and technological interconnectedness	19
3.2.1 Aspiration for international migration and transnationalism	20
3.2.2 Transnational communities and the transformation of home	21
3.2.3 "Digital family relations" of transnational community	22
3.2.4 Migrants' New Transnational Habitus	23
3.2.5 Trans localism as the New Paradigm	24
3.3.1 Contextualizing Formation of Diaspora of Bangladeshi Immigrants in the UK	24
3.3.2 "Little Bangladesh" in America	25
3.4 Bangladeshi Student Migration in Europe	26

3.5 Conclusion	28
<b>Chapter four: Theoretical development of transnationalism</b>	29-33
4.1 Introduction	29
4.2 How do we define Transnationalism?	29
4.3 Development of the transnationalism field	30
4.4 Diaspora and Transnational Community	31
4.5 Transnational as Social Morphology	32
4.6 Type of consciousness	32
4.7 Mode of cultural reproduction	32
4.8 Avenue of Capital	33
4.9 (Re) construction of 'place' or locality	33
4.10 Conclusion	33
<b>Chapter Five: Research Methodology</b>	34-41
5.1 Introduction	34
5.2 Reflexivity	34
5.3 Finding research area(s) and selecting participants	35
5.4 Choosing methods of data collection	36
5.4.1 Semi-structured in-depth interviews	37
5.4.2 Participant as a native observer	37
5.4.3 Ethnographic description and its site(s)	38
5.5 Method of analyzing the data	39
5.6 Ethical consideration	39
5.7 Positionality	40
5.8 Limitations	41
<b>Chapter Six: The "Investment for life" aspiration of migrant student</b>	42-47
6.1 Introduction	42
6.2 The Journey begins with migration aspiration	42
6.3 Home country's economic situation and Government policies	43
6.4 Kinship and network bondage of individuals	43
6.5 Scandinavian welfare system, culture, and health care system	44
6.6 Technological connectivity as an influencer	45
6.7 Investment for Dreams	45
6.8 Conclusion	47
<b>Chapter Seven: Difference between dreams and reality: Initial life stage of migrant student</b>	49-60
7.1 Introduction	49
7.2 Migrate Student huddles and how they navigate their life.	49
7.2.1 Leaving behind their family	50

7.2.2 Opening a bank account	50
7.2.3 Housing problem	51
7.2.4 "Living in Sweden requires three W: work, weather, and wife."	51
7.2.5 Language barrier	52
7.3 Work-related Involvements	52
7.4. 1 Working experiences of work permit holders	53
7.4.2 Official job work experiences	54
7.5 Unofficial job work experiences: "Any idiot Swedish is better than an outsider"	55
7.5.1 Working in an international chain restaurant	55
7.5.2 Working in an Indian Restaurant	57
7.6 Migrationsverket related experiences	58
7.7 Online community through Facebook groups	60
7.8 Conclusion	60
<b>Chapter Eight: Transnational identity: combating with invisible fences and spider net connections</b>	<b>61-73</b>
8.1 Introduction	61
8.2 The struggle continued with 'invisible fences.'	61
8.2.1 Experience with 'Unofficial Job'	61
8.2.2 Experience with 'official job'	63
8.3 Transnational social life 'spider net' connections	64
8.4 Remittance as responsibilities and connections	65
8.5.1 "Transculturation" of Bangladeshi Migrant Students	66
8.5.2 After-work party	67
8.5.3 Family purpose	68
8.6 Maintain culture in their own way	68
8.6.1 Collective activities	69
8. 6. 2 On an individual level, "Bangladeshi type Swedish culture"	70
8.6.3 After touching the dream	71
8.6.4 'Bidesh (foreign) is like a trap'	72
8.7 The new way for transnational Bangladeshi	73
8.8 Conclusion	73
Bibliography	75
Appendix: One	86
Appendix: Two	87

## Chapter One

### Unfold the Untold Stories,

#### Journey of Permanent Resident, Bangladeshi Migrant Student in Sweden

##### 1.1 Introduction

This study is about the life experiences of Bangladeshi migrant students who have obtained permanent residency in Sweden through a work permit. , the study focuses on their aspirations, their experiences in working life, and as transnational individuals, their changing relationships with their 'home.' Finally, how do they define their dynamic identity in Swedish culture?

The idea for this study emerged from the life experiences of a Bangladeshi permanent resident migrant. I was invited to a Bangladeshi house party. The host had bought his new apartment. On this occasion, he invited his closest Bangladeshi community members. There were about twenty people, including children. Some of them had been living in Sweden for decades. When the host introduced them, he said, "This is Mudad Bhai; he has a Swedish passport; this is Sumon Bhai, he has a work permit; that is Sudip Dada; he came as a student last year. This is Songita Didi. She is shudip dadas wife. Faruque Bhai is fem Italy. He has an Italian passport. ...." Through this introduction, he classified the guests based on their residency status in Sweden during the informal conversation with the host. I asked him why he introduced the guests in this way. He told me, "In Sweden, you have no value if you don't have any legal documents. If you have a permanent residency, you have every opportunity. Here, the immigration rules are so strict. Documents are essential. I fought for my papers and my current position for more than eight years". He told me his life story about how he fought for a permanent residence permit and then for a "better job." The above statement impresses me. It gives me the basis for my research idea. His struggle for a "document" (a legal paper) inspired me to learn more about it. That is why I want to understand the other PR holders' Bangladeshi migrant student life stories in Sweden.

For example, they have lived in Sweden for years and connected with their home country in very dimensional ways; they are transnational. Consequently, I used the transnational lens to comprehend their everyday trajectories. As a transnational individual, how they maintain their social, cultural, economic, religious, and political relations with both their host and home country will also be investigated throughout this study.



## 1.2 Background of the study

In recent years, migration has been treated as a movement of people from one place to another and is considered a development tool for countries of origin and destination alike. Additionally, Castle, Hans, and Miller (2014) observed and pointed out two significant factors for migration: "primarily movement of commodities" and "movement of capital." (Stephen Castles, 2014). According to the World Migration Report 2022, it was projected that 281 million international migrants comprised 3.6% of the world's population in 2020. (McAuliffe, 2021).

The Bangladeshi population is a significant part of the statistics of the world migrant population as an origin country. They primarily benefited from labor migration, where they took its poverty reduction strategy. The government facilitates orderly movements through labor agreements with destination countries. They adjust the education system to build low and skills populations as per countries' requirements. Moreover, they prepare to send their citizens to obtain better jobs if they migrate and thus contribute more through remittances and knowledge transfers. (Ang and Tiongson, 2023; Bossavie, 2023; World Development Report, 2023).

This specifies that there are ample opportunities for high-skill, educated, and professional migrants. That's why Bangladesh tries to capitalize on that scope for its economic development and transfer knowledge. It can be defined as a "Brain drain". Immigrant students contribute a significant part of that brain drain. We can find that if we observe the recent trends of Bangladeshi student migration. The number of students going abroad for higher studies has tripled in the last fifteen years. In the year 2022, a total of 49,151 students went abroad to study in 58 countries. (Alamgir.M, 2023). In 2020, almost eleven thousand student resident permits were granted in Sweden. Of these resident permits, 585 were given to Bangladeshi Students. (Dyvik, 2023)

It is not only one-sided; both receiving and sending immigrants are mutually beneficial for the result of this migration. Improved technological advancement and communication systems laid the platform for international migration. As a result, economically developed countries need huge educated, skilled labor, and developing countries need remittance and expert knowledge, where student migration emerged as a solution and scope for both the sending and host countries.

In recent decades, a new group of immigrants has emerged who complete their studies, find jobs, and choose to stay in foreign countries, creating a new transnational community. It is worthy that many European countries identify the advantage of international students and graduates, considering them skilled migrants due to their innovation, language skills, contribution to social integrity, and ability to meet labor demand. (Raghuram, 2012). In this study, my respondents are Bangladeshi nationals who came to Sweden as international students, and after completing their studies, they found a job and chose to stay in Sweden.

### **1.3 Aims and Purpose of the study**

The study's objective is to understand the experiences of Bangladeshi migrant students comprehensively. The study will explore several key themes, aspirations of Bangladeshi migrant students followed by permanent residents in Sweden, The challenges and opportunities that they face in the PR process and afterward, and the role of social, cultural, economic, and political networks and support systems in their transnational experiences. The study will also examine the impact of Swedish migration policies and regulations on the experiences of Bangladeshi students. All the themes are interconnected and experienced inversely by the students.

An ontological position to understand Bangladeshi migrant students' thoughts, social actions, and rationality, this research will explore and understand through their perspective, experiences, narratives, stories and actions, associations, and connections. This thesis wants to recognize their aspiration and dreams for migrating to an international student and their work permit experiences on the way to achieve PR. Later, their everyday experiences of transnational belongings. The whole study will try to echo their untold voices from the emic point of view and unfold the layers of daily experiences. Where the report position would be a native facilitator. Overall, the study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the experiences of Bangladeshi students in Sweden and provide insights that can inform policies and practices to support their integration and successful pursuit of permanent residency.

### **1.4 International student migration in Sweden**

The story begins with the internationalization of higher education through student migration. Student migration is very lucrative for both the host country and individual personnel. It is like a win-win situation. Host countries can generate revenue and skilled migrant labor, and students can get a chance to change their lives through higher education. Various research on the internationalization of higher education is found, giving emphasis on Canada, the USA, the United Kingdom, and the predecessor of the internationalization of higher education (Gürüz, K., 2011). However, other European countries have adopted internationalization in their education systems to attract international students. (Gürüz, K. 2011). As a result, European countries have become the higher study destinations for many students from all over the world. In Europe, many institutions have internationalization policies (61%) compared to other parts of the world, which is lower than in Europe (Morris-Lange, 2015).

According to the OECD (2015), in 2015, Sweden ranked number 16 on the list of student-receiving countries. In 2022, 14,536 international students came for higher studies. Every year, a lot of Bangladeshi students get admission to different universities in Sweden to pursue higher degrees. Some of the world's best and oldest universities are established in Sweden. At the government and university levels, there are many scholarship opportunities that also attract international students to study in Sweden. However, study costs, job opportunities, the easy visa process, and Swedish culture can influence and guide international students to choose Sweden. Bangladeshi students are also attracted to observing those features.

Higher education in Sweden is free for Swedish residents and incoming EU nationals. However, starting from the academic year 2010/2011, third-country nationals who are not residents of Sweden but wish to pursue higher education must pay tuition fees. Despite tuition fees every year, many students still choose Sweden as their study destination.

According to the European Migration Network (EMN) report "Attracting and Retaining International Students in the EU-Country Report Sweden, 2018", in 2014, there was a vital policy transformation regarding international students. For retaining high-skill international students. Sweden introduced a "job-seekers" permit, valid for six months. So, after finishing their studies, students can apply and be granted this job seeker permit. International students are also seen as an essential resource in satisfying the need for highly qualified labor. The Swedish government aims to have many international students studying at Swedish higher education institutions.

The report showed that the assessed retention rate of international students in Sweden is nearly seven percent. Many of these retained students in Sweden are from developing countries, and these students face many challenges in getting jobs in the mainstream Swedish labor market (ibid). In Sweden, academic studies are often possible in English for international students. However, after their studies, international students discovered their paucity of Swedish knowledge and the need for more private and professional networks to get in touch with employers to find jobs in their own sectors (ibid).

### **1.5 Scope of work permit visa**

After finishing their studies, many Bangladeshi students try to settle in Sweden permanently. According to the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA)-Migrationsverket website, International students can apply for work permits if they want to stay and work after completing their studies at a Swedish university. Self-employed economic activity is possible as well. International students are free to engage in self-employment or to start a business as well. As a student, it is possible to apply for a work permit visa through the Migrationsverket without leaving Sweden before their residence permit for studies expires. Migration law remarks that if someone can maintain a work permit visa for four years, he/she becomes entitled to apply for permanent residency (PR) (Migrationsverket, 2023).

As per the migration agency, work permit visas require that applicants meet specific criteria to be eligible. The offer of employment to the students must fulfill some conditions, e.g., they must finish thirty credits of study, and the offer of employment must mention that the salary is at least on par with those set by the Swedish collective agreement where minimum requirement from SEK 13000 before taxes. When I wrote this report, the Migrationsverket changed their work permit-related salary requirement to more than double. That is SEK 27,360 per month (80% of maiden salary), which will affect from 1 November 2023. The offer of employment must be approved by the worker union. The employee must get paid vacation of 25 days every year. Additionally, employees must be covered by

four types of insurance: life insurance, health insurance, occupational injury insurance, and occupational pension insurance. (Migrationsverket, 2023)

Meeting the Swedish migration law's requirements is problematic for numerous Bangladeshi student immigrants. Edwards pointed out that many migrant students fail to get jobs in their respective sectors. Therefore, they try to get jobs in other areas. (Edwards, 2019) it is very much related to the experiences of Bangladeshi students. When they fail to find any suitable subject-related job as a last resort to survive and stay in Sweden, many Bangladeshi students try to get jobs in Indian restaurants, primarily owned by the Bangladeshi people (Islam K. M. R, 2021; Dulal, 2016).

In this scenario, after all of these administrative, legal, and workplace-related hurdles, migrant students get their permanent residency. Unfortunately, those who tried and failed them have to leave the country. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to debate that the Swedish migration law and Swedish labor law probably have "unintended adverse effects (legal violence) on immigrant students." (Islam K.M.R, 2021) (Menjívar & Abrego, 2012). This study will try to draw a complete picture of the process. Not only the reason for migration but also the result of migration. Before and after PR, were there any changes in everyday life experiences, difficulties, and what they expected before and what they face now?

### **1.6 Scope of the study and justification**

Despite the rapid growth in student mobility and its apparent importance, international student migration still needs to be more researched. (Anthias. P, 2008, P.6). In Bangladesh, the need for more literature on student migration contrasts with the extensive attention paid to other migration patterns, particularly labor migration. This study would fill this gap in the literature by shedding some light on student migration and their transnational experiences or belongings in the specific context of Sweden. Student migration has enormous potential benefits for both sending and receiving countries and individual students. The benefits of student migration for the receiving country have long been recognized in terms of 'brain gain' and foreign income gained from overseas students, which the British Council estimates will be 13 billion GBP per year by 2020. (Anthias. P, 2008, P.6). So, as a native researcher, I would use transnational for

In addition, there has been increasing recognition that student migration can bring substantial benefits to the sending and receiving countries. Skill professionals can join the workforce in foreign countries, which can fulfill the skill labor crisis in the host country, where the host country gains through remittance. It is necessary to understand the future result of student migration in specific contexts and to evaluate the current system through which it takes place.

## **1.7 Research questions**

In this given background, my research participants are those successful Bangladeshi students who are rewarded permanent residency. They have achieved a new identity of "Swedish Bangladeshi." Ideally, now they have all the opportunities and facilities like native Swedish people. There is scope to examine that in reality about Bangladeshi migrants. In this scenario, this study focuses on their work permit-related experiences and later getting PR in their daily life in Sweden.

The research seeks to elucidate:

1. What underlying aspirations led Bangladeshi migrant students to choose Sweden?
2. What experiences did they face during the permanent residency process? How did they overcome that?
3. What experiences did they face after pursuing permanent residency? How do they negotiate with their new identity?

## **1.8 Arrangement of the thesis**

The structure of this thesis is arranged in the following chapters. After this introduction chapter (Chapter One), Chapter Two clarifies in what sense the frequent terms and concepts are used in this thesis. Chapter Three provides a systematic literature review. This literature review focuses on the transnational migrant population situation in Sweden, Nordic countries, the UK, the USA, and other countries worldwide. In this chapter, I have presented a systematic literature review to examine the scholarly literature that has focused on transnational migration from a different point of view, like family linkage and their identity; this literature review has helped me to find out the research gap(s), and it was helpful to engage with the mainstream debates. Chapter Four discusses the theoretical development of transnational framework.. In Chapter Five, I discussed the outlines of the study design and methodology. In Chapter Six, I have critically analyzed the empirical data aspiration for study in Sweden. Chapter seven includes the work permit period huddle of migrant students. Chapter eight of this thesis is based on the final discussion and concluding remarks, the third phase focuses on the transnational migrants' encounters with transcultural aspects of daily life, encompassing social, cultural, and economic, dimensions. Where I discuss primary empirical and theoretical findings and the significance of the thesis for policymaking.

## Chapter two

### Historical overview of Bangladeshi migration

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is based on the key terms and concepts I have used in several places of this study. Migrants and Permanent Residency (PR) These terms and concepts have varying meanings based on contextualization. Therefore, in what sense these particular terms and concepts are used in this study are clarified in this chapter.

The second part is an overview of Bangladeshi migration trend from the British period to the present. Additionally, governmental initiatives regarding migration. This historical contextual information is needed for the readers of this thesis to be familiar with the analysis of the empirical data.

#### 2.2 Migrants and Immigrants

For this study, the terms migrants and immigrants are used interchangeably. Definition by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Migration Report migrant means-

'A person who moves away from their usual residence, whether it is within the same country or across an international border, can do so for a variety of reasons. This could be a temporary or permanent move, and the reasons behind it might range from work or education to personal or family-related matters.'

That means migrant persons move from their birthplace or usual residence to another country or cross an international border to a host country of which they are not nationals and try to settle in temporarily or permanently by fulfilling the host country's legal requirements. That movement may done for various reasons. (IOM, World Migration Report 2020; Islam, K.M.R, 2021). All of the respondents in this study have to fulfill the Swedish legal requirement to get their permanent residency.

#### 2.3 Permanent Residency (PR)

Swedish Migrationsverket is the authority concerned with providing permanent residence permits. On their website (<https://www.migrationsverket.se>), the student gets all the required migration-related information and directives. This section is also constructed with the help of their information.

As per Migrationsverket, you must meet certain eligibility criteria and follow a specific application process to apply for permanent residency in Sweden. Regardless of the residence permit type, one with a resident permit can apply for PR. To obtain a permanent residence permit, an applicant must full fill requirement for a permanent residence permit in Sweden: 1) you must have lived in the country with a residence permit for a certain period. 2) Be able to support yourself financially. 3) Live an orderly life.

The criteria for acquiring a permanent residence permit in this country are that, as a general rule, one must have had a residence permit for at least three years. There are some exemptions exist for self-

employed individuals who can get a permanent residence permit after two years. However, most people would have to wait for at least four years before applying for a permanent residence permit since most temporary residence permits are valid for two years. It is quite a process, but it will be worth it. If applicants are doctoral students, an applicant can submit their application for a permanent residence permit via a special e-service.

For permanent residency, the migrant student must be able to support themselves through taxed income from legal employment. According to the previous requirement, the applicant must earn SEK 13,000 monthly. From November 1, the new requirement comes into force: Applicants must instead earn a salary corresponding to at least 80 percent of the median salary in Sweden to be considered a good income. This currently means a salary of at least SEK 27,360 per month. Or their own company, or a combination of employment and personal company. They must meet the maintenance requirement if their monthly income from their employment or company covers their housing costs and the average amount for a single adult. (Migrationsverket, 2023)

The Swedish Migration Authority calculates a "new normal amount" each year. The standard amount for 2023 is SEK 5,717 per month for a single adult in 2023. The Swedish Migrationsverket uses the minimum amount for a single adult in its calculation because it only requires that applicants support themselves to obtain a permanent residence permit.

When a migrant student is granted a valid permanent residence permit as long as they live in Sweden, they will receive a residence permit card as proof that they have a valid residence permit for up to five years. The card is not a valid travel document. Traveling outside Sweden, you must carry a valid passport and residence permit card to re-enter the country.

## **2.4 Overview of Bengali migration back to the future**

It is difficult to identify the exact time from when Bangladeshi migrations started. From the research and historical records, we can trace the Bengali migrant's tracks. Bangladesh was a part of the Indian sub-continent from 1757 to 1947 under British rule. (Islam,K.M.R, 2021) The region was known as "Bangla"/Bengal during that time. It is well-established that migration from "Bengal" to abroad has happened for over a century. (Visram.R, 1986).

The trend began in the early 1900s when many Bengalis migrated to the United Kingdom. Under colonial rule, East India Company nabobs recruited Bengali servants and lascars (sailors) to work on British ships and households in England. (Visram,R, 1986; Rashid. S., & Shafie. H, 2016,p. 24). Visram pointed out that after African slavery was legally ended in 1833. Asian Labor was considered cheaper than others. At that time, a vast migration arose. White English could not afford white servants, and Africans due to "trust issues," "high cost, and "availability." Bengali men, women, and kids appeared as the best choice. Besides those who worked as servants, their treatment was not better than that of another black in England. Kids are treated as "pat boy." Whereas women worked as an "ayahs" "servant to a lady." At the same time, men worked as lascars (sailors) (Visram.R, 1986).

Replacing enslaved Black people, Bengali were treated the same as blacks. Sometimes worse than before. By the late eighteenth century, lascars drew public concern due to their poor, unpleasant working conditions and low wages from British employers. (Fryer,P, 1984,p.79). These sailors came from East Bengal, especially Chittagong, Noakhali, and Sylhet. These are the first people of millions of South Asians to be drawn into the global labor market to British territories in the nineteenth century (Clarke et al., 1990; Wolf, 1982, pp. 368-70)

Over time, these migrant laborers established themselves over there. Their influence increasingly dominates such areas. In East Bengal, it was noticeable that Sylheties lascars (sailors) had become particularly closely connected to Britain. A considerable amount of cheap Labor is also collected from this area. By the mid-twentieth century, they had slowly monopolized employment (Gardner. K, 1995, p.36). Katy Gardner, in her ethnographic study "Global Migrants, Local Lives: Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh" (1995), described the detailed historical journey of Sylhety sailors to Britain. Working as a sailor was the initial stage of their migrant life. The ships travel all over the globe to the Far East, Australia, America, Europe, and Britain. Once they had docked, especially in London and New York port friends or fellow Sylhet citizens to help them find accommodation and work. Gardner's distinct, individual men were critical in providing shelter for their incoming fellow citizens. Through this process of Sylhety migration, they were chronologically developed in Britain. During that time, many men in Britain worked hard for their families.

The flow of cheap labor migrants continued until the early 1960s. Later, in the 1970s, the oil price boom explored the Middle East's labor market. Huge economic. Expansion creates new job opportunities. (Rashid 2011:90). Labor recruited from all over the world to the Middle East. Unfortunately, South Asian Labor is at the bottom of the pile regarding working conditions, security, and pay. (Owens, 1985,p. 12). Bangladesh gained independence in 1971. Labor migration flows flourish in multiple ways in different countries. Between 1976 and 2010, about 6.7 million workers went abroad with temporary work permits to the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Europe. That was about 12.7% of the country's total labor force then. (Rashid. S., & Shafie. H, 2016, p. 24) Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) data shows that between 1976 and 2017, only ten destination countries constituted 96 percent of the total overseas migration. Only three countries (i.e., Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Oman) constituted 73.4 percent of the total migration. (IOM, 2020, p.34)

In contrast to labor migration, another main migration flow emerges: student migration. Bangladeshi students migrated to the UK, America, Australia, Japan, and Europe to pursue higher studies. Relatively wealthy and well-educated Bangladeshis go to these countries to study at different universities. Getting citizenship or a work permit after graduation is sometimes possible in the US and Australia. This makes studying in those countries highly attractive, although out of reach, economically and academically, for the vast majority of Bangladeshis. (Rashid. S., & Shafie. H, 2016, p. 24)

Many Bangladeshi students have left the country to study abroad in recent decades. The number has grown in the last fifteen years, and the flow of students leaving could not be ebbed for several reasons,



including the lack of quality in higher education, political uncertainties, and limited scope of employment opportunities in the country. (Alamgir. M, 2023; The Daily Star, 2023).

We find one contextual answer if we observe the Bangladeshi labor migration trend to different countries, referring to Katy Garner's work. She added, "such as wanting a good income source, ensuring a bright future for their children, empowering their families by owning lands in Bangladesh and mostly to bring themselves up from poverty and uncertainty of financial stability." (Gardner. K, 1995, P.50)

It is interesting to note that historically, we have observed individual initiatives to migrate abroad from Bangladesh. However, after gaining independence and becoming an independent state in 1971, the government became interested in labor migration. In recent times, facilitating international migration from the policy level to implementation is a positive step toward ensuring safe and legal migration for the people of Bangladesh. Now, I will discuss Bangladesh's government initiatives regarding migration.

## **2.5 Bangladeshi Government Initiatives Regarding Migration**

Bangladesh's government recognizes migration's positive contribution and sets development priorities and targets dedicated to migration in the agenda for sustainable development by 2030. On the policy level, they aim to facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration through well-managed migration policies. This includes the effective implementation of policies that help migrants to access regular channels for migration. It also includes administrative hassle-free visa processing facilities for migrants. Besides, it aims to protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, especially women migrants and those in precarious employment. This includes applying effective cross-border health measures, strengthening public health issues, and detecting irregular migration trafficking, smuggling, and trans-border criminal activities.

Bangladesh's Seventh Five-Year Plan (FY2016–FY2020) recognizes migration as an integral component of the country's development process. The plan classifies migration as a significant development driver by creating employment for many workers. In addition, the five-year master plan has been working towards a solid legal framework for labor migration, mainly through the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act (OEMA) 2013 and the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016.

Migrant populations play a dominant role by earning foreign remittance. The Ministry of Welfare and Overseas Employment estimates that thirteen million Bangladeshis live abroad, the fourth highest among the top twenty countries of origin for international migrants. As per the International Organization of Migration (IOM) report 2022, Bangladesh earned 21.75 billion USD in remittances in 2020. Recent studies also show that the Bangladeshi government adjusts the education system to build low- and high-skill populations as demand countries require. (Ang and Tiongson, 2023; Bossavie, 2023).

In the education system, The National Education Policy 2010 aims to provide world-class higher education and, in the recommendations, develop skilled manpower. Besides, goals include enabling

network infrastructure and connectivity and enhancing information and communication technology (ICT) capacity.

In the academic year of 2023, Bangladesh has formally adopted a new skill-based curriculum for secondary and higher secondary levels. Learners will be introduced to coding, AI, data analytics, digital security, and other relevant technologies to promote digital literacy. This strategy promotes critical thinking and active engagement, making it the perfect way to get learners ready for the challenging demands of the future global economy (Hossain, 2023). It reflects the government initiatives regarding the skilled youth population; those are ready for demand countries' requirements.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Overall, the migration trend of Bengali people started from the British colonial era. From lasker to present student migration. This whole discussion lends substance to my understanding that even the Bangladeshi Swedish transnational community is very much connected, coming to examine their destiny with the hope of establishing their settlement here. This was also the case in Bangladesh during the 1970s; as Gardner stated, "Access to foreign countries today is seen as the prime means to improve one's economic position in Sylhet" (Gardner. K, 1995, p.50). Faruq, in his research, also endorses that Bangladeshi students are choosing Sweden as a destination country for their studies, intending to settle in Sweden. (Faruq, 2021). From the beginnings of migration history in London to present-day Sweden, the systems of power that regulate the economy and discipline people have played a significant role (Blanc et al., 1995). History reveals that the host country is always in a "better position" in the power dynamics. They use migrants as a source of "cheap labor." This was the situation in the past and is still the example today. However, the form of exploitation has changed in the course of globalization. It has become more sophisticated.

## Chapter Three

### Literature review on transnational migration

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will review a methodical literature review on transnational and student migration. Four relevant sections are presented in the outline and structured as follows. Initially, the focus on literature shows research-based international migration and transnationalism. The additional part focuses on Bangladeshi migration-related studies concentrating on labor migration. Thirdly, works on Bangladeshi student migration-related studies, primarily based on the European context (UK et al.). In the last part of this chapter, I will outline the research gap(s) acknowledged in the publications; the primary aim of the chapter is to review the scholarly literature that has focused on the situation of migration workers with particular attention to the transnational society. This literature review helped me understand the migration scholarships and debates related to transnationalism and identify my study position.

#### 3.2 International migration and technological interconnectedness

A lot of academic research deals with aspiration, international migration, and transnationalism. For my research, these three are relevant to understanding the theoretical perspective of Bangladeshi transnational students' experiences. Therefore, I have selected some that are relevant to my topic and discussed them accordingly.

Marianne Gullestad (2002), in her article "Invisible Fences: Egalitarianism, Nationalism, and Racism," Examines the relationship between egalitarianism, nationalism, and racism in Europe, Particularly in Norway and other Nordic countries. Combining an open capitalist economy and a bureaucratic welfare state provides a unique context for this analysis. She argues that there are still barriers and inequalities based on cultural and social factors such as ethnicity, race, and national identity.

Immigration is a site for racial and racist discourse. Where a racialization of difference takes place, and it becomes a site of conjuncture between the welfare state and its citizens. The current debate on immigration in Norway shows that equality conceived as sameness, or 'imagined sameness,' underpins a growing ethnification of national identity. The discourse on immigration in Norway draws upon the metaphor of home and family life, emphasizing the close link between territory and generalized kinship and highlighting the renewed importance of Lutheran Christianity in contrast to Islam. This model of Group identity and relationship suggests that organizational boundaries and cultural substances transform one another rather than being based on different or even opposed approaches.

This article enriches my understanding of Bangladeshi migrant students' situation and analysis of how Bangladeshi Students face Swedish society, their attitude in their workplace, and how they encounter everyday life in Sweden.

Pedro J. Oiarzabal and Ulf-Dietrich Reips (2012), in their "Migration and Diaspora in the Age of Information and Communication Technologies," describe the technology, migration, and diaspora. This

article combines seven essays based on the connection of migration and technology; Pedro and Ulf have conducted separate analyses on migration and diaspora, which they have presented in different essays. However, they both seem to have arrived at a common thematic point: the emergence of new media and technological networks developed by individual and family migrants have contributed to the construction of transnational and diasporic communities. They have brought the example of Arab reevaluation to demonstrate the impact of technology on migration and how it has facilitated the flow of people across the globe. Personal computers and cell phone access to the Internet have become common resources that migrants use to create, develop, and maintain formal and informal relationships both in the physical and digital worlds. This has reinforced and sharpened their individual and collective identity. (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Castles, 2014;Cohen, 1999).

Possibly, there have been significant differences in the experiences of migrant people before and after technological upgradation like internet communication and digital media (Alonso & Oiarzabal, 2010) There is no doubt that the migration experience has undergone major changes since the advent of the Internet and digital communication media. In the past, migrant people relied heavily on traditional ways of communication, such as letters or telephone calls. While these methods are still used today, the rise of technology has given us more options to connect with others, such as email, text messaging, and video calls, to stay connected with their family members and friends back home. This was often a slow and expensive process, and many migrants felt isolated and disconnected from their home communities (Silverstone, 2005).

In the empirical part, they overviewed several individual original papers on the instrumentalization of information and communication tools such as Facebook and mobile phones, among other media devices, by migrants and Diasporas.

Overall, both authors try to outline migration, diaspora, and communication technology. Here, they explore how the Internet reshapes diasporic communities and evolves new dimensions of personal and communal relationships transnationally. The relation network that builds would be personal, social, and political. So, the digital platform helps people adapt to the new space of "illusion" and become an active part of the global community.

### **3.2.1 Aspiration for international migration and transnationalism**

Carling and Collins, in their paper "Aspiration, desire and Drivers of Migration" (2018), examine seven research papers closely related to the concepts of aspiration, desire and drives to migration. They focused on better understanding the forces and frictions through which migration occurs and is experienced. Why do people migrate, how do they decide where to go, and whether migration movements are increasing or decreasing? The assumption is that whether migrants are entrepreneurs or students, more or less skilled or affluent, they will determine which locations offer more benefits to them or their families.

The author adds that transnationalism was founded in the 1990s by anthropologists. It is a new concept for understanding and studying ethnic community formation and politics in the United States (Basch et

al., 1995; Rouse, 1991). Soon, transnationalism became a seminal indicator for all kinds of cross-border initiatives related to migration and other social, cultural, and economic processes (Collins, 2018).

As a new theoretical perspective, the transnational approach has enabled the analysis of migration as a geographical entity that goes beyond considering migrants in their "sending" or "receiving" nation-state. Moreover, transnationalism crucially challenges the notion of the old single-straight movement. It can involve complex and multi-faceted movements that are not necessarily linear. People may move to different places for different reasons, and their journeys may involve a variety of stops and detours along the way. It's essential to examine migration from a holistic perspective rather than assuming it can be understood as a single, straight-line movement (Carling & Collins, 2018). This new dimension of optics involves scholars recognizing the various ways in which migrants are embedded in transnational social fields (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004), move through transnational channels and use transnational resources for political, social, and economic life (Smith, 2001).

The authors suggested that in striving and desiring, not only economic rationality but also human emotions play an essential role. They added, "Emotions play a role in people's migration plans, in their interactions with people they meet during the migration process, in their attachment to homelands and in their sense of belonging in the new environment" (Baldassar, 2013; Svašek, 2010). As Svašek (2010) notes, emotions in migration can refer to 'bodily experience – pleasure or pain as a result of a concrete interaction' or involve "a thought, a memory, a feeling in response to an image, a text, and a symbol."

Overall, the transnational approach reconfigures our understanding and analytical lance of the drivers of migration. This is because it emphasizes the migration process in a new context in which migrants simultaneously establish and maintain regular connections to their homeland and other places and influence each other.

### **3.2.2 Transnational communities and the transformation of home**

Al-Ali, N. S., & Koser, K. (2002). "New approaches to migration: transnational communities and the transformation of home ."The book critically examines the transnational approach to contemporary international migration. There is a growing emphasis on the concept of "transnational communities" and the notion of "home" among international migrants. The meaning of home for these individuals constantly evolves as new globally-oriented identities emerge. The dynamic relationship between migrants and their homes is a defining characteristic of transnational migration. According to Al-Ali (2002), the meaning of "home" for transnational migrants is likely intricate and multi-faceted. It is no longer confined to a specific geographical location but a fluid construct that transforms over time.

The authors propose that transnational communities can be formed through various means, including social networks, cultural and religious affiliations, and political activism. These communities can act as a support system for migrants, providing them with emotional, financial, and social support.

Furthermore, they can also facilitate the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and resources between migrants and their home countries. In my study, I can relate this new approach of transformation of "home" and transformation of transnational community to understand how Bangladeshi Students perceive their "home" and how they transform their Bangladeshi identity in everyday life within the Swedish community and culture.

### **3.2.3 "Digital family relations" of transnational community**

Transnational communities connect with their families through the internet and telecommunications systems. Loretta Baldassar et al. (2018) highlighted this issue in their research. In their study, "Transnational Families in the Era of Global Mobility" (2018), the authors bring the family from the "backstage" of the analysis of globalization and migration to the forefront.

In this paper, the authors explore the effect of globalization on discrimination and inequality. They argue that the neoliberal economic agenda, prioritizing autonomous markets over social welfare provision, has exacerbated these issues. The authors seek to understand the integral nature of these problems and their implications for society. This article shows that exchange, defined as the "glue" of kinship and the constituent of family life (Baldassar 2016:p.20), has become a central lens through which to examine the relationship between migration and globalization and families. The author has identified two dimensions of the relationship: The 'crisis of care' (Baldassar, 2016) and the 'crisis of social reproduction' (Kofman & Raghuram, 2015).

In the global economic periphery, many families and houses face crisis due to the uneven development caused by globalization. Various crises, such as economic, social, and political instability, are the reason for migration overcoming this crisis (Kofman & Raghuram, 2015). Migration is believed to improve people's livelihoods and financial situation, enabling them to provide more for their family or household. From this reasoning, it is clear that people migrate not for their personal or own benefit but as part of a larger strategy to support their family, children, spouse, kin, and extended family members. Moreover, they are planning for a better life in the future.

Second, household members are extended across borders when a family member is not with the migrating person. They transform into "global households" (Douglass, 2006) and "transnational families" (Baldassar et al., 2014), where members are separated for an extended period. The conceptual shift to a transnational framework illustrates the "mobility turn" in social science (Urry, 2007). An important observation shows that family and community members do not migrate but can remain connected and active participants in social relationships stretched across time and place.

David Harvey (1989) describes this as a "time-space –comparison." In this article, the authors show four different case studies of Brazilian, Australian, and Italian migrants and refugees as they survive, stay connected through phone, Skype, and mail, and share their photos with family members. Women send remittances to their families to provide for them.

The question is whether a technological option is beneficial and accessible to all groups of people by age and gender, social status, economic situation, and country of origin. The authors elucidate, "The increasing reliance on temporary migration regimes is impacting the educated middle class, especially youth, as well as the working and underprivileged classes. Access to the Internet and the skills to use it are increasingly important determinants of people's ability to participate in social and political life, not only in terms of access to information but also in terms of family and social support and connections."

The authors address a fundamental problem of family support. It shows that the Internet and telecommunications can create a "digital family relation" of transnational families. Here, place and geographic location are abolished through technological advances. People with migrant backgrounds are closely connected to their spouses, children, and other family members. For a better future or an acceptable livelihood, they choose to migrate to a better, economically strong country. Through the accessibility of the Internet, transnational families can be connected and care for each other across distances. Finally, the authors raise an interesting problem: When a mother is far away from her child, the material presented is not reflected in the emotional bond, and the care issue is taken over digitally. Interestingly, the concept of family changes; the family is created, maintained, and reproduced.

#### **3.2.4 Migrants' New Transnational Habitus**

Transnational migration has taken on a new dimension of investigation in Nedelcu's paper, "Migrants' New Transnational Habitus: Rethinking Migration through a Cosmopolitan Lens in the Digital Age"(2012). Nedelcu examines the emergence of new transnational social structures and transnational habitus facilitated by the digital revolution embedded in globalization processes where the migrant becomes a leading social actor. (Pedro J. Oiarzabal & Ulf-Dietrich Reips, 2012). However, this article proposes a cosmopolitan reading of international migration, focusing on ICTs' role in creating new forms of coexistence and transnational action in the digital age. This article addresses social transformations on both an epistemological and empirical level. Her Study of Romanian migrants living in Switzerland was conducted between 2002 and 2007. ICT shows how migrants adopt cosmopolitan values while defending particularistic values and learn to draw their strength from a new culture of difference and otherness. According to Nedelcu's analysis of the transnationalization approach, there is a growing disjunction between territory, subjectivity, and collective social movement (Appadurai, 1996, p. 189). This approach apprehends various economic, cultural, and political practices and dynamics that cut across national borders, generating new social morphologies such as transnational communities, networks, and social spaces. (Nedelcu, 2012).

Nedelcu finally concludes that it focuses on the transnational dimension of socialization processes, highlighting the emergence of a transnational illusion. The findings indicate that online migrants develop a transnational habitus by combining cultural references from their physical and virtual journeys. In addition, the study highlights the blurring of boundaries between migrant and non-migrant populations as social life becomes deterritorialized for both mobile and sedentary populations. The

transnationalization of habitus reflects the broader transnationalization of social structure, which warrants revisiting Bourdieu's theory of habitus." (Nedelcu, 2012).

### **3.2.5 Trans localism as the New Paradigm**

In his groundbreaking *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Appadurai, 1996), Appadurai illustrates transnationalism in diverse features. He provides a new paradigm of trans-locality as opposed to transnationalism. Appadurai's work on globalization and cultural dimensions has influenced other scholars to consider translocality a more suitable model for community-level analysis. Using the concept of 'scapes,' Appadurai explores global cultural spaces and flows, providing a nuanced understanding of transnationalism. It is fascinating to see how different scholars build on each other's work to develop new ways of thinking about complex issues.

In his book, Appadurai presents a unique perspective on the cultural study of globalization. He argues that immigration is crucial in shaping social forces and creating alternatives to the nation-state. Which some predict will become obsolete. Appadurai focuses on the current era of globalization, characterized by mass migration and electronic mediation. He offers fresh insights into the consumption patterns of popular culture, debates around multiculturalism, and ethnic violence. Appadurai also examines the international circulation of images of lifestyles, popular culture, and self-representation through the media, often borrowed inventively. Overall, his work provides a new framework for understanding the complexities of globalization and its impact on contemporary society.

It is fascinating to explore the connection between our imagination of the world and how it shapes our understanding of ourselves. The social institutions we participate in also significantly impact us, and Appadurai challenges the conventional dichotomy between concepts like culture and power, tradition and modernity, and global and local. In his view, the imagination is a crucial element in how we construct our present and future worlds, and it offers us a way to transcend these traditional boundaries.

Overall, Appadurai's work is a thought-provoking analysis of the complex nature of globalization and how it shapes our social, cultural, and political lives.

#### **3.3.1 Contextualizing Formation of Diaspora of Bangladeshi Immigrants in the UK**

In this study, the authors contextualize the formation of the diaspora of Bangladeshi immigrants in the UK by Mohammad Morad, Shahabul Haque, and Jahangir Alam (2014), analyzing three broad types of diaspora characteristics- 1. Dispersion; 2. Connection with the homelands; and 3. Continue a distinctive identity in the host society. Research-based on secondary data, this study explores that Bangladeshi diasporic members mainly dispirited from their home country for economic reasons. This migration of Bangladeshi people started in the British colonial era; research shows that landless people from the Sylhet region found jobs as dockyard workers, cooks, cook-mates, or cleaners over the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in British merchant navy ships that carried goods from Kolkata in India to all other parts of the world. This group of people had few seafaring experiences. According to experts,



they left ships when presented with the opportunity (ibid). They found themselves in several countries, such as the USA and the UK, where they introduced many small settlements.

Like many other diaspora groups, Bangladeshi immigrants in the UK maintain several linkages-economic, social, cultural, and political- with their home country, Bangladesh. A recent study on the Bangladeshi diaspora in the UK and the US shows that 84 percent of the respondents from the UK were sending remittances to Bangladesh (Siddiqui, 2004, p. 47). Studies show that these remittances are mainly used for maintaining their own or extended families' expenditures, purchasing/constructing land and houses, and increasing family income by developing businesses (Siddiqui, 2004). From the social and cultural perspective, migrant people visit Bangladesh regularly for marriage, and a religious feasible or close relative dies. In the natural or environmental deserter, they contribute by financial help.

The authors added that this diaspora community becomes more connected when the Internet and telecommunication become available. Previously, the postal service was replaced by mobile, internet-based communication with fellow members. In this host society, they present their individual life by maintaining close relations with ethnic Bangla cultural objects. Like introducing ethnic TV and Bengali newspapers, they also present their vibrant and distinctive Bengelines by doing several activities collectively through associations. By doing so, Bangladeshi immigrants in the UK work like a diaspora, as the three broad elements of the diaspora were evident in our findings and discussion.

### **3.3.2 "Little Bangladesh" in America**

"Little Bangladesh: Voices from America" is a comprehensive overview of the Bangladeshi diaspora in the USA, based on case studies across Southern California. The book results from a long multi-site ethnographic study conducted by Zahir Ahmed (2021). Ahmed explored the experiences of the Bangladeshi diaspora in Los Angeles, where he found another Bangladesh "home away from home." He wrote, "On the third street of Los Angeles, I wandered into "little Bangladesh" as a symbol of an ethnic identity. When he found the Bengali life and immigrant neighborhood, he advocated that 'place' and 'identity' become highly complex when considering second-generation children born and raised in America. Children do not often perceive 'desh' (homeland) and 'bidesh' (outside the homeland/America) the way their parents tend to. He argues that this contestation around meanings given to 'desh and bidesh' is particularly important for the children involved.

This ethnographic study focuses on two main quarries to explore and map out the "narratives of migration" and show the "resultant transformation in the dreamland." Ahmed's work explores the everyday practices of immigrants and tells us about "transnational habitus." Individuals' motivation, strategies, hopes, and desires with the border historical, economic, and political conditions that shape their lives abroad.

The study validates the role of "social capital" (Bourdieu, 1986) and "symbolic capital" in influencing the migration experiences of Bangladeshi migrants and how their social and economic mobility is

impacted by access to those capitals. Additionally, he scrutinizes the challenges and risks associated with migration and the limitations imposed by immigration and legal policies by the host country.

He raised the question of the relationship between migration, globalization, and religious practice. Then shows that for many Bangladeshi Muslims, Islam is important in many ways (e.g., from the point of view of 'community' and in terms of their relationship with 'there'). They stick to the basic principles and values but are not especially devout and are certainly not radicalized.

Meanwhile, Ahmed's work provides rich insights into the lives of Bangladeshi migrants in the US and sheds light on complex social and economic factors that shape migration patterns and outcomes. He analyzes the migrant population to get help from their kinship linkage to migrate to the US or UK. As social capital which is perceived as the extended forms of familial relationships and networks (Bourdieu, 1986) cited in Ahmed (2021), he shows family re-unification is a crucial factor behind this increased Bangladeshi immigrant groups in Southern California and creates "An Imagined Homeland in California". And then symbolic capital which is evidenced if the UK or the US Bangladeshis are into business ventures in those countries, the children of these upward mobile families are likely to attract marriages with British and American citizens to enhance the connectedness to Britain and America (Gardner, 1995, p. 69; Ahmed, 2021).

Under the theme of peace, security, and relatedness, he narrates that apart from all those successful, wealthy Bangladeshi Americans, there are people who became illegal migrants who tried to go to the US through brokers and agencies, which are primarily frauds in Bangladesh, this kind of brokers give false hope to people that they will go to the overseas with high paid jobs and good lifestyle but once these brokers get the money, few of them cons by not even sending those aspiring people out of Bangladesh and few Bangladeshis become able to go to the US but then become illegal, or the way they lead Their life is complicated. This helps my study understand Bangladeshi students' complex everyday lives and how they negotiate with Swedish society.

### **3.4 Bangladeshi Student Migration in Europe**

There is a good number of research on international migration. However, especially for Bangladeshi students, migration needs to be improved. We can find some migration-related interesting research on Bangladeshi students' immigration in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the UK context. Those give me find out my position and justification for my study.

Penelope Anthias has done a mixed-method action research. Title "Student migration from Bangladesh to The UK." (2008). her study aimed to enhance our understanding of student migration from Bangladesh to the UK. This study evaluates the current system of the total migration process from Bangladesh to the UK. Also, observing how the process could be improved to maximize the potential benefits for all parties: individual students and both states. (Anthias, 2008)

Primarily, it seeks to identify current patterns and trends of student migration to The UK. Besides, what motivation drives you to make the decision? This study investigates the process and the role of various actors in detail, then evaluates the process and actors' activity. It is identifying what significant problems exist.

Md Lutful Bin Faruq has done additional qualitative research on Bangladeshi student life named "Migrating Abroad: Factors and Experiences of Bangladeshi Students in Umea, Sweden" (Faruq, 2021). The study aimed to examine and discuss the factors that lead Bangladeshi students to choose Sweden and Swedish universities as their overseas higher education destinations.

The study discusses the experience of Bangladeshi students during their study period in Sweden. The researcher used the "Push and Pull factors" theory to discuss the findings of his study. According to the study, social insecurity, political instability, poor education opportunities and quality in the home country, personal choice, and lack of job opportunities are considered major 'push factors.' In contrast, education quality, world-class institutions, social security, the standard of living, and an easy application process are identified as 'pull factors' that attract Bangladeshi students to choose Sweden as their higher education destination.

Recently, another qualitative research work done by Sejoti Afsana Shukti on Bangladeshi students titled "Navigating Dreams and Realities: An Auto-Ethnographical Approach to the Aspirations, Experiences, and Prospective Futures of Bangladeshi Students in Norway" (Shukti, 2023) In her thesis Shukti explore detailed events of the participants' lives, meta-narratives and situations of Bangladeshi students in Norway. Her study discussed two strategies among Bangladeshi students: 'becoming similar' and 'keeping their own culture.' She found the presence and absence of social/symbolic capital building, and she explained these approaches along with food, place, and cultural practices to identify Bangladeshi students.

K M Rakibul Islam did another research project on Bangladeshi student migrant restaurant workers. His research title is "The Informal Tactics of the Bangladeshi student migrant restaurant workers in Sweden: Crime or Survival Strategies" (Islam,K.M.R, 2021). Islam inquires about the reasons and consequences of the relationships between formal and informal laws, focusing on Bangladeshi student migrant restaurant workers. He used the concepts of 'informality,' 'legal culture,' and 'legal violence' as analytic frameworks to analyze the empirical data to understand the reasons for the Bangladeshi student migrant workers' engagement in informality, informal norms, and practices within the Swedish legal system.

In his Study, Islam used the legal lens to understand restaurant workers' course of engagement to maintain their paperwork for work permits. Student restaurant workers express their life stories in this research project. Islam's research is concentrated only on Indian restaurant workers, with no other job sectors where students also work. Their social, political, and economic activities and identity-related questions are ignored.

This study goes beyond Anthis, Faruq's, Shukty's, and Islam's work as it examines the students' aspirations and experiences and explores the outcomes of their plans based on their present circumstances. An emic point of view study will explore the experiences of Bangladeshi Transnational students in Sweden. What opportunities and hurdles are they facing before and after their permanent residency (PR)?

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Overall, the literature review has helped this study to understand the theoretical frameworks of transnationalism and international migration and their relevance to this research topic. It has also identified the research gaps in Bangladeshi transnational student migration. The following chapters will address these gaps and explore the experiences of Bangladeshi transnational students in Sweden, drawing on the insights gained from the literature review.

## Chapter Four

### Theoretical development of Transnationalism

#### 4.1 Introduction

In order to examine the research inquiries, this study employed the term "transnationalism" as a fundamental theoretical concept. The phenomenon of transnationalism is characterized by its reliance on intricate networks and robust connectivity. The various types of networks, including social, economic, and political, facilitate the transfer of information, resources, and influence across international boundaries. Migrant individuals engage in a series of economic, social, political, religious, and cultural interactions and connections between the society of their host country and their home country. The approach of constantly measuring Bangladeshi student migration has led to forming social fields that are distinct from the host society and confined by state boundaries.

#### 4.2 How do we define transnationalism?

Based on my understanding, transnationalism is a theoretical framework used in anthropology, sociology, political science, and international relations. It centers on the notion that the traditionally rigid boundaries of nation-states are undergoing a process of permeability, wherein individuals, cultures, and concepts surpass these demarcations. This perspective questions the traditional concept of the nation-state as the primary focus of study in international relations. Instead, it emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of various actors and entities that extend beyond national boundaries.

Transnationalism is intricately linked to the examination of global matters and challenges that cannot be adequately resolved solely by individual nation-states. Illustrative instances of such concerns encompass climate change, terrorism, and global pandemics. (Castles et al., 2014, p. 41). Adopting a transnational perspective has important policy implications. The statement suggests that to successfully address global challenges, promoting international cooperation and creating cross-border governance structures is crucial. This may involve strengthening international organizations and promoting mechanisms of global governance. Transnationalism is defined by its dynamic and continuously evolving nature, which reflects the constantly shifting dynamics within the globalized world. This framework thoroughly explains the complex dynamics and interrelationships beyond traditional national boundaries in the modern era.

This development of 'transnationalism' is partly a response to dissatisfaction with older, already established models of migration scholarship. Within literature, several thematic fields have been developed, including transnational economic ties (Portes, 1996; Sana, 2005) politics (Nielsen, 2002; Bauböck, 2003) (Bordes-Benayoun, 2010, p. 47) and culture (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1996; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2002; Jackson et al., 2004) or social (Faist, 2000; Pries, 2001; Vertovec, 2003; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). Transnational scholarship has investigated how migrants maintain

economic ties across borders, participate in political processes in their home countries, and navigate the cultural differences between their origin and destination countries. These thematic fields provide this study with a more nuanced understanding of migration's complex and multifaceted nature. Moreover, how 'transnationals' are different from other international migrant.

### **4.3 Development of the transnationalism field**

The emergence of transnationalism in the 1970s is intriguing as it pertains to the actions of non-state actors within the domain of international relations (Lacroix Thomas, 2009). At the beginning of the 1990s, it was introduced and used by several anthropologists in the United States to analyze migration-related activities. There were some groundbreaking debates on this concept, and it was inspired by the work of Basch et al. (1994). Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc, 1994, p.7), in their book 'Nations Unbound' defined transnationalism as well as 'transmigrants', those who participate in the process of transnationalism.

As per their definition, transnationalism refers to the processes through which immigrants establish and maintain complex social connections that connect their countries of origin and settlement. The term 'transnationalism' highlights that modern immigrants often establish social networks that extend beyond geographical, cultural, and political boundaries. Individuals who establish and sustain various connections - such as familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political - that extend across national boundaries are referred to as 'trans migrants.' The multiplicity of involvements that 'trans migrants' withstand in their home and host societies is a crucial aspect of transnationalism.

They argued that the "de-territorialization of the nation-state" immediately affected national identity and international politics. Vertovec added that globalization led to the rapid increase of transnational communities (Vertovec, 1999, p.447; Castles et al., 2014): "Transnationalism can extend face-to-face communities based on kinship, neighborhoods or workplaces into far-flung virtual communities, which communicate at a distance." Portes and his collaboration distinguish between 'transnationalism from above' and 'transnationalism from below.' Powerful institutional actors conduct transnationalism from activities like global capital, media, politics, multinational corporations, and states. Transnationalism from the activities below results from local grassroots initiatives and activity by immigrants and their home country counterparts. (Portes et al., 1999, p.221; Smith and Guarnizo, 1998). Portes and colleagues retained that the transnational field comprises a group of people who live "dual lives"; they speak two languages, have their own homes at home and abroad, and frequently visit their home country though they stay abroad. (Portes, Guarnizo & Landolt, 1999, p.217)

This study employs the concept of transnationalism from below to analyze the relationship between Bangladeshi international students and their countries of origin and destination. Furthermore, the association between fixed and specific concepts of families and households directly correlates with migratory actions that are anticipated to offer economic means and ensure the family's welfare.

#### 4.4 Diaspora and Transnational Community

Transnationalism is different from other migration scholarship. Castles et al. (2014) clarify the difference between diaspora and transnational communities. They added that "Diaspora" is a much older term for transnational communities. "The majority of migrants probably do not fit the transnational pattern. Temporary labor migrant who stay abroad for few years and send back remittances, communicate with their family at home, and visit them occasionally are not transmigrants". Nor are permanent migrant who leave forever and retain only loose contact with their homeland. Most important to the analysis of transnational social formations are structures or systems of relationship best described as networks.

Manuel Castells (1996) extended the analysis of the current information age. As described, "The network's parts—connected by nodes and hubs— are both autonomous forms and happened upon its complex system of relationship." According to Castells, new technologies are the heart of today's transnational networks. Technology does not altogether create new social patterns but facilitates and certainly reinforces pre-existing ones. (Vertovec, 2010, p. 5)

In addition, Vertovec (2010) added that dense and highly vibrant networks spanning vast spaces transform many types of social, cultural, economic, and political relationships. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992:9) noted that the transnational public sphere has challenged the traditional notion of community and locality being strictly bound to each other. This phenomenon has also facilitated the formation of a new type of solidarity and identity that does not necessarily depend on the appropriation of physical space where face-to-face interaction and proximity are the key factors. Further, Frederic E. Wakeman (1988:86) also points out that the bond between people, state, and wealth is lost through the emergence of complex networks, challenging the traditional definition of the state. In this way, the dispersed Diasporas of the old have become today's "transnational communities" based on various forms of social organization, mobility, and communication. (Gurnizo and Smith 1998)(Vertovec 2010:5).

As discussed earlier, my main theoretical framework for understanding Bangladeshi international student PR experiences through transnationalism is. To analyze my responses to everyday experiences, In particular, taking a more flexible approach to consider essential questions surrounding the flexibility of transnationalism. I used the dimensions of transnationalism as described by Vertovec. Steven Vertovec's (2010) comprehensive discussion of transnationalism covers many highly relevant dimensions to my research. I will discuss them shortly.

1. Transnational as Social morphology.
2. Type of consciousness.
3. Mode of cultural reproduction.
4. Avenue of Capital.
5. (Re) construction of 'place' or locality.

#### **4.5 Transnational as Social Morphology**

Vertovec (2010) explains social morphology with sociological concepts like transnational social movement, transnational business networks, and cyber community to understand social formations. The intensifying process of coalition-building empowers people at the base' and connects them directly to the people at 'the top' (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000,p.320) (Vertovec, 2010,p. 40). In this thesis, this dimension helps me understand Bangladeshi international students' networks of social and personal life in Sweden and other places.

#### **4.6 Type of consciousness**

Regarding the type of consciousness, Vertovec (2010) is concerned about 'diaspora consciousness marked by dual or multiple identifications.' Like Bangladeshi international students, some migrants describe and identify themselves as more involved in one society than the other. However, they have lived outside of Bangladesh for many years. Further aspects of transnational consciousness. De-centered attachment of individuals being 'home away from home 'here or there. Indeed, James Clifford (1994:322) finds, "The empowering paradox of diaspora is that dwelling here assumes a solidarity and connections there. However, it is not necessarily a single place or an exclusive nation...It is a connection (elsewhere that makes a difference (here)". Of course, common consciousness or experiences guide many people into different social forms or networks. This sort of awareness of locality stimulates the desire to connect oneself with others, which can happen 'here and there' or the person share their same 'root' and 'routes' (Vertovec, 2010, p. 6)

Further aspects of transnational consciousness are explored by Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge (1989, p.1), who advocate that whatever the form, "diaspora all the times leaves a trail of collective memory about another place and time and creates new maps of desire and attachment." Finally, we can say that transformed identity, previous migrant memory, awareness, and other modes of consciousness of individuals can be observed in contemporary forms of cultural reproduction. This idea helps me to analyze the activities of migrant Bangladeshi communities in their religious and cultural festival. Like the "Boishakhi utshob" Bangla New Year festival, women's sports, 'Eid- reunion,' 'Mahdi Utsob, 'picnics, Bangladeshi concerts, and 'Ifter Mahfil.'

#### **4.7 Mode of cultural reproduction**

Transnationalism is often related to a 'fluidity' of constructed styles, social institutions, and everyday practices. These are often described in syncretism, cultural translation, and hybridity. (Vertovec, 2010, p. 7). For example, music, fashion, film, and visual arts are some of the most noticeable areas in which such processes are observed. Many other forms of globalized media are having a considerable impact on cultural reproduction among transnational communities. Advanced satellite and cable networks play a significant role. Targeting specific religious Diasporas as well as specific ethnic communities, they operate TV channels, such as Med TV for Kurds, Zee TV for Indians, and Space TV system for Chinese,



Vietnamese, Japanese, and Korean. There are multiple complex ways in which these media are consumed. (Gillespie, 1995; Morley and Robins, 1995; Shohat and Stam, 1996).

#### **4.8 Avenue of Capital**

Transnational Corporations (TNCs) are described as a significant institutional form of transnational practice and the key to understanding globalization by economics, sociologists, and geographers. (Sklair 1995). The reason behind this is transnational Corporation's global connections and networks. Their system of investment, supply, production, marketing, information transfer, and management often create the path along with much of the world's transnational activity flow (Castell, 1996) (Vertovec, 2010, p. 8)

In addition, Vertovec introduces the "little players," the migrants who transfer relatively small amounts of remittances to their place of origin, now adding up to at least \$300 billion per year. (IFAD, 2007). For example, India has changed its national market policies to attract foreign investment from non-resident Indians (NRI). Such policy change impacts their economy tremendously. As Katharyne Mitchell (1997, p.106) observed, "The interest of the state in attracting the investments of wealthy trans migrant widens of possibilities for new kinds of national narratives and understanding." Interestingly, the trades and investment place orders with close relatives like cousins, siblings, kin nice and nephews, uncles, and aunties. (Robin Cohen 1997, p.160) (Vertovec 2010, p.9) This dimension helps me understand and analyze the remittance flow, both inward and outward, of Bangladeshi international student migrants. What are the effects on their personal life as well as social status?

#### **4.9 (Re) construction of 'place' or locality**

Some analyses have proposed that transnationalism has changed people's relation to space, particularly by creating transnational 'social fields' or 'social spaces' that connect and position some actors in more than one country. (Glick Schiller et.ad 1992; Castells, 1996; Appaduria, 1995, P.213) Distinguishes that many people face increasing difficulties in relating to or indeed producing 'locality'. Although it has a variety of meanings, transnationalism provides an umbrella concept for some of the most globally transformative processes and developments of our time. It helps me to understand Bangladeshi translations distant relations with their home and host country. Especially how they create their community involvement in host country.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

Exploring the concept of transnationalism and its impact on individual lives is remarkable. This study examines the experiences of Bangladeshi migrant students who have obtained permanent residency and are currently living in Sweden. This study further elucidates the influence of transnationalism on individual lives and identities. It is valuable to analyze the strategies employed by these individuals in managing their 'dual lives'(Vertovec, 2010) and balancing their ties with family members in their home country while simultaneously forging new connections and pursuing opportunities in their host country. Investigating the economic and social consequences of their transnational way of life is also worthwhile.

# Chapter Five

## Research Methodology

### 5.1 Introduction

Methodology refers to the fundamental principles and reasoning that guide the research process. It is closely related to epistemology, which is the study of knowledge (Castles, 2012, p. 7). Conversely, methods refer to precise techniques to gather and analyze information or data. (Castles, 2012, p. 7) The participants of this study are Bangladeshi Students who are permanent residents in Sweden. Researching this particular category of migrants necessitates a deep and committed involvement. Minority groups are usually considered "sensitive populations" and require special attention due to the intricacies associated with their vulnerable nature. (Ayala L. S., 2012, p. 117). Ethnographic methods are appropriate for this study because they encompass research techniques employed in anthropology and other social sciences to investigate and comprehend diverse cultures and societies. This ethnographic study has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the transnational residents from the Bangladeshi student community in Sweden, including their behaviors in different socio-cultural contexts of both their home country and the host country. Especially ties and contentious connections that link migrants with their 'home' country and make them transnational.

### 5.2 Reflexivity

It is crucial to analyze the methodological approaches used in studies, as research should always take into account the underlying assumptions and values that guide it. Swartz (1997) summarized Bourdieu's call for reflexivity; reflexive research involves interpretation and reflection and requires researchers to critically examine their role in knowledge production. Bourdieu argued that through self-reflection, researcher can gain a deeper understanding of participant dynamics and their interpretation of empirical data. (Swartz, 1997, p. 295). This inquiry allows for maintaining ethical commitments and can lead to new insights and hypotheses. (Sultana, 2007, p. 376; Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009, pp. 8-9) Addressing reflexivity is the inner of research. It might not be mentioned, but reflexivity may be involved in selecting the topic and the area of study. (Barusch, Gringeri & George, 2011; Probst & Berenson, 2014).

This study reflects reflexivity in electing this topic and analyzing transnational migrant life in Sweden. Ethnographic methods are appropriate for this study because these methods recognize the subjectivity of knowledge and prioritize reflexivity.

This self-reflection has enabled me to recognize my position as a researcher and the biases and perspectives that influence the research process. It has enabled me to acknowledge that as a researcher, I am not merely an impartial observer but an engaged contributor whose personal history, encounters, and viewpoints shape the research process. This recognition of subjectivity undermines the concept of objective knowledge and emphasizes the significance of comprehending the researcher's positionality in influencing the research results. As an ethnographer, I have fully immersed myself in the community or

culture I am studying, actively engaging in and participating in their daily activities; by directly participating in this activity, I acquired a more profound comprehension of the social environment. However, it also prompts inquiries regarding the impartiality of their observations. Furthermore, as an Ethnographer, I have analyzed my observations and interactions from a subjective standpoint, acknowledging that diverse viewpoints can result in varying interpretations. The focus lies on comprehending the interpretations ascribed by the individuals involved rather than imposing an external, unbiased structure.

Furthermore, as an ethnographer, I recognize that my positionality, encompassing cultural background, gender, socioeconomic status, and other variables, can potentially impact my perceptions. (Johnston et al., 2000, p.604) My ability to be aware of myself has assisted me in understanding and analyzing the data that was gathered. Furthermore, as an ethnographer, I actively participated in reflexive writing, openly addressing my experiences, biases, and contemplations regarding the research process. The transparency of this study will ultimately enable readers to comprehend the inherent subjectivity involved in data interpretation. As an ethnographer, I recognize the inherent subjectivity of knowledge and the importance of embracing reflexivity. The use of ethnographic methods in this study has provided me with a more nuanced and contextually rich understanding of the cultures and societies within my targeted population.

### **5.3 Finding research area(s) and selecting participants**

This research involved extensive multi-site ethnographic field work where the concept of 'field' was not limited to a geographical location but rather seen as an interactive plurality of sites. The field itself was "considered a conceptual and deeply rational space, with its boundaries being negotiated and redefined by the social practices of the actors involved and the research questions being asked." ( Paolo Boccagni, 2012, p. 305). In line with multi-sited fieldwork approaches (Marcus, 1995; Gardner, 1999; Clifford, 1992, 1994), this anthropological research also takes into account the broader context in which the "local" is positioned the advice to "follow the people" (Marcus, 1995) makes good sense.

I have chosen the group 'Bangladeshi migrant students' who have received permanent residency after work permit visa in Sweden as participants for this study. Their experiences in becoming permanent residents and adapting to Swedish culture are different than other Bangladeshi migrants who come on a family reunion visa or have European country passports or asylum seekers or dependent visas. That must have been inspiring for me to choose them as my respondents. Besides, I have lived in Malmo for more than three years; I have come to know many Bangladeshi student migrants who have settled here permanently, reflecting my choice of this group. Moreover, I know a few of them through our shared workplace. Some have even been granted permanent residency after finishing their work permits. When I started this research, I shared my ideas with them. They encourage me. As an insider sharing the same background and similar identity, 'Bangladeshi' and 'student migrant' as the informant, I had positive acceptance at the same time and few negative rejections (Ayala et al., 2012, p. 119). Before starting the in-depth interviews, this study undergoes through piloted the semi-structured questionnaire. After

discussing the outline with four persons with their consent, I mailed the semi-structured research questions. Then, I face difficulties in getting responses from them. Some of them refused to be part of the pilot interviews.

The study faced real challenges in finding respondents. However, I have decided to take a unique approach inspired by Marcus' (1995) "follow the people" principle. By following the trail of migrants beyond the specific cities, this study aims to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the migrant process and the experiences of Bangladeshi transnational students. This method allows for observing and documenting various stages of the journey and the challenges encountered. This approach aligns with the transnational perspective that emphasizes the interconnectedness of migrant communities across borders and regions. By following the 'migrants' trail, ' this study hopes to gain insights into their aspirations, motivations, and experiences and the broader social, economic, and political factors that shape their transnational identity.

For this study, two private social media groups based on Facebook have been used: the Bangladeshi community in Sweden (20.8K Members) and the Bangladeshi Incoming Student in Sweden (BISS). As a community member, I posted on these Facebook groups to conduct interviews for this study. I also mentioned that I want to interview the PR holders of migrant Bangladeshi students who have passed through work permits and want to share their life experiences with me. I got satisfactory responses for my posts from these groups, and twenty-one PR holders wanted to participate. After that, I communicated with those enthusiastic participants by messenger, mail, and other communication methods, sent them the questionnaires, and requested them to think before replying if they wanted to participate in my study. Within one week, eighteen from all over Sweden responded to me and wanted to participate voluntarily. Where I got the whole of Sweden's participation and covered four cities. As my native identity and shared culture, it was easy to build rapport with the participants, and as I was not using their names and cities, they felt comfortable sharing their life stories. I was also vigilant about my position as an insider \ outside border as a native researcher. (Ayala M. I., 2012)

#### **5.4 Choosing methods of data collection**

Based on qualitative methods, ethnography is an extensive approach to studying migration (Fitzgerald, 2006). Qualitative method as it is "suitable for this type of study" (Mason, 2018). This method established Anthropology apart from all other disciplines. The qualitative approach explores the nature of human culture, behavior, and experiences. Anthropological inquiry combines information about people's thoughts gathered through interviews with information collected by observing their behavior and social Interactions. (Mason, 2018).

Therefore, qualitative research methods have been used in this project, which helped to reveal the migration process and real-life experiences of permanent residents of Bangladeshi students in Sweden. Accordingly, various data collection methods used in this ethnographic fieldwork are participant

observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, described as the most appropriate data collection methods for researchers (Mason, 2018), and case studies.

#### **5.4.1 Semi-structured in-depth interviews**

Through in-depth interviews, the study tried to understand the reasons behind the phenomena I observed by deliberately letting an ethnographer communicate with the participants. (Clifford, 1992). Mason argues that interviews help to investigate the experiences of private and public lives of different categories of people (Mason, 2018). I was aware of testing questions that could lead my research to focus on the research framework. Therefore, I conducted four pilot interviews with voluntary responses.

This study fieldwork was done successfully, and empirical data was collected from September 15, 2023, to November 15, 2023. Conducting eighteen semi-structured in-depth interviews with participants in our native language, Bangla, must make it easier for both to communicate effectively. Where their local terms have been used, and it was an advantage because we shared the same culture and language. I engaged myself. The interviews continued for fifty minutes to one hour. First, record the interviews, then transcribe them. After transcription, I have taken feedback from them and confirmed the originality of the data.

This research uses two types of in-depth interview methods: face-to-face and online. Before interviewing with them, I established a rapport by having long informal conversations. For those I couldn't visit in person, I conducted four in-depth interviews over phone and messenger calls at respondents' convenient times to ensure a comprehensive understanding of their experiences. The concerns of interviewers over the telephone are generally the same as those conducting them face-to-face. (Block, E. S., & Erskine, L., 2012). Online telephone interviews have the two most obvious benefits: cost-effectiveness and time efficiency (Cannell, 1985; Dinham, 1994; Sarantakos, 1998; Taylor, 2002).

I asked the participants several open-ended questions that covered six different themes (the questionnaire is given in Appendix II). The themes which were covered by these open-ended questions include- a) Mobility question (aspiration), b) Issuance of first work permit, c) Second-time visa extension and PR, d) Economic questions, e) Settlement and acculturation process, f) Transnational Belongingness as a cultural unit. Besides, I used all possible ways to collect data and become creative and reflexive (Mason, 2018, p. 24). Specifically, I used different methods in different aspects to help me observe participants' life and aspirations and their struggles and make this research work more closely and 'experiences near' (Geertz, 1974).

#### **5.4.2 Participant as a native observer**

This research is based on participant observation and eighteen semi-structured in-depth interviews, where I can visit my respondents in their workplaces, homes, and other open public spaces. However, I had to build rapport and trust with the respondents, which was challenging. Because data rely on "personal encounters." Suppose the interviewee did not trust the researcher. She refused or avoided

sharing the 'real' stories. Research data was collected through interviews with them in various public places such as restaurants, coffee shops, public libraries, and shopping malls, as well as online interviews. As a participant observer, I tried to understand their diverse life stories with their different perspectives. During the whole period, I took observation notes of respondents' attitudes besides their interviews.

In most instances, South Asian people try to re-construct their community life "on their terms" (Ballard, 1994). More than three years of living experiences with the Bangladeshi community in Sweden also helps me to understand responses to different unique symbolic native verbal jargon. They use jargon between themselves like 'bidesh kora' (Working abroad for a specific time with a high chance of return) and 'bidesh thaka' (Living abroad for a long time with a plan for permanent settlement) 'Swedish life' (Total time living in Sweden) 'Passport dhari' (Having Swedish passport), 'gorib' (Poor migrant working in Bangladeshi restaurant), 'Kamla dawa' (working in restaurants, cleaning company, housekeeping or physical job), 'Sada kaj' (Working with a contract in Swedish company and getting Swedish standard payment), 'Kala kaj' (working without a contract and getting low paid) 'genuine Student' (student who came to Sweden with scholarship) "official job" (Working in an office where there is no physical labor). Throughout the report, especially in the analysis part, we will find their voices with native words in detail. As H. Russell (2006) mentioned, 'Participant observation is about stalking the culture and learning to act accordingly so that they feel themselves even if the researcher shows up.' (Russell, 2006, p. 343-344). Therefore, this study would echo their voice and write down those notes that have been seen and heard with the blend of their reality and my research questions' standpoint.

### **5.4.3 Ethnographic description and its site(s)**

Ethnography might be descriptive or even in the form of storytelling (Walker, 1981). Following Geertz (1974 chapter 1), ethnography is defined as 'thick descriptions.' Where 'thick description' will use detailed observations to develop contextual interpretations, analysis, and explanations of what is happening. Mason added, "A thick description is always an interpretative and analytical description" (Mason, 2018, p. 13). So, as a more comprehensive set of methods based on extended co-presence and participation, ethnography is particularly compelling in approaching transnational relationships and practices (Glick Schiller, 2003). Where comprehensive ethnographic involvement enables making sense of 'transnational living' as an extended 'set of cross-border relations and "practices' stemming from migrants 'drive to maintain and reproduce their social milieu of origin from afar'" (Gürüz, K. 2011).

For this study, I have visited several cities in Sweden. I follow the trail of my responses. So, it was mainly cited ethnography. I met and interviewed them in restaurants, coffee shops, public libraries, and shopping malls. I also visit their workplaces. I do in-depth interviews over the phone and on messenger calls for those I cannot visit due to their unavoidable time constraints.

The ethnography study I conducted was with permanent residents of Bangladeshi students working in different mutational companies, restaurants, shops, warehouse stores, and special schools. And doing

business. They have faced three different phases in Sweden's life, primarily, the aspiration of Bangladeshi international students, secondly, pursuing a work permit and being granted permanent residency. Finally, after PR, their new identity is transnational as Bangladeshi Swedish.

The whole journey was different for all of the respondents in this study. Those were diversified as well as contextual. Each has different stories of success, stress, discrimination, and exploitation in the various stages of transnational 'Swedish life.' This study aims to understand the experiences of these stages provided by 'thick description.' All the studies have tried to observe the participants in a manner so that they can get usual and exceptional exposure. However, I have considered the PR holders "expert and successful" in their work. They effectively meet all migration rules and regulations requirements and are awarded permanent residency.

### **5.5 Method of analyzing the data**

For analyzing the data, I considered the qualitative thematic data analysis method. It allowed me to identify, analyze, and write a report following the themes existing in the collected data (Ayala et al., 2012.). For this, I have relied on Braun and Clarke's (2008) proposed six-step process of using thematic analysis. For this purpose, I have studied my collected data several times and gotten familiar with it. Then, I systematically segmented all my data to generate the themes. After that, I revised the themes a few times. Afterward, I titled the themes, and lastly, I analyzed the collected data for this thesis. In this study, Bangladeshi transnational migrants' lives are fragmented into three primary themes: first, their aspirations and achievements; later, their work-life experiences; and finally, achieving permanent residency, their transnational social and cultural life experiences.

### **5.6 Ethical consideration**

Qualitative research imposes more ethical challenges due to the relationship between researcher and research respondents (Mason, 2018). When considering research ethics, face-to-face interaction, participating, and observing participants create tensions. Ethical standards in social science are based on three basic principles: respect for human dignity, justice, and beneficence (Ayala et al., 2012). These principles or standards also emphasize four guidelines through which they become operationalized. Initially, informed consent, non-deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy (Ayala et al., 2012). During my studies, I was concerned about all those ethical principles.

All participants share their "sensitive" and "personal" life experiences for academic research. Participants were informed that this research may help future researchers to understand the transnational dynamics of Bangladeshi migrants. I was fully conscious of power dynamics and tried to protect respondents from questions that may cause discomfort or emotional or psychological harm (Mason, 2018; p.96). Before the interview, the participants were informed about their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw or skip any question they did not want to share at any time without any reason. Prior interview, written and signed consent (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001, p.342) has been taken from them. To protect the identity of the participants, I have changed all their names and did not mention any

workstations or places where they are doing business or employed. Hidden all types of identification marks. They even deleted all the voice records after transcribing them. I was deeply concerned about after-field work ethics (Weber, T. 2003). When placing the information publicly, follow the strategic pattern for balancing harm and benefits. Some information could harm a particular group, and minority people have their survival strategies. As a researcher, that was also an ethical consideration.

### **5.7 Positionality**

Before fieldwork and engaging in writing, the first step is to consider the researcher's position. (Ayala L. S., 2012, p. 118). Positionality shapes our understanding of the world and how knowledge is constructed. Our social location and the institutions we belong to influence our perspectives and biases. .This affects how we interpret information and construct knowledge (Ayala et al., 2012, p. 118). As an anthropology student, my social position, race, gender, racial identity, class, and economic position or being a member of a society (Said, 1979, p. 10) may impact my positionality in field and data analysis. It could be both positive acceptance and trust and hostile skepticism and rejection. I have already experienced both ways. Nevertheless, as a researcher and observer, I was a facilitator. I was cautious about my researcher position as a native insider, which helped me build rapport with Bangladeshi migrant PR holders. Sharing the same culture and language also benefits me in conducting informal discussions and understanding contextual deeper meaning. That helps me when I conduct my interviews outside Malmo like other cities, Lund, Stockholm and Gothenburg. Because, I don't have any prior relationship with them. I am not living with their local society. If they share their past stories that would not be harmful for them. However, I assured them their identity would be anonymous and their experience will help future Bangladeshi migrants. So they expressed their untold stories without any hesitations. However, the danger lies in the risks the interviewer might unconsciously attach to the respondent, which would restrain the researcher from seeing only a one-sided view. (Ayala L. S., 2012, p. 119) Besides, recognize respondents' experiences from the perspective of the participants. I was also aware about that in this study.

As I am a native speaker, I don't use any "gatekeeper" or "chief informant" (Narayan, 1997) for my study. My native position faced challenges during the pilot study of the research questionnaire. I have faced some challenges in terms of finding respondents who were willing to share their personal experiences. While approaching four individuals and outlining the semi-structured research questions, two agreed to participate in the interview. For the rest, one Participant expressed discomfort discussing their "personal matters," while the other did not reply positively. This group's 'sensitive nature' made it difficult to access them. Some members of groups denied full participation. (Castles, 2012). As a native researcher, those difficulties forced me to find respondents outside my known area peoples. Then, I posted two Facebook groups for this study interview and got my respondents from their voluntary responses. Because my well-known personals did not wanted to share their 'Untold personal stories' what they had experienced. Though I assured them their identities would not be disclosed, they refused to share and access their experiences. (Ayala L. S., 2012).



As a researcher, I am responsible for ensuring that my assumptions, expectations, and beliefs do not affect the overall process of my research. I have also ensured that my connection with the respondents has not impacted the writing of the research. But, when choosing my respondent, I had two distinct criteria. The first one was a Bangladeshi student granted Permanent Residency. The last one was to undergo the work permit process because of my research goal of analyzing their life stages. What I also mentioned in my Facebook post.

### **5.8 Limitations**

All the data were collected in Bangla and then translated into English. In this process, there was a challenge for interpretive and meaning inaccuracies between what was initially said by the interviewees and what was translated. However, to avoid these problems, after transcribing the interviews, I have communicated with the participants again, and they have offered feedback on their interviews,

One of the limitations of this study is to ensure diversity. Of my eighteen participants, seventeen were male, as I have only one female migrant student who got PR after a work permit. However, my informal conversations with male workers and other relevant inquiries have led me to assume that female migrant student workers are usually deficient in number. They come to Sweden to join a family reunion with their husbands.

## Chapter Six

### The "Investment for life" aspiration of migrant student

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter will delve into the initial stage of Bangladeshi student migration to Sweden. The focus will be on their aspirations before they arrive in the country. This chapter explicitly addresses the initial research question: What were the motivations and aspirations of these individuals in migrating to Sweden? Given the diversity of respondents in terms of sex, age, marital status, family background, and economic status, their aspirations are naturally varied. This chapter aims to investigate the disparities in aspirations. De Has (2021) points out two types of aspirations that motivate people to move from one place to another. 'Instrumental' and 'intrinsic'. Instrumental aspirations are linked to migration as a way to achieve a specific goal, like better education scope for students, such as earning more money or having access to job opportunities. On the other hand, intrinsic aspirations are related to the value people place on the experiences of migration itself, such as the opportunity to explore new cultures or embark on a journey of personal growth.

#### 6.2 The Journey begins with migration aspiration

Upon analyzing the reasons behind the migration of Bangladeshi students and their subsequent acquisition of permanent residency in Sweden. Carling and Francis Collins's (2018) work provides a substantial theoretical contribution to this subject. Their research paper, "Aspiration, desire, and Drivers of Migration," explicitly identified two factors contributing to migration. One factor is the "desire to migrate," while another is the "capacity to migrate." They stated that aspiration is a broader term encompassing the terms 'desires,' 'wishes,' and 'preferences.' It represents the distinct embodiment of individual personnel. According to Ray (2006), aspirations are influenced by the social context in which individual desires are formed. Ray perceives desire as intrinsically individualistic, whereas (Collins 2018) underscores desire as a social phenomenon. Collins posited that an individual's inclination towards migration is contingent upon the social context in which they exist and is made feasible by the desires embedded within that social structure. Collins stated that the desire to migrate is influenced by socially accepted behavior and the social process of diffusion. Individuals can observe their peers' environment, lifestyle, and economic opportunities, which can also inspire their desire to migrate. Thus, migration becomes integrated into individuals 'aspirations window' (Ray, 2006, p.209), where individual desire and social peer pressure work together. Two of the study respondents' aspiration case studies were relevant to individual desire and social pressure. Ayan (pseudonym) shared his aspiration story. When he was nineteen, he started thinking about going abroad. He said -

I always admired my cousin for his academic excellence and followed in his footsteps. When he went to England for higher studies, I was inspired to pursue my education abroad, too. My

father always supported my aspirations and encouraged me to work hard towards my goals. I was determined to make my dream a reality and worked tirelessly. After completing my Bachelor's degree, I applied to several universities in England and Australia, but unfortunately, I did not receive any scholarships. Then, my cousin suggested to apply in Sweden, and I managed to secure admission. My dream of studying abroad finally came true, and I am grateful for the unwavering of my family and cousin.

This respondent was inspired by his cousin's success and his father's encouragement to pursue higher education abroad. This is an instrumental aspiration (De Has, 2021). He was focused on his goal. Despite facing initial rejection from universities in England and Australia, His cousin suggested universities in Sweden, ultimately leading to his admission and realizing their dream. Students are drawn to pursue higher education abroad due to personal ambitions and family support. Nevertheless, certain scholars have disapproved of this occurrence, referring to it as "mobility fetishism" (Robertson, 2010; Sidhu et al., 2017). Although the personal benefits of migration can serve as a driving force, as demonstrated by Leung (2012), broader societal and cultural perspectives on migration can also substantially influence academic ambitions. This context is relevant to my study, as it highlights the significance of individual factors and the influence of family, culture, and the state's attitude towards migration.

### **6.3 Home country's economic situation and Government policies**

Collin's (2018) theoretical aspect of the social and cultural aspect of individual actors' decision-making is very relevant to the respondents' backgrounds. With this context in mind, I endeavored to comprehend their experiences. In Bangladesh's social and economic landscape, approximately one-fourth of the country's population, 45.9 million, is young. (Detailed discussed in Chapter two) The Government has implemented long-term strategies to transform the large population into valuable assets by equipping them with skills and education. Consequently, a significant number of students graduate every year. However, the current job market cannot accommodate the vast number of people seeking employment. As a result, migration has gained prominence in national policy discussions. The Government focuses on the global labor market to stimulate the country's economic expansion. Therefore, the Government considers the migrant population a crucial component of the economy, specifically as a means to combat the outflow of remittances. Consequently, the Government prioritizes the migrant population as an integral part of the economy and a 'remittance fighter.' This also fosters a significant number of young individuals to relocate abroad. The educated, skilled population took the opportunity of international academic mobility. The Government took migrants, especially skilled ones, into special consideration.

### **6.4 Kinship and network bondage of individuals**

Individually, the participants in this study were influenced by their family members, including sisters, cousins, maternal uncles, department teachers, senior brothers, and other relatives who had been living with them for a long time. Their familial ties and personal networks substantially influenced the

migration of students. One of my respondents, Ronny (pseudonym), shared his aspiration to come to Sweden as a student.

When I finished my Master's in chemistry from Bangladesh, I was looking for a job. Getting a job in my study-related field took a lot of work. My maternal uncle has been living in Sweden for a long time. He is very close to me. At that time, I communicated with him and shared my situation. My uncle suggested I apply for higher study in Sweden. He has his own restaurant business. My uncle told me that if you come, you can work in my restaurant, and in the future, you can stay permanently in Sweden. It was a very lucrative offer for me. I immediately tried to get admission, and the following year, I came to Umeå University as a master's student in chemistry. 2015, after completing thirty credits, I applied for a work permit visa from my uncle's Indian restaurant. After fulfilling all migration requirements, I got permanent residency from that restaurant in 2019.

This case shows that kinship connections inspired the Bangladeshi student to migrate. Unfortunately, he could not complete his higher studies. Understandably, a changed situation and specific context can affect one's initial dreams and plans. It is essential to adapt and make the best of the situation.

### **6.5 Scandinavian welfare system, culture, and health care system.**

The aspiration to relocate to Sweden was motivated not only by the opportunity to receive scholarships and access free higher education but also by personal factors such as the appeal of the Scandinavian welfare system, lifestyle, high living standards, excellent healthcare for infants, and a superior childcare system. These factors served as underlying reasons for the decision to migrate.

Methuen (pseudonym) shared his experiences, where Scandinavian culture, secure life, and lifestyle become prime factors of aspirations. He said,

I came to Sweden in 2009. I do not have to pay any tuition fees at that time. I got my admission to KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Nanotechnology. During that period, one of my university seniors completed his Master's and did his PhD. I was closely connected with him. He shared his educational experience, Swedish culture, high living standards, and the overall secure life of Swedish people. He was engaged with the student union, where he engaged in different events, fika, and student parties. From his personal experiences, I became familiar with Swedish culture and lifestyle. Later, I experienced them. That attracted me to come to Sweden.

Another of my respondents, Sultana (pseudonym), found her to be a mother who sacrificed herself for her child. She came to Sweden in 2015 only for her 'special child.' She shared her aspirational life story with me during an interview. This woman said,

I worked in a senior position in a private commercial bank in Bangladesh. My family life was going well. But the problem started when I gave birth to my first child. She was a special

child. She has Down syndrome. The day I gave birth to my child, my misery started. It started in the labor room. I saw my daughter's face was flat. Her nose was too small. I asked the doctor why she looked like this. The doctor replied, "I am very sorry, she is a Down syndrome baby. Such children cannot speak and walk properly, and their brain development is not normal. They can thrive if they get the right care and service". That was the worst day of my life. I was taking off from my workplace for one year. My mother-in-law did not come to my house to see my daughter for two years. I stopped attending public gatherings like Eid gatherings, marriage ceremonies, and birthday parties with my daughter. My world became small within my room. Because everyone asked me about my daughter's disability, like, oh, she has some problems, why she cannot walk, go to the doctor. I cannot accept that kind of attitude towards me and my daughter. It creates a physiological breakdown for me. The medical facilities were not adequate for her at that time. Besides, I felt this society did not accept me and my daughter. I wanted to escape from them. Then, one day, my husband and I decided to move abroad. I wanted to try to give her better health care and life. Now that I face this social pressure, my daughter will face the same tomorrow. I cannot accept this. I was looking everywhere where my daughter could get the best medical treatment and child care. Then, I found Sweden as my destination. I applied for higher studies and got admission. I resigned from my job, and I moved to Sweden. I have to fight a lot for my present position. I worked in a cleaning company for six years during my work permit. I am a permanent resident; my daughter is attending a particular school. She improved a lot. Here, nobody neglected her; I think she is getting her best treatment and care.

Here, we have seen a child's health issue become significant in her life, so she decided to migrate for the sake of her daughter's life. Where she "escapes" from her home country of social pressure or violence being the mother of a "special child." In this case, her aspiration was her hope of a better medical facility accessible from societal violence.

### **6.6 Technological connectivity as an influencer.**

Advancements in communication technology have facilitated global connectivity. This has facilitated individuals to disseminate their daily experiences, lifestyles, and narratives, impacting how others connect with them. This study demonstrates that social media also influences an individual's aspirations. One of my respondents, Shamim (pseudonym), shared his experiences. He said social media photos, stories, and lifestyle influenced my migration to Sweden.

After completing my Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from BUET. I was looking for a suitable job, but unfortunately, I could not find one that met my expectations. However, my three sisters lived abroad, and one lived in Sweden. I have been following their lifestyle on social media since my student life, inspiring me to migrate. Additionally, the achievements of the seniors in my department at BUET and their work lives influenced my decision to migrate.

This case reflects that social media photos, close relatives, and friends' lifestyles inspired the individuals to migrate.

This case study examines the migration patterns of Bangladeshi students, who frequently emulate the behaviors, lifestyles, and narratives of familiar and unfamiliar individuals, thereby being influenced by them. Here he influenced by his sisters. Humans are inherently inclined to be drawn to successful narratives and aspire to emulate those who have achieved success in their lives. This study demonstrates that social media also influences an individual's aspirations.

### **6.7 Investment for Dreams**

In 2011, Sweden introduced tuition fees for students from these countries except the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. Those who came after 2011 must have strong financial stability to pay tuition fees and support themselves. In this study, I found five students who paid initial tuition fees. They desperately search for jobs to change their visa category from student to work permit. After completing their thirty credits requirement, they managed a job and immediately applied for a work permit visa to fulfill their dream of becoming permanent residents. I asked them how they managed those primary tuition fees. They replied that their family supports them to pay the tuition fees. One respondent, Rahim (pseudonym), shared his past.

He said, I came from a middle-class family. My father was the sole breadwinner of our family. After graduation, I applied for various jobs but could not find a suitable one. That is when I decided to settle in Europe and apply for higher studies in Sweden. Luckily, I got admitted to Gothenburg University with a half scholarship. I was thrilled and shared the news with my parents. They assured me that they would manage the rest of my tuition fees. My father gave me that money, but I discovered he had borrowed it from the bank and some relatives as a loan. However, I gradually returned the whole amount when I started working in Sweden. Being the only son in the family, I have some responsibilities towards my family members. When I moved to Sweden, my two younger sisters were school-going. Now, they are studying at Dhaka University. Therefore, I consider it to be an investment for future settlement. My parents believed that if I became economically strong, I could help the family, and everyone would be benefited.

Respondent believed they came to Sweden for (bidesh that) settlement. In Bangla, the term "bidesh thaka" means permanently staying abroad. Where a study visa is used as a way to reach Sweden. Research data validate that they had planned for permanent settlement before they entered this country. Faruq's research also endorses that Bangladeshi students are choosing Sweden as a destination country for their studies, intending to settle in Sweden. (Faruq, 2021).

One of my respondents, Pankaj (pseudonym), shared his perception. He said,

Before entering Sweden, I had to pay my first-semester tuition fees, which was huge pressure for me. My parents helped me to pay this money. I paid my tuition fees again the second time to retain my visa renewal. However, I had a plan when I decided to invest money and time in my education. I moved from my University area to the nearest big town. There, I got a job in an Indian Restaurant. Later, by getting a job in an Italian Restaurant and switching to a work permit visa, I can save money on tuition fees and a work permit toward permanent residency. A permanent residency in Sweden opens opportunities for a better life and security. I do not have to think about my future later. So, at that time, I counted it as an investment for my dream. After seven years, I got my resident permit and Swedish passport. In the meantime, I have completed my study. Working as an IT consultant with a renowned multinational company, I am happy here in Sweden.

This case shows that he invests time and money to fulfill his dreams. Becoming a permanent resident opens the doors of opportunities. That helps him to achieve a better job and secure life. On the contrary, the respondents of this study also countered that they did not intend to stay here permanently before they came. Four out of eighteen respondents specified that they did not plan to stay permanently in Sweden and wanted to move to an English-speaking country after completing their studies. However, their friends planning to stay in Sweden encouraged them to reconsider. Then they tried, and now they are a permanent resident.

One of them, Ratul (pseudonym), shared his perspectives. He said,

At first, I had planned to complete my education and then move to an English-speaking country. However, Things did not go as planned. My friends who were studying with me encouraged me to stay in Sweden. As a mechanical engineer, I applied to various Swedish and multinational companies. Eventually, I landed a job as a junior consultant in a well-known multinational car manufacturing company. They offered me a work permit, and later, I obtained my permanent residency through the company. I still work in the same organization and have been promoted to senior level. Though I have a Swedish passport, I may move to an English-speaking country like Canada. I don't know. I have skills so I can move anywhere in the globe.

It is interesting to hear about Ratul's Journey. Sometimes, unexpected opportunities can lead to excellent outcomes. Though he never planned on staying after completing his studies. He secured a job in a multinational company and obtained permanent residency in this country.

## **6.8 Conclusion**

It demonstrates that aspiration is influenced not only by economic rationality but also by human emotions, social networks, family connections, technological connectivity (such as social media), and the culture of the country where one resides. Economic capacity, economic rationale, and social and cultural characteristics played a significant role in shaping aspirations. Moreover, at the individual level,

it resembles fondness and ardor in most instances. The concept of permanent settlement has a captivating effect on an individual's thoughts and behaviors. According to Rony (pseudonym), one can develop a strong enthusiasm for something to the point where it becomes the central focus of their life, and they are willing to go to any lengths to achieve it. It is remarkable how an exclusive emphasis on settlement can lead students to disregard all other aspects.



## Chapter Seven

### Difference between dreams and reality: Initial life stage of migrant student

#### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the initial difficulties of transnational migrants when they first arrived in Sweden. This is the second stage of my respondent's settlement process. Besides, it explores challenges and how they successfully navigate them through their relationships with family members, friends, and senior Bangladeshi individuals in Sweden. This section will unfold their experiences before obtaining permanent residency. Specifically, examine how they obtained their job and their experiences while obtaining their work permit. In addition, this discussion also encompasses tensions related to Migrationsverket (MV).

#### 7.2 Migrate Student huddles and how they navigate their life.

Upon arriving in Sweden, the Bangladeshi students harbored the belief that their 'dreams come true'. However, in actuality, once they commenced their work permit, they were exposed to the world's true nature. Bangladeshi migrant students face huddle to reach their goal of permanent residency. Primary data reveals that students living in a 'foreign culture' face a range of challenges, such as family disruption, language problems, racial discrimination, food restrictions, financial stress, bank account opening, housing difficulties, and social isolation. The issues are intricately connected to work permits and migration regulations. Both work permit and permanent residency are closely interconnected. During the participant's observation phase of my research and our conversation, it became evident that many needed help getting specific jobs based on their educational background.

Additionally, they struggle in their work life for 'documents.' That struggle sometimes lasts up to more than nine years. Over time, they learn how to cope with these hurdles and make their way to overcome them. Henrik Vigh (2009), in his 'Motion Squared: A Second Look at the Concept of Social Navigation,' gives us the proper theoretical optics about how Bangladeshi students move in certain circumstances and seek to escape constricting structures. He used "social navigation" to describe people's movement trajectories. The concept of 'navigation' describes motion within motion rather than just movement across a solid surface, like fields or landscapes (Vigh, 2009, p. 420). This idea can be applied in social life, highlighting how Bangladeshi migrant students move in social environments that constantly shift and engage them differently. That means the way migrant students move in a moving environment. It adds another dimension to our understanding of movement and mobility (Vigh, 2009, p. 420). Migrant students constantly cope with legal and social pressures and take the influence of these pressures into consideration about present possibilities and envisioned trajectories. Social navigation allows us to focus on how migrant students move and manage social flux and change situations. Based on empirical data, look into their huddles and how they overcome them.

### **7.2.1 Leaving behind their family**

After students depart from their homes at the individual and family levels, they encounter many challenges. First and foremost, the impact of migration on family dynamics can be exceptionally severe. Primary data indicate that being separated from parents can lead to psychosocial difficulties and heighten vulnerability in unfamiliar environments. However, they try to habituate and make new friends. Nevertheless, technological advancement helps them communicate with family members and maintain relationships across borders. Baldassar also validated that in the past, transnational families relied on touch only by waiting for letters; today, people can be virtually constantly present with each other. (Baldassar ed. et, 2018); (Mahler, 2001)

One of the responses, Akbar (pseudonym), describes his early day's memories. He said,

At the age of twenty-three, I left my home and came to Sweden. It was my first time alone from home, and I had never been so far away. When I arrived in Sweden, I missed my family members. Furthermore, I felt down for them. After finishing my class, I called them, and our conversation lasted for hours. My mother waits for my call. The biggest problem I faced was preparing food. I did not know how to cook traditional Bangladeshi food. For the first seven days, I bought food from Indian restaurants, which was expensive. Then, I tried to make food alone, and my mother helped me over the phone. .

This case shows students residing abroad but are connected digitally with family members. Contentious telephone calls and video chat felt them close. Baldassar (2016) argued that family relationships stick like "glue". Students took mental and emotional support from their family members in their transnational lives. That's how they overcome their vulnerability of being detached from the family.

### **7.2.2 Opening a bank account**

As international students, Bangladeshi students face difficulties opening a bank account in Sweden. Not getting an account was a big problem for those who were affected. When new students come to Sweden, they have cash currency and their home country's credit card, or travel card, for their living expenses. Scholarship holders got a debit card from their universities for their daily expenses. Those who pay tuition fees need to open a bank account for their daily financial truncations. Persons who did not open any student file from their home country must open a Swedish bank account to pay tuition fees through bank transfer. I want to share one case regarding a Bank account.

Sazzad (pseudonym) bought two thousand euros with him for his living expenses. After three days, he went to SEB Bank to open a bank account. The Bank officer asked for his identity card. He showed his passport and asked for his personal number and visa card (UT card). At that time, he did not have any personal number. They gave him an appointment date, which was after three months. They informed him there was no schedule before that. He returned

home, and then he shared his problem with his seniors. They suggested he open an account with Forex Bank. The next day, he went to Forex Bank, who gave him a list of required documents. After one month, he managed to open his bank account. During this time, he has to carry the cash with him.

This case shows, Sazzad faced difficulties accessing banking channels here, though he later found a way out. Another problem was the long waiting time to access any banking service. Finally, he got suggestions to move the agent bank, which requires less time. That is how he navigated and overcame his challenges.

### **7.2.3 Housing problem**

International students are accommodated at the university accommodation. As per my respondents' primary data, many Bangladeshi students leave their student accommodation due to loneliness, the search for job opportunities, and high rental expenses. Therefore, they move to the nearest city, which offers more job opportunities. Students with wives and children live in a shared apartment and then move to their apartment. Finding accommodation was challenging for the newcomer. They use the Bangladeshi network relations and community members' references to find shared apartments. The sooner they find a job, the greater the possibility of getting an apartment from a housing company. Otherwise, they have to start living in shared apartments. Most of my respondents have experiences of shared living. In the case of Sultana (pseudonym),

She came with her daughter and husband, but her student accommodation did not allow her to live with family members. So she was obliged to find shared accommodation. She posted in the Bangladeshi community Facebook group and asked Bangladeshi personnel for shared accommodation. Then she found one shared accommodation. She lived there for about nine months. However, she applied for her apartment when she got a permanent job. However, getting an apartment in her name takes a long time.

This case shows that finding a permanent source of income, such as a job in Sweden, is crucial for this individual's housing solution. Without a valid source of income, securing a first-hand housing company apartment contract can be challenging. Individuals may need to resort to living in secondhand houses or shared apartments. This emphasizes the importance of stable income when seeking housing options in Sweden. Moreover, the long waiting time reflects the housing crisis in Sweden.

### **7.2.4 "Living in Sweden requires three W: work, weather, and wife."**

Bangladeshi students possess a highly dynamic cultural heritage in their native country. Friends and family members constantly surround them in their daily lives. Upon their arrival in late August, they encountered a remarkably calm Swedish society. In areas with sparse population, there is minimal vehicular congestion on the roads. They feel unaccompanied, from a densely populated country to a calm and least populated country. Additionally, its environment was challenging for new students. They

encountered the cold, harsh winter, a new experience for them. One of this study's respondents, Anwar (pseudonym), described his experiences.

He shared, "When I first arrived at Uppsala University, it was right before winter started. First time I saw snowfall. I was not used to such cold weather, and I remember wearing heavy jackets and gloves that I brought with me, but I was still freezing. Eventually, I had to buy new boots and jackets during the Black Friday sales to help me cope with the weather".

Besides him, Methuen (pseudonym) shared his life experience. He added,

Living in Sweden requires you to focus on three W: work, weather, and wife. Finding a job is crucial for existence, regardless of the type of work you do. You must have proper job contact for your document; otherwise, you can't stay here. Secondly, coping with Swedish weather can be challenging, but with proper clothing, it becomes adaptable. Initially, it is not easy to adjust to the weather. Especially when we come from a monsoon climate; lastly, having a supportive wife can make a big difference. Being away from home can be tough, but having a supportive wife makes you psychologically and economically strong. You have to adjust here with three W.

Two cases show the initial struggle for students in Sweden involves adapting to the weather, finding employment, and dealing with feelings of loneliness. It is understandable that having a trusted companion like a spouse can be incredibly helpful during this challenging time. Not only spouse can provide emotional support, but they can also contribute financially through their employment.

### **7.2.5 Language barrier**

Upon arrival, new students may need more proficiency in the Swedish language. Primarily, the Swedish language became a barrier to mixing new people. Each of my study participants initially faced uncertainty, confusion, or anxiety about a new language. They experienced this 'cultural shock' distinctly, although the weather was a shared factor. (Adler, 1975, p. 15).

Raju (pseudonym) described his experiences of his cultural shock.

The initial challenge I faced was language. During my first winter, I had to go to a medical center due to my asthma problem. There, I faced language problems. However, they provide a translator for me. All grocery store products here have their names written in Swedish. Administrative offices also use the Swedish language form. Even when I applied for my number in the tax office (Skatteverket), the authority gave a form written in Swedish. This was very new to me, as in Bangladesh, people are very expressive and live to communicate with others. It was difficult to communicate as I did not know their language, and I began to feel depressed. I also worried if I would be able to continue my studies. Even though I was staying at my sister's house, she was busy with her job. Every day, I talked with my parents, and they convinced me to finish my studies and then return to Bangladesh. Later, I started SFI

(Swedish for immigrants) to adjust to the language. Eleven years have passed, and I am still in Sweden.

It is evident from the respondent's experiences that he faced a language barrier when he first arrived in Sweden. However, he overcame these challenges over time by learning the Swedish language, whether it was at hospitals, shopping malls, or government offices.

### **7.3 Work-related Involvements**

Social scientists have begun to talk about precarious work and to analyze the process that pushes specific categories of workers, mainly migrant workers, into insecure and exploitative jobs. This means that people's chance of getting jobs depends not only on their human capital, like education and skills, but also on race, gender, ethnicity, and legal status. (Castles, 2014, p. 259). The phenomenon of labor market segmentation has been a recent development. During the 1960s, guest worker policies in Western Europe led to the concentration of immigrants in specific occupational sectors, resulting in inherent discrimination. (Castles and Kosack, 1973). This study also noted similar patterns in Swedish migration policies. All my respondents have been processed through a work permit visa to obtain permanent residency. Not every Bangladeshi student residing in Sweden had a satisfactory professional life. The job required individuals with exceptional educational qualifications, proficient language skills, and a robust personal network. Hence, the city holds significance in securing employment and providing guidance for individuals' lives. The primary data I have collected indicates that experiences related to work permits vary depending on the type of work and the company of employment.

In this study, eighteen respondents were interviewed. Here, I tried to unfold their untold stories. It was challenging to get into their lives and dig out sensitive stories. In most instances, South Asian people try to re-construct their community life "on their terms" (Ballard, 1994). In the Swedish context, Bangladeshi students classified their work into two categories: an "official job" and an "unofficial job." According to their observation, an 'official job' means a desk work-related job. There is no physical labor involvement. On the other hand, a 'non-official job' means where more physical labor is involved.

All my respondents have been processed through a work permit visa to obtain permanent residency. During that time, seven of the eighteen respondents were employed at various branches of different restaurants, which included an Indian restaurant, an Italian chain restaurant, a Grill shop, and a Burger shop. Different multinational furniture and motor manufacturing companies employed four individuals. Three of them were employed by a paper distribution company. Additionally, three of them were employed by a cleaning company. One worked in a "Special school" for physically and mentally 'specially able' kids.

#### **7.4.1 Working experiences of work permit holders**

In this study, respondents classify two different types of work permit holders. One is an "official job," another is an "unofficial job." Now, I will try to understand their work experiences.

#### 7.4.2 Official job work experiences

Based on response empirical data, official job holders comparatively get better salaries, flexible working hours, and a satisfying working environment and get help to reply to migration-related inquiries on their visa-related problems, last, faster processing time for visa decisions and less time to get Permanent residency.

I can share one case experience related to this theme of Alam (pseudonym). He said,

I completed my Master's in Nanotechnology from Gothenburg University in 2012. I landed my first job as a junior consultant in a well-known motor vehicle company. Within one month, I was issued a work permit after a positive decision from Migrationsverket (MV). As a fresh graduate, learning the process took me some time. But I tried hard to learn quickly. Being Asian, I have to work harder to get the attention of my supervisor. However, I eventually started working like others and was promoted to system engineer after two years. It was challenging as it was my subject-related job, but I could manage it quickly. In 2014, I applied for a second extension and received a decision within a week. Around the same time, I got married and had to move to Bangladesh. Fortunately, My Company's HR department allowed me to work remotely from Bangladesh for two months. However, Migrationsverket complicated my wife's visa, which caused some delay. Thankfully, I informed my HR department, and they fixed that problem by communicating with Migrationsverket within one week. That took a total of one month. When I applied for permanent residency, I received a decision within three days, which was surprisingly quick. I applied on Thursday and got the decision on Monday. As it is a multinational company, I have not experienced discrimination. It may not be visible even if there is any, as I hold a higher position in this company.

This case shows that the job, workplace, and nature of employment are essential to get better attention and treatment from Migrationsverket. "Official job" has a better salary structure and felicity that helps Bangladeshi migrant students to achieve their permanent residency on time.

Moreover, migration can create adverse incentives for education in case of low-skilled, often irregular migration, where the return of education is only sometimes as positive as expected, and a significant 'brain waste' occurs. Castles (2014). Here in this study, we have seen that educated migrants are struggling with visa documentation. There is an example of "brain waste" in the work permit time of one of my respondents. Students have higher educational degrees, but due to "papers" (visa documents), they are "guided" to work low-skilled jobs. He worked as a facilitator in a 'special school.'

Auvro (pseudonym) case is relevant. He said, "I am working with especially able' kids in a particular school. My responsibilities are taking care of gaming, educational, and physical activities. I came to Sweden as a Masters student in the year 2015. My dream was to work as a lawyer in a law firm after finishing my studies. Previously, I had three years of teaching experience in Bangladesh as a Senior Lecturer at a reputed university, and I was practicing

law in Bangladesh. As part of my plan during my studies, I completed my Swedish language up to level D. At that time, I managed a job in school after applying almost five hundred applications. After my provision period, I applied for my work permit from there. I completed three masters in Sweden and London at different universities before getting my permanent residency in 2022. Two have a law background, and one is from the sociology of law. I applied for a study-related job but could not find any suitable job. Working in restaurants or cleaning did not fit me. However, I need a job that fulfills the Migrationsverket requirement for my document. I remain working with a particular school. This job secured my visa. I am getting a salary better than cleaning and restaurant jobs. However, I am now looking for better opportunities outside Sweden. Because I want to utilize my knowledge. I plan to migrate to English-speaking countries where I can find a suitable job as a lawyer.

This case validates that highly educated and skilled people cannot get the desired job in their desired sector in Sweden. He is bound to work for his 'visa document' or "paper". This is an example of brain drain where thousands of migrant students struggle to achieve legal rights to stay in Sweden. Working restaurants, cleaning companies, and housekeeping for their document. In the recent past, on November 1, 2023, migration law changed their work permit application primary requirement to more than double. From the previous 13,000 kr to 27,360 kr. (Migrationsverket, 2023) so the option for a restaurant, cleaning company, or related job sector becomes squished for Bangladeshi future students.

### **7.5 Unofficial job work experiences: "Any idiot Swedish is better than an outsider."**

On the other hand, those who work in Indian restaurants or any international restaurants experience different exploitative behavior from a colleague and their managers. They had to work more hours and needed a proper contract or payment. Islam explores the legal exploitation of Bangladeshi student migrant work in Indian restaurants in Sweden. (Islam K.M.R, 2021). This study reveals, as stated by despondences, it is not only the Indian restaurant situation but also other Swedish-driven restaurant workers who also face different "discriminatory attitudes."

#### **7.5.1 Working in an international chain restaurant**

Here, I draw attention to what my respondents experienced as restaurant workers in their work permit period. That would be the best scenario to portray if I draw a case.

Soumik (pseudonym) shared his experiences with me during his work permit. He shared, "When I came to study here, I was unaware of the Swedish job market. My dream was to finish my studies and then get a better job in Sweden. Initially, I lived in a shared student apartment with two Bangladeshi students. They had arrived two years earlier. After three months of my student life, I had already spent all my savings and was struggling to pay semester fees. I had no money to have my breakfast in the morning. So, I stopped having breakfast, and in the afternoon, I had to rely on the food that my roommates brought for me from the restaurant where they worked. I was feeling so depressed about that situation. I

communicated with my family members about my tuition fees and situation. They paid my tuition fees and sent money for my living costs. In the meantime, I had already completed my thirty credits and was desperately searching for a job. Upon my request, my roommates managed a job for me. That was an Italian restaurant. I started working there besides my studies. I tried my best to keep the job and prove myself a good worker. After finishing my provision period, I also applied for my work permit and got my decision after five months. I started my career as a restaurant assistant and received one promotion during the whole working period of six and a half years. During my work period, I faced unfair attitudes towards me by my manager and shift leaders. Initially, I started working in the food preparation section. I made pasta sauces and salad dressings and cut and packed bacon, meat, beef, chicken, and salad for around two hundred people daily. I did not have time to creep for a minute during work. Every task had to be done within a booked time, and during my probation period, one day, my shift manager came to me and said, 'Are you planning to sleep here tonight? You are slow, and you have to finish on time. When there were big events, I had to prepare huge quantities, double the regular time, but I rarely got any help from anyone. They never put any extra personnel to help me there. One day, I was working on a disk alone. There was an event (music concert) on that day; about 120,000 kr (approx.) were sold that night. I cleaned all the hooks and dishes alone and asked for help from my shift leader. He said, 'If you need, you can take more time, but I cannot give anyone there now.' I was so tired that I could barely move my hands. Since they knew I had to work there for my work permit.

Consequently, there was little scope to leave this job. Occasionally, they called me to do an 'extra job' when there was any big event like a concert, hockey, or football game, or if anyone became sick, but they never gave me any contract. They refused to raise my contract from 75% to above. On the contrary, if they do not sell well, they ask me to leave early to save hours. They did not realize that my work permit required hours. After two years, one day, I talked with my manager about my position. He replied, 'Any idiot Swedish is better than an outsider. You need to prove yourself for the position, and then you can ask. I can remember an incident; every month they declared 'Employee of the month'. I was rewarded only once during the six years of my working period. I think that stood unfairness and subjective behavior.

This case validate that, Bangladeshi students are paid Swedish standards salary in Swedish-owned restaurants. But still, they feel unfairness, discrimination, and biased behavior there. I asked why he did not file a complaint with the labor union. He replied, "I have to work there for my paper, so I cannot argue with crocodiles living in water." This was the true picture of transnational Bangladeshi migrant students' previous life struggle. They were used as labor. Now a days slavery has ended but that was like 'symbolic hidden slavery' this disparity can be seen in the case of Bangladeshi restaurants as well.



### 7.5.2 Working in an Indian Restaurant

Primary data shows the Indian restaurant working life experiences of my respondents. Most of the Indian restaurants are operated by Bangladeshi owners. One respondent, Rony (pseudonym), shared his work permit-related experiences with me. He said,

After arrival in Sweden, I started working in my maternal uncle's (mama) Indian restaurant. I have applied for a work permit from there. Because he is my uncle (mama), I do not have to pay any amount for a work permit application and job. I heard many Bangladeshi students must buy work permits from Bangladeshi-owned restaurants for their "papers" (legal documents). However, he showed a salary of around twenty-three thousand kr per Swedish standards. But I got only ten thousand kr. Because I had to withdraw and return the rest of my uncle's money. I had to pay my taxes myself. My cousin also worked with me. Although I have been working in my uncle's restaurants daily, I start work at 7 am and finish at nearly 10 pm. I started as a dishwasher. Later, I became a cashier cum cook. Every morning at 7 am, my day starts with cleaning the toilets and restaurant floor. At 11 o'clock, I go to the kitchen to take all the saucepans and clean them by noon. After that, I had to cut onion around forty kg of and ten kg of vegetables. Nobody was there to help me. For those who worked in the dish, it was their job. Later, I became a tandoori man (tandoori is a special type of bread). I was not established, and as I worked at my uncle's restaurant, I couldn't say anything against him. I thought my struggle would end if I got my permanent residency paper. From there, in 2019, I got my dream permanent residency.

Overall, the information confirms that, Bangladeshi students are in a vulnerable position. They risk being exploited when they aspire to obtain permanent residency documents and face restrictions from Migrationsverket to stay with a specific organization for an extended period. As a result, they experience economic and behavioral inequalities. Various studies reinforced that migrant workers working in restaurants and cleaning companies appear to be exploited due to unequal power between employees and the employer, and they are being used unjustly (Nielsen & Ware, 1997). Legally, migrant workers are entitled to the same working conditions as Swedish workers. According to the study conducted by Woolfson, Fudge, and Thörnqvist (2014), it is argued that certain employers have been exploiting the complexity of Swedish migration laws and legal systems to their advantage. Migrant workers face the possibility of job loss and all other facilities, including losing their work permit visas, if they try to raise their voices against exploitation (Ostajen et al., 2017). This validates the current state of affairs where migrant students cannot lose their work permit visa linked to their permanent residency despite being in unpleasant working conditions.

## 7.6 Migrationsverket related experiences

The response experiences of this study validate that the Bangladeshi student migrant workers are suffering due to the rigid migration law of Sweden in various multifaceted ways, which are adversely distressing their everyday lives and also influencing their life strategies. This was their major hurdle to overcome. As one of the respondents, Nazrul (pseudonym), shared, 'Every year there are a lot of Bangladeshi migrant students returned due to Migrationsverket negative decision. In the year 2015, there was a big chunk faced migration-related rejection and forced to move outside Sweden'.

The empirical data also illustrates that the more restrictive and rigid the legal requirements imposed by the Swedish migration law, the more resilient and resourceful the Bangladeshi student migrant workers try to overcome the organizational constrictions of the Migrationsverket. If they get a negative decision, they appeal against the decision, and sometimes they get positive results.

Islam (2021) also authenticates in his research that by fulfilling the migration requirements and staying in Sweden, "migrant workers are becoming more innovative in overcoming the constraints of maintaining the work permit visa. They seem to be no longer just a mere passive recipient of the rigid migration policies; rather, in the restrictive legal environment of Sweden, they are growing their capabilities by maintaining the requirement. That is how they overcome that situation". (Islam K.M.R, 2021).

In this study, respondents who worked in "Indian restaurants" faced similar migration-related legal constraints. I want to share one of their struggling experiences. Enamul (pseudonym) shared his nine-year legal struggle with Migrationsverket during his work permit period. He said,

I came to Sweden in 2011 as a student. I completed my ninety credits within one and a half years. I planned to complete my studies and move to England as my cousin was in London. At that time, I was living in an apartment shared with other Bangladeshis. They suggested applying for a work permit and staying here permanently. Then, I join an Indian restaurant. After one month of work, I applied for my first work permit from that restaurant in 2014. Subsequently, six months later, I got rejected from Migrationsverket due to my irregularly low salary and my company's failure to pay tax and required insurance. Then, I started my restaurant with another Bangladeshi cook. I applied for a business visa from my own company. I waited for two and a half years before deciding but failed to get any positive decision. I communicated with them several times but did not get any case officer. Then, my roommate referred me to an international chain restaurant. I joined there, and after a month's provision period, I applied again for a work permit. Here, after five months, I got a case officer. My case office made a negative decision and mentioned in my previous work permit that I did not comply with salary requirements, tax, and insurance. Currently, I do not have any job advertisement for my present position. When I appealed against that decision in the year 2018, they rejected my appeal and deported me. I applied for the same job with a job

advertisement from Bangladesh and returned to Sweden within a few months at the same restaurant. I went to Bangladesh in August and came to Sweden in November. I got a two-year work permit visa. I worked as a kitchen assistant for the first two years. I learned how to make pizza and pasta and prepare different sauces and salads there. I faced such legal difficulties that, at that time, this job was my only lifeline to stay in Sweden. I do not express any discomfort working there or expect any promotion. I just want to do more extra from my site and try to do it as fast as possible. As they helped me to come back to Sweden again, I want to pay them back with my dedication and hard work. Due to my dedication after two and half years, I got my first promotion as section chief. In the meantime, I applied for a second renewal of my work permit visa. Then, after nine months, I got rejected again for the same reason as the previous case. I cannot sleep on those nights. I lost all my strength and became mentally traumatized. I shared my situation with my family and said I had no hope of staying in Sweden. Then, my roommate and senior Bangladeshi brother suggested I appeal through a lawyer. I went to a lawyer and appealed against the decision because I had already been punished for my previous case. Why would I be punished twice for one case? Then, the migration court requested that the case be reconsidered. It takes seven months to get a new case officer. Then, the case officer asked for different papers like pay slips, rental agreements, salary contract papers, previous business-related papers, and bank statements. Finally, in February 2023, I got my decision and was simultaneously granted permanent residency. My waiting escapes from a difficult life filled with obstacles and challenges.

This case shows that Bangladeshi migrant students face difficulties and challenges with Migrationsverket requirements and long waiting times for receiving their decision, which creates both mental and psychological damage for migrant students. Immigrants' mental health can be viewed as one of the most central public health problems in Sweden today. Several Swedish studies have reported that among immigrants, it is more common to find mental health issues than the native-born. (Bayard-Burfield et al., 2000; Rundberg et al., 2006).

My observation shows that among my respondents who are not working in reputed, established companies, they are always in physiological tension. If their company misses any salary, tax, or leave-related issues, that might be a significant problem when they apply for a visa extension. Because Migrationsverket can reject their application and deport them even on minor matters, so they have other backup plans. Emanuel's (pseudonym) case proves that he started his own business when he got rejected from his first work permit application. Then, he proceeded with his business visa.

Overall, respondents face difficulties in their work life and the primary part of their study life. However, they also overcome them through the help of their network connections with Bangladeshi populations. Those are their family members at home and abroad or friends in Sweden.

## **7.7 Online community through Facebook groups.**

Bangladeshi Migrant students found that social media groups help students in their early lives even after permanent residency. Ahmed's (2022) research has greatly aided my understanding and description of social and symbolic capital. In Sweden, two private Facebook groups also played a crucial role in facilitating networking among Bangladeshi students. They work voluntarily through information sharing and fostering relationships among their members. 'Bangladeshi incoming students in Sweden (BISS)' consists of approximately 62.6k members, and the 'Bangladeshi community in Sweden' consists of 21.2k members. These two Facebook groups provide valuable suggestions and information regarding admission and migration and facilitate discussions on various work permit-related cases and daily life in Sweden. The fraudulent acts Ahmed (2022) explained in his work have provided me with a clear understanding of this Facebook group. They operate authentically, genuinely aiming to aid and support individual students in consolidating their higher studies in Sweden. The admin group tries to stop the agency's fraudulent business. They have empowered students to get all the information on one page. Here, they can ask admission-related questions, and the admin panel replies to their specific questions. That is how they also get different legal and work permit policy-related information. Facebook groups are also seen as city-based, such as the 'Bangladeshi community in Malmo,' the 'Bangladeshi community in Stockholm,' and the Bangladeshi community in Goteborg. These local groups facilitate Bangladeshi culture in their different communal activities. Vertovec defines it as 'social morphology,' where a virtual community creates a coalition and empowers themselves, connecting people from the base with people at the top. (Vertovec 2010: 40; Cohen and Kennedy, 2000, p.320).

## **7.8 Conclusion**

Overall, the power of social connections (online and offline) and family networks in a huddle can help migrant individuals navigate toward achieving their goals. From job searching to migration-related problems everywhere, it works. By sharing ideas, pooling resources, and encouraging one another, migrant students can overcome challenges and succeed. So, they constantly adapt to the movement to 'act' upon them and shape the situations of their lives. (Vigh, 2009, p. 433). Whether we realize it, they constantly adjust their strategies and tactics based on their experiences and predictions of how things will evolve. This ability to adjust to migration rules, work life, and host country society is crucial for success in many aspects of their life. It is something all this study respondents did to some degree. It is interesting to consider how they navigate and how the movement of the migration laws shapes their actions and decisions. Whereas the study looks at movement, it is not individuals who 'are on the move but also the finishing lines of the track they run on and the running tracks themselves' (Bauman, 2001, p. 125).

## Chapter Eight

### **Transnational identity: combating with invisible fences and spider net connections.**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter will explore the third and final stage concerning the post-PR (Permanent Residency) life of migrant students. These students have established permanent residency in Sweden for a considerable duration, and their strong connections to their home country classify them as transnational migrants. This study seeks to enhance comprehension of Swedish Bangladeshi individuals' daily social, cultural, and economic activities and their perception of their own identity by analyzing transnationalism from a grassroots perspective. Notably, their experiences diverge from settlers in other countries, and they frequently encounter a constant succession of enigmas, paradoxes, and difficulties.

#### **8.2 The struggle continued with 'invisible fences.'**

After acquiring permanent residency, migrant students encounter various challenges in securing employment in their desired fields despite possessing the necessary educational qualifications and skills. The study of Castles (2014) examined the challenge of labor market segmentation. Migrant workers' specialized labor fills specific gaps in job sectors. They address vacancies that native workers are either unable or unwilling to occupy (Castles, 2014, p.261). Gullestad's "Invisible Fences: Egalitarianism, Nationalism and Racism" (2002) is highly relevant to this viewpoint. Gullestad's (2002) work is about the Norwegian context. Despite their reputation as an egalitarian society, she argues that there are still barriers and inequalities based on cultural and social factors such as ethnicity, race, and national identity. Which she refers to as "invisible fences." She supports the concept of "invisible fences" in Norwegian society to maintain cultural identity. In her book, the author discussed the tension between Norway's national identity as an egalitarian society and the reality of social and cultural diversity. She argues that Norwegians rely on subtle discrimination and exclusion to maintain their cultural identity. (Gullestad, 2002, p. 45).

##### **8.2.1 Experience with 'Unofficial Job'**

This study would like to analyze the applicability of the 'invisible fences' model in the Swedish context. Based on my observation, individuals who have engaged in "Unofficial jobs" (which refer to physical labor jobs) during their work permit period, such as working in restaurants, housekeeping, newspaper distribution, and cleaning companies, are actively seeking to transition into study-related employment opportunities once they obtain permanent residency status. However, during that period, they encounter "invisible fences" as they cannot secure their desired employment despite meeting all the necessary qualifications. One of the study participants, who possesses all the requisite qualifications, including language proficiency, needs help securing a suitable employment opportunity. One of the study respondents' cases is relevant to this context.

Anwar (pseudonym) said, "I have completed my master's degree from Malmo University and also completed a language course during my work permit. After obtaining my permanent residency, I completed a two-year company accounting course. Now, I have an extended network with Swedish people. It is easy to get a job if you have a good network. I even changed my previous restaurant through a network connection. However, I am still trying to change my restaurant job as I have an education and all the required qualifications. I have applied for several opportunities, but unfortunately. I am still waiting to receive a call for an interview. Initially, becoming a Swedish passport holder would be more of an option for me, but the reality is different. Nothing has changed; I can feel a significant gap between native and migrant people. In every case, we face challenges. Our professional development graph could be faster. But we can still perform our duties perfectly. However, native people still get advantages in official jobs. One of my colleagues and I both applied for the same accountant position last month; she got the job without having any relevant experience. Whereas I have experience and educational qualifications, I got no interview calls. Obtaining permanent residency was a significant relief from Migrationsverket's constant stress. Otherwise, for my personal economic development, everything has stayed the same.

I asked him if you have experienced yourself in the restaurant sector. Why do you want to change your track? He replied, "I have respect for this job. It gives me the paper. But, in restaurants, we have to do physical work; after a certain age, it is impossible to do this Type of physical work. If you are promoted maximum, you can become a restaurant shift leader. They would not make you a branch manager. If I go to any official job, my scope of income will increase. Additionally, social status is essential here. I can expand my network with multitalented people. And lastly, utilize my educational expertise. You know learning is earning. I have hope. That is why I can live here. If I don't have any hope, I cannot live. Life in Sweden is expensive. After the coronavirus and Ukraine wars, it became more challenging. If my wife does not work, it would be difficult to survive with three kids".

Consequently, three themes emerged from this case,

- The pursuit of initial financial gain,
- The desire to escape manual labor employment,
- And the aspiration for social status and network expansion.

I recall when he invited me to visit him at his place of employment. After lunch, he allocated me some time, resulting in a tranquil atmosphere at the restaurant. However, the restaurant was nearly at maximum capacity that day. He abruptly mentioned the arrival of a group of individuals and then extended an invitation for me to wait while offering me a cup of coffee. I was scrutinizing him. He was occupied preparing pizza and salad for the guests. I endured a nearly one-hour wait for his arrival. While we were in an interview, another individual arrived for their shift, indicating its completion.

This case study highlights the huddle faced by Bangladeshi students holding PR status and offers a more comprehensive insight into labor market segmentation. This situation led to the concentration of immigrants in specific occupational sectors, (Mapril, J.,2011) resulting in inherent discrimination (Castles & Kosack, 2010). Besides, this case exemplifies the challenges faced by permanent resident migrants as they endeavor to secure more favorable employment opportunities, encountering obstacles of invisible barriers that are not compliant with Swedish regulations.

In the 1960s, the Swedish parliament enacted a law that expanded welfare benefits to encompass all guest workers (Skodo, 2019). This law established the basis for Sweden's approach towards immigrants, portraying them alongside native Swedes as equal contributors to society and providing incentives to integrate new migrants into the social fabric (Jensen, 2022).

In 1975, Sweden became one of the early adopters of a policy known as multiculturalism, which involves accepting and supporting ethnic and religious diversity in order to protect the identity and culture of minority groups (Skodo, 2019). Consequently, it is imperative to recognize and embrace third-country minority migrant individuals as equals within Swedish society. Sweden implemented a policy in their primary schools that encouraged teaching students native languages and Swedish, allowing migrant students to learn their country of origin language (Skodo, 2019). While everything is legally established, they encounter practical obstacles known as 'invisible fences.'

The issue of Swedish companies' lack of interest in recruiting international talents was brought to attention in the recent publication of Switch to Sweden (2022). The two primary impediments to international recurrence were the a) language barrier and b) administrative procedures. Consequently, the extended processing duration of work permit applications by Migrationsverket is an obstacle to recruiting international students. (ibid, p.20). Nevertheless, this legal impediment did not prevent migrant students from obtaining Swedish permanent residency or acquiring Swedish passports.

### **8.2.2 Experience with 'official job'**

Let us examine the experiences of individuals employed in "Official job" positions. Respondents were employed in the automobile, furniture, home accessories, and IT industries. One of my correspondents shared his experiences closely connected with this context.

Raju-((pseudonym) Upon obtaining my master's in supply chain management, I became a consultant at a multinational motor vehicle production company. I have been working here for more than ten years. I am satisfied with my salary and got my permanent residency from this company. I have encountered no discrimination or obstacles in my role as an international employee at this establishment. Currently, I am employed in a more senior role. My boss is also an immigrant. We are operating within a diverse cultural setting. There exists a barrier when it comes to language and food. I abstain from consuming " haram " (religiously prohibited). I consciously abstain from consuming those particular foods and opt for vegetarian options. Due to my Swedish colleagues' proficiency in English, I can communicate

with them in English. As a technical expert, I do not experience any barriers in my work. Prominent corporate companies consistently prioritize their reputation. They are unwilling to jeopardize their reputation.

This case shows that respondents' organizations always try to maintain their reputations. As there are diverse nationalities and more skilled personnel are working, they take care of their employees. Raju has been working here for more than ten years. It indicates the resilient environment of that company. Through different training and education, they prepared the employee fit for them. They want to retain their employees with handsome salaries. As per other respondents' data, they never experienced any barrier or discriminatory behavior with them. Additionally, they shared how they facilitated different times of their personal matters. For example, for migration-related issues, the company's human resources department helped them.

What is remarkable is that transnational migrants who overcome the "hidden barriers" can live a comfortable work life. That is why Bangladeshi transnational migrants try to overcome hidden barriers to achieve their goals. They overcome the migration-related barrier through permanent residency, but the struggle remains until they get a suitable job. That is why they always navigate their strategies and moves to touch their destiny.

### **8.3 Transnational social life 'spider net' connections.**

This section highlights a noteworthy observation regarding the personal and social lives of permanent residents (PR) through the lens of transnational scholarship. This section also highlights the notable shifts in the transformation of social life within kinship and family structure. Upon arrival from Bangladesh, a student consistently communicates with family and friends. According to Vertovec (1999), transnationalism refers to the connections and interactions between individuals or organizations across national borders. Understanding student marriage is highly pertinent in this context, as it facilitates reestablishing their connections with their home country and culture. By engaging in transnational activities, migrants transform into trans-migrants and strengthen various connections with their countries of origin (Glick et al., 1992; Glick & Fouron, 1999; Pries, 1999).

Baldassar (2014), in her article "Transnational Families," elaborately describes transnational family and their social relationship with family members who stay behind. She contended that this social relationship extended over time and space, even if they never physically relocated.

My observation reveals an additional aspect: Bangladeshi migrant students maintain connections with their family members to maintain social contact with their home country, motivating them to visit or return to their homeland. It is like a complex network of a "spider net." Where family remains at the center of their connections with their homeland, transnational migrant students act like spiders. They always prioritize family. Over time, the spider builds new networks. These networks encompass individuals or organizations that engage in cultural, economic, political, and social interactions.



Based on my study observation, transnational individuals prioritize their family members when making significant decisions. They engage in discussions primarily to reach decisions illustration of their marital choice. Upon marriage, they selected Bangladeshi women as their life partners. They consider cultural and religious factors in this context. Eleven of my respondents got married during their work permit period. They went home, married in Bangladesh, and later brought their spouse to Sweden. Only three of them married after getting PR. The only female participant came with her husband and offspring.

Additionally, family care is also an important issue here. When parents become older, they need care both physically and mentally. Migrants try their best possible ways. Using the pseudonym, Alam said,

My mother lives in Chottogram (Port city in Bangladesh). She is currently in her seventies. I cover all of her expenses from Sweden. Annually, I celebrate two Eid festivals with my mother in Bangladesh. It brings me joy and provides my mother with serenity. Furthermore, I converse with her daily, and she eagerly anticipates my phone call.

Utilizing cutting-edge technology and affordable air travel enables Bangladeshi individuals living in different countries to sustain their interpersonal connections. They maintain their connection through video conferencing and frequent trips to their country of origin. Vertovec (2010) said cheap telephone calls have various impacts on transnational communities. That impact on domestic and community life creates intergenerational linkage and social and economic development in migrant homes and host countries. (Vertovec, 2010, p. 56). Ratul, using (pseudonym), shared,

After PR every year in December, I visit Bangladesh. All my relatives get together on my grandfather's death anniversary. Together, it's an excellent gate, and the whole house is full of people. Besides, I talked with my parents every day. My daughter especially loves to talk with her grandmother. Overall, the transnational student maintains their communication with their family members. Though physically they are not there, physiologically they are connected.

This case represents that transnational relations are rigorous on family and family members. Family care, cheap calls, and affordable travel fairs help to maintain their connections.

#### **8.4 Remittance as responsibilities and connections**

Remittance has become a tangible proof of the connection between migrants and their home country (Guarnizo, 2003, p.666). According to Nyberg-Sorensen et al. (2002), remittance tends to be spent in three different ways:

- For family maintenance and housing improvement,
- For "conspicuous" consumption, and
- For 'productive' activities.

This study data shows that migration and settlement are interconnected with economic and cultural linkage. Transnational students send remittances through their mobile phones. It is a matter of a few seconds to send money. There are different money-sending apps they use now. It is essential here that

migrant students not only send money to their family members but also receive it in the initial stage of their student life. So, the remittance flow is reciprocal. All the respondents in this study send money to their family members regularly and occasionally. It could be seen as an act of care, responsibility, and a future window to return home. A case study is contextual to this. One of the study respondents, Soumik (using a pseudonym), stated,

Upon my arrival in Sweden, my parents covered all of my tuition fees. They assumed full responsibility for all my duties, and now it is my turn to attend to their needs. My father, who is now retired, is currently afflicted with multiple ailments. In February of 2022, he experienced severe cardiac failure and was subsequently hospitalized. I traveled to Bangladesh. I regularly transfer remittances each month to cover the expenses of his medical treatment. I have already acquired a residential property in Bangladesh, where they currently reside. I entered into a contractual agreement with a proprietor of a nearby pharmacy to obtain their medication. I directly remit funds to the pharmacy proprietor, who supplies all the necessary medication to my parents". It has been seen that remittance is not only for economic purposes but also for care and responsibility. It is like caring from abroad. Respondents sent remittances and made an apartment complex in their home country for future economic stability. And made a 'home' in the home country. Relevant cases signify this. According to Raju (pseudonym), "I started working at my uncle's Indian restaurant and earning money three months after arriving in Sweden." As a result of living in a shared accommodation and being employed at a restaurant, my expenses for food and rent are significantly reduced. I transferred the entirety of the funds to Bangladesh. We owned property in Dhaka's Mohammadi housing area. My father constructed a five-story apartment complex at that location. I have made a substantial financial contribution through remittance. I am experiencing contentment as I can now acquire funds for my housing expenses. Additionally, my parents can obtain financial resources from the same source. So, it is a significant relief. After my Permanent residency, I started my own restaurant business here.

So, remittance seems like the bridge between transnational migrant and their family members. This economic relation helps the home country's economy as well.

### **8.5.1 "Transculturation" of Bangladeshi Migrant Students**

The term "Transculturation" was coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz (1995[1940]) to refer to the phenomenon of cultural transformation that occurs when foreign elements are incorporated into a new social environment (Levitt, 2004, p. 44). The dynamic process of cultural exchange frequently leads to the emergence of novel categories and the dissolution of existing ones, rendering it challenging to pinpoint a singular resultant "culture." According to Nurse, the interaction of multiple cultures results in forming new categories and dismantling existing ones, leading to an intricate and constantly changing cultural environment (Nurse, 1999, p. 477). In this study, I examined how they define themselves as Bangladeshi or Swedish as transnational migrants. When they live in Sweden for a long time, does it

influence the home country's culture? One of my participants said, "Obviously, we care about Bangladeshi culture; firstly, I am Bangladeshi, then Swedish." Bangladeshi migrant students who get Permanent residency live here in a "mixed culture." It is not my statement but a response opinion. One of my responses. This study explores the self-identification of transnational migrants as either Bangladeshi or Swedish. During an extended period of residence in Sweden. Does the home country's culture experience any impact? One of my participants expressed their strong attachment to Bangladeshi culture, "obviously, we care about Bangladeshi culture. Firstly, I am Bangladeshi, then Swedish." Bangladeshi migrant students who obtain Permanent Residency reside in a "mixed culture." This statement does not originate from me but represents an opinion expressed in response.

One of the study respondents, Alam, using a (pseudonym), has held a senior position at a well-regarded motor vehicle manufacturing company for over eleven years. He expressed his viewpoint, stating,

I was born and raised in Bangladesh, and I cannot sever our ties to our origins." I am cultivating a diverse cultural environment here. The individual's cultural background consists of a majority of Bengali heritage, comprising sixty percent, and a minority of Swedish heritage, comprising forty percent. I am adept at maintaining equilibrium between both cultures. Regularly, I participate in post-work gatherings with my colleagues. Occasionally, we convene at the coffee shop. I attend various dinner parties and extend invitations to my apartment. Since I live alone, I have ample free time after work. I do not experience any crisis regarding my identity. However, individuals who reside in Sweden but need help to assimilate into the local culture may encounter difficulties. I observe that the Swedish people will only consider you a friend if you want to establish a friendship with them. They have a profound reverence for an individual's boundaries. They lack expressiveness. They will refrain from inquiring about your personal life and personal space. You must establish harmonious relationships with them. Step forward and demonstrate your desire to engage with them. If you cannot socialize with the locals of this country, it will become your challenge. I have observed that many individuals from Bangladesh struggle to integrate with Swedish people and adapt to their culture, forming distinct "pocket cultures." They support a distinct Bengali culture within themselves. They constantly need help assimilating into Swedish culture while struggling to preserve their Bangladeshi culture effectively. They experience a significant struggle with their sense of self.

This case exemplifies the ability to effectively harmonize personal and professional cultural aspects, enabling successful integration into Swedish culture. Nevertheless, the integration or cultural assimilation process does not yield uniform results for all Bangladeshi migrants.

### **8.5.2 After-work party**

I attended an "after-work party" at the house of one of my colleague's acquaintances. Food and beverages can be classified into various categories, including alcohol, soft drinks, fruit juice, and non-alcoholic

options. The pizza includes salami, margarita, kebab, and chips, accompanied by a generous assortment of chocolates and fruits. At the party, I noticed three individuals from Bangladeshi backgrounds who exhibited distinct behaviors. Three individuals adhere to the Islamic faith. One Bangladeshi individual enthusiastically engaged in the activities, embracing the Swedish man and woman, consuming alcohol, dancing with them, and participating in various sports events. The remaining two participants exhibited distinct behavior by opting for non-alcoholic beverages, halal cuisine, and fruits. Although they exchanged handshakes with their colleagues, they refrained from embracing. They attended the party but only engaged in some of the activities. The Bangladeshi participants frequently engaged in conversations with their colleagues. I inquired about their contrasting behavior, and one of them responded, "I thoroughly enjoy participating in social gatherings and possess a receptive mindset. However, I exercise caution due to my religious beliefs and refrain from consuming prohibited beverages and foods." My colleagues know they make arrangements for Halal food and beverages specifically for me. Here, I observed that he adeptly harmonized his religious beliefs and practices. Religion helped the integration of host cultural activities.

### **8.5.3 Family purpose**

In this research, I have found that "family purpose" is not only present but also significant, alongside religion in my respondents. Using the pseudonym Rony, one of the study respondents shared that despite being sociable, he could not participate in Swedish parties. He said- My wife intensely disliked spending nights away from her, particularly in places where alcohol was present. She has apprehensions regarding our daughter. She desires to spend quality time with her family. I want to provide my daughter with values and education that will enable her to preserve Bangladeshi culture in the future. I share apprehensions regarding the future of my daughter. I prioritize allocating my time to be in the company of my family members. Typically, I interact with members of the Bangladeshi community, and my engagement with Swedish culture is limited to a level consistent with my values and religious beliefs.

This case reflects the traditional Bangladeshi culture of prioritizing family and firmly believing in religion. Rony also thought about his daughter's future. He wants to show and transfer Bangladeshi culture to his daughter.

Vertovec (2007) also affirmed that the extent to which migrants preserve their own identity and establish connections with the host culture is unparalleled. Not all migrants maintain their connections at the same level or Type of transnational engagement, which can vary in social, cultural, political, and economic aspects. Transnational practices among immigrants exhibit significant diversity both between and within groups. (Vertovec, 2007, P. 78)

### **8.6 Maintain culture in their own way.**

Notably, Bangladeshi individuals and communities residing in a foreign country actively endeavor to preserve their culture according to their unique approach. Both collectively and individually.

### 8.6.1 Collective activities

Vertovec (2010) categorizes collective activities as ‘transnational as social morphology’. Some social gatherings primarily serve as platforms for Bangladeshi populations to practice their culture based on religion and cultural affiliations. In Malmö, the Bangladeshi community members founded a “Bangladeshi cultural center and mosque.” They host various events, including daily prayers, Eid prayers, iftar parties, and summer parties. Invitations were extended to all residents of Bangladesh residing in various cities via a Facebook group. During the most recent Eid gathering (Eid referring to a Muslim celebration or festival), In the Islamic tradition, there are two annual religious festivals known as Eids. (These two celebrations have distinct significance. Eid al-Fitr signifies the holy month of Ramadan, while Eid al-Adha commemorates the act of sacrifice by Abraham).

In the last Eid reunion in front of the Malmo student housing field. I participated in that event and observed Bangladeshi community members. All Bangladeshi men, women, and children living in Malmo, Lund, and Helsingborg were invited there. Around three hundred participants joined that Eid reunion. I observed that participants were -new migrant students, work permit holders, permanent resident holders, and kids. There was a ‘senior group’ that got their Permanent residency. They were the “prioritized group” of that event. They organize the whole event. They give different advice to new students and work permit holders. That is how new students can build relations and network with other Bangladeshi community members. In that reunion program, they organize different Bangladeshi traditional games like pillow passing, chocklet run, hari vanga (breaking the clay pot), and cock fight. Served traditional “deshi food” through one dish party. It is always heartening to see families come together and prepare traditional dishes passed down through generations. I have tasted those foods and I am sure the plane polaw, chicken roast, kabab, fish fry, biryani, taheri, ferny, vegetables, lamb curry, and beef curry all taste amazing and are a testament to Bangladeshi culture and cuisine.

Eid- reunion is also celebrated in two other cities, Stockholm and Gothenburg. Stockholm Bangladeshi community hosted a concert of Bangla music, inviting famous singers from Bangladesh. This practice can be categorized as a ‘social gathering’ of the Bangladeshi community. The Gothenburg Bangladeshi community organized a ‘women’s badminton tournament. They feel connected, and it forms a place of belonging. These events also serve as a platform to introduce Bangladeshi culture to the younger generation and keep them connected to their ancestor’s origins. That gives them the mental satisfaction of keeping their generation connected with roots to preserve cultural identity and heritage.

Ahmed’s (2022) work provides evidence and reflects this interpretation. Through his empirical observations, he sought to clarify the phenomenon of Bangladeshi migrants frequently failing to assimilate into their new environment, instead maintaining a dual identity as part of both the Bangladeshi diaspora and their host society. Ahmed supplemented his observations with Katy Gardner’s assertion that various connections and disconnections occur in this context, encompassing physical, material, and emotional aspects. According to Ahmed, connections appear to be at the state level. The United States is a country that attracts immigrants due to its secure employment opportunities and transparent

government sector. The disconnections are mitigated by maintaining social relationships and networks through community involvement, which helps counterbalance the feeling of being detached from one's homeland. He stated that engaging in various community activities in Little Bangladesh creates a sense of belonging and mental fulfillment, allowing individuals to establish a connection to their home (Ahmed, 2022).

#### **8. 6. 2 On an individual level, 'Bangladeshi type Swedish culture'**

Vertovec (2010) categorizes individual activities as 'type of consciousness'. At the individual level, the character of one's work impacts one's transnational lifestyle and cultural pursuits. For example, the Bangladeshi community greatly enjoys consuming their traditional cuisine. They consider rice to be an essential food, much like a staple. However, it has undergone a shift in direction over time. One of my correspondents, Nazrul (using a pseudonym), stated,

Upon obtaining permanent residency, I commenced employment in Denmark. I am currently employed on a full-time basis. During my day off, I accomplish my weekly grocery shopping and allocate time to be with my wife and other family members in Bangladesh. Due to the time-consuming nature of preparing traditional food, I typically cook on my day off, while my wife takes charge of cooking on her day off. Typically, our lunch consists of salads, pizzas, or pasta from restaurants, while our breakfast consists of bread. We regularly consume traditional cuisine during the evening hours. Our dietary habits have been altered due to our busy work schedules. Due to my work schedule, I frequently cannot participate in Bangladeshi community gatherings.

One of my correspondents, Rony (using a pseudonym), stated, "I have resided in Sweden for over a decade." By default, when individuals reside within a society, they inevitably integrate themselves into that society. In addition, I modified my conduct, attire, and dietary preferences to assimilate into this particular culture. However, I always remember my origins. I possess a profound bond with my family members. I visit Bangladesh regularly.

These two respondents' data describe the changing nature of traditional Bangladeshi food-taking patterns and behavioral changes by transnational migrants. But still, they try to maintain their connections with root. That is evident when they regularly visit Bangladesh and communicate with family and friends.

Swedish culture is well-received by individuals who incorporate it into their personal lives. The behavioral pattern of Bangladeshi migrants was altered. It propagated from individual to household and subsequently to the local population. One of my correspondents, Turjo (pseudonym), said.

I appreciate the punctuality and time management skills exhibited by Swedish individuals. Whether it is a bus, train, or school, they all adhere strictly to punctuality. I have a strong affinity for this and actively incorporate it into my daily existence. As a devout Muslim, I

abstain from consuming alcohol and strictly adhere to halal dietary restrictions, which means I avoid any meat that is not prepared according to Islamic guidelines. "Halal" refers to something permissible or allowed according to Islamic law. I exclusively consume nutritious food, as I have significantly altered my dietary habits. The majority of my meals consist of salads and fruits. I seldom consume rice. However, when guests visit my house, it is customary for all Bangladeshi cousins to be ready. Turjo changes both his dietary habits and meal schedule. He takes those he thinks do not conflict with his religious beliefs. This is how transnational Bangladeshi migrant students adjust their culture to Swedish culture. They try to make their way of culture. It could be described as "Dual culture" or "Bangladeshi-type Swedish culture."

Overall, the data from this study indicate that the concept of "transculturation" is influenced by factors such as individual education, social class, personal choice, ability, economic status, and level of social engagement. Their employment, personal or familial affiliations, and social, religious, and cultural engagement are paramount. This allows them to interact with individuals and immerse themselves in the local culture. Consequently, we perceive the effects of "transculturation" in varying ways depending on the individual and their level of integration with the host culture. The level of positive or negative involvement directly impacts the likelihood of cultural integration. Based on my observations, Bangladeshi migrant students do not have the intention to transform Swedish society. However, they demonstrate an interest in assimilating Swedish culture that aligns with their Bangladeshi background. By residing in Swedish society for an extended duration, individuals naturally assimilate into this society. Consequently, whether aware or unaware, they assimilated certain aspects of Swedish culture. As a result, they uphold a "hybrid culture". However, the extent of this "transculturation" differs at the individual level. Furthermore, it is challenging to ascertain the correlation between transnationalism and integration. It is crucial to comprehend that neither concept is cohesive; migrants cannot selectively combine various modes or components (Vertovec, 2010, p. 80)

### **8.6.3 After touching the dream**

After receiving permanent residency, I asked all my respondents if there was any chance to move to another country. I got mixed responses from all of my respondents. Some of them replied that they 'love to be here.' Sultana (pseudonym) shared her experiences about her Swedishness and said, 'Culturally, it is not like my home culture. Here, they have religious freedom, equal rights, and no gender discrimination, especially regarding child education. What I faced regarding my 'Down syndrome daughters in my home country is the opposite here. My daughter gets the highest priority, the best behaviors in school, and administrative support from community hospitals. I had passed my long struggle as a housekeeper for permanent residency. I have a Swedish Passport. Now, I am working in a preschool. My husband also works in a chain shop. My family and I get the best health care, social security, after-work pension facilities, and social safety net. I made my life settle here. I love to be here. I do not have any plans to move to any other country. Her response indicates her situation is better than

before she came from Bangladesh, and her aspiration in her daughter's health care is fulfilled. She does not want to return home.

Raju (pseudonym) says, "Sweden is a welfare state. Here, economic development is not like a pyramid model; it's horizontal. The government trying to value each personnel by maintaining a decent living standard. They are trying to provide health care and education at the same level. I have my life security here. Regarding my income, I am spending taxes on all the facilities. In the pension period, I will get back my money. Here is what I am earning as well as spending almost the same. You cannot save much. Compared to Bangladesh, I am getting a much more secure life now, and after my retirement, that is the fundamental difference I feel. I cannot do any luxury." Ayan (pseudonym) has his restaurants in Sweden. He said, "After my PR. I started my own business. Now, I have two Indian restaurants. Therefore I am busy all day. My wife and four staff members helped me run my business. My only son will complete his graduation in aeronautical engineering next year from Canada. He is independent and can manage his life. I am busy with my business. I am still determining what will happen but plan to stay here. As an elder son, I had many responsibilities. I bring my brother here. I do not have any family members in Bangladesh. Besides my business, I am involved with the Bangladeshi community in my city.

Besides those who have a specialty in their sector, like information technology, engineering, and law, three of my respondents said there is a big chance to move to English English-speaking countries like the USA or Canada. Soumik (pseudonym) expressed his plan. "Currently, I am working for an American IT company. I might move to America or Canada if I get a better opportunity. Now I can move anywhere in the world. I have the expertise and Experience. Maybe later, I will open my own IT company in Bangladesh. I have not decided yet".

#### **8.6.4 'Bidesh (foreign) is like a trap'**

'Foreign is like a trap' was the opinion of one of my respondents. He is unfulfilled about his life. Nazrul (pseudonym) expressed his situations,

Bidesh aisa gachi ami faisai" (coming abroad, I get stuck). It's like a trap. Fifteen years ago, I dreamed of a good life. Still, I am struggling; besides my contract job, I worked personally "kala jak"(cash contract) as a plumber. Due to excessive expenses, I have to work and earn money. I do not have any rest in my life. I ran for my Swedish passport; I spent my life's golden youth in a restaurant kitchen. Still, I cannot break the chain. Now, I have my wife and two daughters here. I have my passport and own apartment. However, lost my willingness to have a luxurious lifestyle. I built a house In Bangladesh. Nevertheless, I cannot stay there. Only once a year, I traveled to my home. Bidesh (abroad) means work. Previously, I worked for my passport, and now I work for my family and daughters. I hope my daughters will not face the problems that I faced. Because they were born here, my elder daughter is exceptionally meritorious. She is studying pharmacy. She dreams to be a scientist. They are more close to Swedish culture and society. They think Sweden is their home but always



remember their parents' culture. Nevertheless, I dreamed of returning home at an old age. 'Bidesh'(Sweden) gave me money but took 'life' from my life. At present, for my family, I cannot leave Sweden.

All cases show that transnational Bangladeshi students have mixed experiences with their lives in Sweden. Some of them like the social security and health care system. Some are thinking about returning home or moving to other countries. Economically, those who work 'unofficial jobs' are trying to get better official, high-paid salary jobs. However, as there are hidden barriers, they have to struggle for that. Those who overcome the barriers find a stable life, but those who do not overcome the barriers still struggle for a better or good life. They constantly navigate their move to achieve their goal. So, for them, life in Sweden is an entire struggle. Apart from the economic part, culturally, they maintain a Bangladeshi-type Swedish culture. It is a combination of both cultures. Besides, they have economic and emotional connections with their home; moreover, for their current position, they cannot return to their home country. However, those skilled in IT, engineering, and law can move to other English-speaking countries.

### **8.7 The new way for transnational Bangladeshi**

It is proven that culturally Bangladeshi transnational migrants maintain mixed cultures. It varies at which level individuals get involved with the host culture. Here, their source of income or job comes first. Because based on income, their connections to their surrounding will be developed. So, the job category is essential. As immigrants, there are fragmented work categories (Castles, 2014, p.261). However, their second-generation Bangladeshi Swedish could abolish their language barrier and migration-related hurdle. However, if the hidden barriers remain, there might be a risk of falling into the same circle. Here, at the policy level, the government might look into this matter. More emphasize on integration with Swedish society. Emphasize on eliminate hidden barriers, what migrates faces in their every day life.

### **8.8 Conclusion**

This thesis aims to comprehensively analyze the life trajectories and challenges faced by Bangladeshi migrant students in their pursuit of obtaining permanent residency in Sweden. In addition, the text emphasizes the individuals' desire to relocate to Sweden, their encounters during the work permit duration, their subsequent attainment of permanent residency, and their navigation of life as transnational migrants. Initially, this study focused on the moment when the idea for this research work came to mind—then explained the historical patterns of the Bangladeshi diaspora in Sweden, providing an overview of its development. Additionally, this study provided a concise history of the migration of Bangladeshi students to Sweden. This study attempted to classify the life trajectories of study participants into three distinct stages of their lives in Sweden; during the initial stage, this research examined the underlying motivations that prompted individuals to pursue their aspirations of relocating to Sweden. Their aspirations shaped by individual level and familial collective level. This involved exploring the diverse experiences they had in their previous lives and how these experiences shaped

their perspectives on life. The primary motive shared by all individuals was the pursuit of a fulfilling life, defined by the freedom of financial security and a high standard of living that the Swedish society provides, as elucidated in various situations.

The second phase focuses on the individual's Experience of work permit life. Both in “Official job” and “Un official job”. The study observed “official job” holders that only a few individuals seamlessly adjusted to the new work environment as if they were inherently suited to this society. However, their perception, behavioral patterns, and goal-oriented attitude enabled them to maintain harmonious stability. While others ‘Un official job’ holders faced difficulties, they opted to stay within their familiar community. Transnational migrants engaging in activities and interacting with people they were accustomed to create a sense of belonging. However, their attention was increasingly directed towards conforming to social struggle. While these actions have played a role in the growth of the Bengali community on a larger scale, they have had varied effects on individual lives.

The third phase focuses on the transnational migrants' encounters with transcultural aspects of daily life, encompassing social, cultural, and economic dimensions. Suppose it deviates from the aspirations they initially had in this journey. This study found it inspiring to explore respondents' experiences and observe how they approached decision-making. How they face the ‘hidden barriers’ and overcome that and navigate their steps towards goal. Even small circumstances with positive and negative outcomes added to the diversity of their choices. However, witnessing their journeys as some unfolded like captivating narratives was genuinely remarkable.

Lastly, the study emphasized the impacts, precisely the significance of transnational family networks as intricate interconnections as described ‘spider net’ connections. Then discussed, transcultural Bangladeshi migrants observe "on their own way “or "Bangladeshi type Swedish culture." This study was concluded by emphasizing the second-generation Bangladeshi Swedish and policy alteration in Sweden regarding minority transnational migrants. This represents an alternative aspect of the transnational Bangladeshi migration experience that could be further investigated and comprehended.

## Bibliography

Ahmed, Z. (2021). *Little Bangladesh; Voices from America* <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367765910>

Alvesson, Mats & Skoldberg, Kaj. (2009). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage.

Asian Development Bank. (2015). *Innovative strategies in higher education for accelerated human resource development in South Asia: Bangladesh*. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2015

Al-Ali, N., & Koser, K. (2002). *New Approaches to Migration? Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home* (1st ed.). Routledge Home. ISBN 9780415254328

Alonso, A., & Oiazabal, P. (2010). *Diasporas in the New Media Age: Identity, Politics, and Community* (1st ed.). Diasporas in the New Media Age: Identity, Politics, and Community.

Ayala, M. I. (2012). The State of Research in Latino Academic Attainment. *The Sociological Forum*, p. 117, 27(4), 1037–1045. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1573-7861.2012.01367.x>

Ayala, L. S. (2012). Interviewing technique for migrant minority groups. In C. Vargas-Silva (Ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration*. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Adler, P. (1975). The Transitional Experience: An Alternative View of Culture Shock. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 15,13-23. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/002216787501500403>

Armitage, S. J., Sabah A. Jasim, A. E. Marks, Adrian G. Parker, Vitaly I. Usik, & Hans-Peter Uerpmann. (2011). "The Southern Route 'Out of Africa': Evidence for an Early Expansion of Modern Humans into Arabia." *Science* 331 (6016): 453–56.

Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Nedelcu,

Anthias, P. (2008). *Student Migration from Bangladesh to the UK*. ResearchGate.

[https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237407834\\_Student\\_Migration\\_from\\_Bangladesh\\_to\\_the\\_UK](https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237407834_Student_Migration_from_Bangladesh_to_the_UK)

Ang, Alvin, and Erwin R. Tiongson. (2023). "Philippine Migration Journey: Processes and Programs in the Migration Life Cycle." *Background paper prepared for World Development Report 2023*, World Bank, Washington, DC

Barusch, Amanda; Gringeri, Christina & George, Molly. (2011). Rigor in qualitative social work research: A review of strategies used in published articles. *Social Work Research*, 35, 11–19.

Ballard, R. (1994). *Desh Pardesh: The South Asian Presence in Britain*. London: C. Hurst.

Boccagni, P. (2012). Rethinking transnational studies: Transnational ties and the transnationalism of everyday life. *Sage Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310114236>

Bordes-Benayoun, C. (2010). CONTEMPORARY DIASPORAS, NATIONALISM, AND TRANSNATIONALISM POLITICS. In A.Gall, A.S. Leouissi & A.D.Smith,(Ed.) *The call of the homeland: diaspora nationalisms, past and present* (pp. 47-58). Brill.

Block, E. S., & Erskine, L. (2012). Interviewing by Telephone: Specific Considerations, Opportunities, and Challenges. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 11(4), 428-445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100409>

Bayard-Burfield, L., Sundquist, J. & Johansson, S.-E. (2001). Ethnicity, self-reported psychiatric illness, and intake of psychotropic drugs in five ethnic groups in Sweden. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 55, 657–664.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2008). *Using thematic analysis in psychology*. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 77-101. Retrieved from <https://www-tandfonlinecom.ludwig.lub.lu.se/doi/pdf/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa?needAccess=true>

Bangladesh, Planning Commission (2015) Seventh Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh (FY2016–FY2020): Accelerating Growth, Empowering Citizens. General Economics Division, Planning Commission, Dhaka.

Bauböck, R. (2003). Towards a Political Theory of Migrant Transnationalism. *International Migration Review*, 37(3), 700–723. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00155.x>

Bangladesh Migration Governance Framework

Bossavie, & Laurent, Y. L. (2023). “Low-Skilled Temporary Migration Policy: The Case of Bangladesh.” *Background paper prepared for World Development Report 2023*. World Bank, Washington DC. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2023>

Blanc, C. S., Basch, L., & Schiller, N. G. (1995). *Transnationalism, Nation-States, and Culture*. *Current Anthropology*, 36(4), 683-686.

Barro, R. J., & Lee, J. W. (2013). A new data set of educational attainment in the world, 1950–2010. *Journal of Development Economics*, pp. 104, 184–198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdevco.2012.10.001>

Baldassar, L., Kilkey, M., Merla, L., & Wilding, R. (2018). *Transnational families in the era of global mobility*. In Anna Triandafyllidou (ed) Edward Elgar Publishing <https://doi.org/DOI:10.4337/9781785367519>

- Baldassar, L., M. Kilkey, L. Merla and R. Wilding (2016), Transnational families, care and wellbeing, in F. Thomas (ed.) *Handbook of migration and health*. Cheltenham, UK, and Northampton, MA, USA. Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 477-97.
- Baldassar, L., M. Kilkey, L. Merla and R. Wilding (2014), 'Transnational families', in J. Treas, J. Scott and M. Richards (eds), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Families*. Chichester: Wiley, pp.155-75
- Baldassar, L. and Merla, L. (eds) (2013). *Transnational Families, Migration and the Circulation of Care: Understanding Mobility and Absence in Family Life*, Routledge, London.
- Beyer, Robert M., Mario Krapp, Anders Eriksson, and Andrea Manica. (2021) "Climatic Windows for Human Migration Out of Africa in the Past 300,000 Years." *Nature Communications* 12 (1): 4889.
- Cannell C. F. (1985). Interviewing in telephone surveys. In Beed T. W. & Stimson R. J. (Eds.), *Survey interviewing: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 63–84). Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Castle, S. A. (2000). *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*. New York: Routledge.
- Castles, S., & Kosack, G. (2010). 1. The function of labour immigration in Western European capitalism. *Selected studies in international migration and immigrant incorporation, 1*, 21.
- Cohen, R., & Kennedy, P. (2000). *Global Sociology*. NYU Press, 2000. ISBN 0814716091, 9780814716090
- Castles, S. (2012). Understanding the relationship between methodology and methods, In C. V. -Silva, (Ed.) *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration*. UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Clifford, J. (1992). "Traveling cultures." In J. Flinn (ed.) *Fieldwork and Families: Constructing New Models for Ethnographic Research*, pp. 1– 21. Honolulu: Honolulu University Press.
- Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9(3), 302–338.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/656365>
- Carling, J., & Collins, F. (2018). Aspiration, desire, and drivers of migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(6), 909–926. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384134
- Carling, J., & Schewel, K. (2018). Revisiting aspiration and ability in international migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(6), 945–963. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2017.1384146
- Castles, S., & Davidson, A. (2000). *Citizenship and Migration Globalization and the Politics of Belonging* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Carling, J. (2002.) "Migration in the age of Involuntary Immobility: Theoretical Reflections and Cape Verdean Experiences." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28 (1): 5–42.

Clarke, C., Peach, C., & Vertovec, S. (1990). *South Asians Overseas: Migration and Ethnicity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dulal, M. A. (2016). *The Bangladeshi Migrant Community in the Developed Country. The socio-economic situation of the Bangladeshi workers in the European Union* (pp. 61-94). Dhaka: University Publication Limited.

Dale, A., & Sameera Ahmed. (2011). "Marriage and Employment Patterns amongst UK-Raised Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Women." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34 (6): 902–24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2011.564058>

Douglass, M. (2006)'Global House holding in Pacific Asia', *International Development Planning Review*, 28(4) 421-45

Dingwall,, R., & Murphy,, E. (2001). Catching Goldfish: Quality in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135581969800300308>

Dinham S. (1994). *The use of the telephone in educational research*. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 21(2), 17–27.

EMN (2018) "*Attracting and retaining international students in the EU- Country Report Sweden*, 2018

Eriksen, T. H. (2003). *Globalization: Studies in Anthropology*. London: \_Pluto

Faruq, M. B. (2021). *Migrating Abroad: Factors and Experiences of Bangladeshi Students in Umeå, Sweden*. [Masters Thesis, Umeå University].

<https://www.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:1564032/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

Fryer, P. (1984). *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*, London: Pluto Press.

Ferrada-Noli, M. & Asberg, M. (1997). Psychiatric health, ethnicity and socioeconomic factors among suicides in Stockholm. *Psychological Reports* 81, 323-332.

Gullestad, M. (2002). Invisible Fences: Egalitarianism, Nationalism and Racism. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 8(1), 45–63. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3134875>

Gürüz, K. (2011). *Higher Education and International Student Mobility in the Global Knowledge Economy* (2nd ed.). State University of New York Press.

Gardner, K. (1995). *Global migrants, local lives: Travel and transformation in rural Bangladesh*. Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press. Oxford [England]: New York.

Gillespie, M. (1995). *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change* (1st ed.). Routledge Home.

Gardner, K. (1999). "*Location and relocation: Home, 'the field' and anthropological ethics (Sylhet Bangladesh)*." In C.W. Watson (ed.) *Being There: Fieldwork in Anthropology*, pp. 49– 73. London: Pluto Press.

Geertz, Clifford. (1974) "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 28(1): 26-45.

Glick, S. N., Basch, L., & Blanc-Szanton, C. (1992). *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration, Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*. The New York Academy of Sciences., New York.

Glick, S. N., & Fouron, G. E. (1999). *Terrains of Blood and Nation: Haitian Transnational Social Fields*. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), 340-66.

Gullestad, M. (2002). Invisible Fences: Egalitarianism, Nationalism and Racism. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 8(1), 45–63. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3134875>

Hossain, M. S. (2023, July 20). Skill based curriculum adopted for 'Smart Bangladesh'. *Daily Observer*.

<https://www.observerbdt.com/news.php?id=428933#:~:text=Bangladesh%20has%20formally%20adopted%20a,challenge%20of%20the%2021st%20century> (Visited on November 17, 2023)

Halperin, A., & Halperin, A. (2014). The Use of New Media by the UK's Palestinian Diaspora. <https://core.ac.uk/download/161109598.pdf>

Hass, D. (2021). A theory of migration: The aspirations-capabilities framework. *Comparative Migration Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-00210-4>

Harvey, D (1989), *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hassan, F. (2021, September 8). How diaspora can support Bangladesh's development. *The Daily Star*. <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/how-diaspora-can-support-bangladeshs-development-2170991> ( visited on November 15, 2023)

Islam, K. M. R. (2021). *The informal tactics of the Bangladeshi student migrant restaurant workers in Sweden: Crime or Survival Strategies* [Master's Thesis, Lund University].

Jensen, C. (2022). The Nordic Model(s) of Immigration: How and Why Sweden and Denmark Present Two Different Answers to the Question of Migration to Scandinavia.

<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/27516>

Kibria, N. (2012). "Transnational Marriage and the Bangladeshi Muslim Diaspora in Britain and the United States." *Culture and Religion* 13 (2): 227^40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2012.674957>

Kofman, E., & Raghuram, P. (2015). *Gendered Migrations and Global Social Reproduction*. Palgrave Macmillan London. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137510143>

Khachig Tölölyan (1996). Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Volume 5 Issue 1, spring 1996, pp. pp. 3-36 Wesleyan University <https://doi.org/10.3138/diaspora.5.1.3>

- Kochanek, S. (2002). The growing commercialization of power, in R. Jahan (ed.), Bangladesh: promise and performance, 149–80. Dhaka: University Press Limited.
- Levitt, P., & Schiller, N. G. (2004). Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society. *International Migration Review*, 38(3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.x>
- Leung, M. W. H. L. (2012). 'Read ten thousand books, walk ten thousand miles': Geographical mobility and capital accumulation among Chinese scholars. *Royal Geographical Society*, 38(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2012.00526.x>
- Longan, M. W., & Bialasiewicz, L. (1997). [Review of *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries*, by D. Morley & K. Robins]. *Geographical Review*, 87(3), 429–431. <https://doi.org/10.2307/216048>
- Levitt, P., DeWind, J., & Vertovec, S. (2003). International Perspectives on Transnational Migration: An Introduction. *International Migration Review*, 37(3), 565-575
- Lacroix, D. T. (2009). Transnationalism and Development: The Example of Moroccan Migrant Networks. *Journal of Ethnic and Minority Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830903165865>
- Mason, J. (2018). *Qualitative Researching* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Mapril, J. (2011). 'The Patron and the Madman: Migration, Success and the (In) Visibility of Failure Among Bangladeshis in Portugal,' *Social Anthropology*, 19(3), pp. 288–96.
- Mahler, S. P. (2001). Gendered geographics of power: Analyzing gender across transnational spaces. *Identities*, 7(4) 441-459.
- Mitchell, K. (2002). *Transnational Discourse: Bringing Geography Back In*. WILEY. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00038>
- Menjívar, C., & Abrego, L. J. (2012). *Legal Violence: Immigration Law and the Lives of Central American Immigrants*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 1380-1421
- Morad, M., Haque, M. S., & Alam, M. J. (2015). Contextualizing Formation of Diaspora of Bangladeshi Immigrants in the UK. *Research in Social Change, School of Advanced Social Studies, Nova Gorica, Slovenia*, 6(2), 103-128. <https://doi.org/>
- Morris-Lange, S. &. (2015). Train and retain: Career support for international students in Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden., *SVR's Research Unit: Study*. Berlin, Germany.
- Marcus, G.E. (1995). "Ethnography in/of the world system: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 ( 1 ): 95 – 117.



- McAuliffe, M. a. (2021). *World Migration Report 2022*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration (IOM). Retrieved October 25, 2023, from <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>
- Mihaela Nedelcu (2012) Migrants' New Transnational Habitus: Rethinking Migration Through a Cosmopolitan Lens in the Digital Age, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38:9, 1339-1356, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2012.698203 To link to this article:  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2012.698203>
- Mohiuddin Alamgir (2023) Number of students going abroad triples in 15 years despite university boom. The Daily Star.  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/number-students-going-abroad-triples-15-years-despite-university-boom-3397431>. (Retrieved October 12, 2023).
- Nurse, K. (1999). Globalization and Trinidad carnival: diaspora, hybridity and identity in global culture. *Cultural studies*, 13(4), 661-690.
- Naidoo, V. (2007). Research on the flow of international students to UK universities: Determinants and implications. *Journal of Research in International Education*, pp. 6, 287–307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240907083197>
- Nielsen, K., & Ware, R. (1997). *Exploitation. Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International.*
- Nielsen, E. Ø. (2002). *Transnational Politics The case of Turks and Kurds in Germany (1st ed.)*. Routledge.
- Neuhaus, A. J. M., & Kalbfleisch, J. D. (1998). Between- and within-cluster covariate effects in the analysis of clustered data *Comparative Study*, 54, 638–645.
- Nedelcu, E. R. (2013). 'Transnational Dynamics in the Romanian Orthodox Parish of Livorno.'  
<https://core.ac.uk/download/16385321.pdf>
- Narayan, U. (1997). *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism*. Routledge.
- Osmani, S. (2005). *The impact of globalization on poverty in Bangladesh*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- Oiarzabal, P. J., & Reips, U. D. (2012). Migration and Diaspora in the Age of Information and Communication Technologies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(9), 1333-1338.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2012.698202>
- OECD, Hanushek, E., & Woessmann, L. (2015). *Education At Glance*. OECD Publishing. ,p.18  
[https://www.google.se/books/edition/Education\\_at\\_a\\_Glance\\_2017\\_OECD\\_Indicato/WWWQDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Education+at+a+glance+2017,+Paris.&pg=PA311&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.se/books/edition/Education_at_a_Glance_2017_OECD_Indicato/WWWQDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=Education+at+a+glance+2017,+Paris.&pg=PA311&printsec=frontcover)
- Owens, R. (1985). *Migrant Workers in the Gulf*, MRG Report no.68, London: Minority Rights Group.

- Ostajin, M. v., Reeger, U., & Zelano, K. (2017). The commodification of mobile workers in Europe - a comparative perspective on capital and labour in Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 1-22.
- Pries, L. (1999). *Developing Transnational and Transnational Social Spaces*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Probst, Barbara & Berenson, Laura. (2014). The double arrow: How qualitative social work researchers use reflexivity. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13, 813–827.
- Pedro J. Oiarzabal & Ulf-Dietrich Reips (2012) Migration and Diaspora in the Age of Information and Communication Technologies, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38:9, 1333-1338, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2012.698202 To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2012.698202>
- Portes, A. (1999). *The study of transnationalism: Pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field* (1st ed.). *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/014198799329468>
- Perkins, R., & Neumayer, E. (2014). Geographies of educational mobilities: Exploring the uneven flows of international students. *Geographical Journal*, pp. 180, 246–259. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12045>
- Rouse, R. (1991). Mexican Migration and the Social Space of Postmodernism. *Diaspora A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(1), 8-23. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1353/dsp.1991.0011>
- Rundberg, J., Lidfeldt, J., Nerbrand, C., Samsioe, G., Romelsjö, A. & Ojehagen, A. (2006). *Mental symptoms, psychotropic drug use and alcohol consumption in immigrated middle-aged women*. The Women's Health in Lund Area (WHILA) Study. *Nordic Journal of Psychiatry* 60, 480-485.
- Raghuram, P. (2012). Theorising the Spaces of Student Migration. *Wiley*, 138-154.  
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.1747>
- Ray, D. (2006). Aspirations, poverty, and economic change. *Understanding poverty*, 1, 409-421.
- Rashid, S., & Shafie, H. (2016). People on move: The Roots and Routs of Bangladeshi Migrations, Diaspora and Development. *International Journal of Global Diaspora Studies*, 2, Number 1(1).  
file:///E:/Thesis%202023/simon%20referance/Reading%20done/PeopleontheMoveTheRootsandRouteofBangladeshiMigrationDiasporaandDevelopment.pdf
- Robertson, G. B. (2010). *The politics of protest in hybrid regimes: Managing dissent in post-communist Russia*. Cambridge University Press.
- Russell, B. H. (2006). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*
- Silverstone, Roger (2005) “The Sociology of Mediation and Communication”, Calhoun, Craig; Chris Rojek and Bryan Turner (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Sociology*. London: Sage.

Stephen Castles, H. D. (2014). *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Palgrave Macmillan.,Fifth Edition.

Svašek, M. (2010). On the Move: Emotions and Human Mobility. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36(6). <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691831003643322>

Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage.

Sidhu, R., & Dall’Alba, G. (2017). ‘A strategy of distinction’ unfolds: unsettling the undergraduate outbound mobility experience. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(4), 468-484.

Siddiqui, T. (2004) *Decent Work and International Labour Migration from Bangladesh*, paper presented at the National Policy Dialogue on 'Globalisation, Decent Work and Poverty Reduction: Policy Alternatives' under Decent Work Pilot Programme of Bangladesh, ILO Dhaka, 27-28 April 2004, Dhaka.

Swartz, David L. (1997). *Culture and power: The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Shukti, Sejoti A. (2023). Navigating Dreams and Realities, An Auto-Ethnographical Approach to the Aspirations, Experiences, and Prospective Futures of Bangladeshi Students in Norway.

<https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/104314/Sejoti-Afsana-Shukti-2023.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>

Sultana, F. (2007). Reflexivity, positionality, and participatory ethics: Negotiating fieldwork dilemmas in international research. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 6(3), 374–385

Smith, M. P., & Guarnizo, L. E. (1998). *Transnationalism From Below*. *Research Gate*.  
<https://doi.org/>.

Smith, M. P. (2008). *Transnational Ties: Cities, Migrations, and Identities* (1st ed., p. 11). Routledge. ISBN 9781351301282

Smith, M. P. (2008). *Transnational Ties: Cities, Migrations, and Identities* (1st ed., p. 11). Routledge. ISBN 9781351301282

Switch to Sweden (2022) Talent map report: Academic International Talent and companies in Sweden.  
<https://linkopingsciencepark.se/read-the-switch-to-sweden-talent-map-report/>

Skodo, Admir. (2019). "Sweden: By Turns Welcoming and Restrictive in Its Immigration Policy." Migrationpolicy.org, Migration Policy Institute, May 27 2019,  
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/sweden-turns-welcoming-and-restrictiveits-immigration-policy>

- Sarantakos S. (1998). *Social research* (2nd ed.). South Melbourne, Australia: Macmillan.
- Smith, M.P. and L.E. Guarnizo eds (1998). *Transnationalism from below*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Taylor A. (2002). I'll call you back on my mobile: A critique of the telephone interview with adolescent boys. *Westminster Studies in Education*, 25(1), 19–34.
- Urry, J (2007), *Mobilities*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Vertovec, S., & Cohen, R. (1999). *Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism*. Edward Elgar, UK.
- Vertovec, S. (2010). Towards post-multiculturalism? Changing communities, conditions and contexts of diversity. *International Social Science Journal*, 61(199), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01749.x>
- Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 22, 447–462.
- Visram, R. (1986). *Ayahs, Lascars, and Princes: The Story of Indians in Britain*. Pluto Press, London. <https://www.routledge.com/Ayahs-Lascars-and-Princes-The-Story-of-Indians-in-Britain-1700-1947/Visram/p/book/9781138921214>
- Vigh, H. (2009). Motion squared: A second look at the concept of social navigation. *Anthropological Theory*, 419-438.
- World Development Report (2023). *Migrants, Refugees and Societies* (EN/AR/RU/ZH) [https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-development-report-2023-migrants-refugees-and-societies-enaruzh?gclid=Cj0KCQjwhL6pBhDjARIsAGx8D59BrojIXebV5Xdh7tmFs0ig-1Oz1k\\_mmPI9KFWhaAY9yHm2XTnmbM4aAthEEALw\\_wcB](https://reliefweb.int/report/world/world-development-report-2023-migrants-refugees-and-societies-enaruzh?gclid=Cj0KCQjwhL6pBhDjARIsAGx8D59BrojIXebV5Xdh7tmFs0ig-1Oz1k_mmPI9KFWhaAY9yHm2XTnmbM4aAthEEALw_wcB)
- Wolf, E. (1982). *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Weber, T., Van Mol, C.(2023). The student migration transition: an empirical investigation into the nexus between development and international student migration. *CMS* 11, 5 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-023-00329-0>
- Wilkins, S., Shams, F., & Huisman, J. (2013). The decision-making and changing behavioral dynamics of potential higher education students: The impacts of increasing tuition fees in England. *Educational Studies*, pp. 39, 125–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2012.681360>
- Walker, J., (1981) “The Last Migration: Amherst, Mass., Winter, 1981”, *The Iowa Review* 12(2-3), 362–363. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.2801>
- Woolfson, C., Fudge, J., & Thörnqvist, C. (2014). Migrant precarity and future challenges to labor standards in Sweden. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 695-715.

## Online Sources

The Daily Star (2023). *The tragedy of a fallen remittance fighter*, Retrieved November 27, 2023  
<https://www.thedailystar.net/views/opinion/news/the-tragedy-fallen-remittance-fighter-2967441>

IOM. (2017). *Migration in the 2030 Agenda*. From International Organization for Migration, Retrieved November 27, 2023, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration\\_in\\_the\\_2030\\_agenda.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_in_the_2030_agenda.pdf)

IOM (2020) *WORLD MIGRATION REPORT*. Retrieved October 15, 2023, [www.iom.int/wmr](http://www.iom.int/wmr).  
<https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/>

IFAD (2007) *Annual report*, Retrieved October 27, 2023, [https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/publication/annual-report-2007-fullversion?p\\_1\\_back\\_url=%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fknowledge%2Fannual-reports](https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/publication/annual-report-2007-fullversion?p_1_back_url=%2Fen%2Fweb%2Fknowledge%2Fannual-reports)

Migrationsverket. (2023). *Work permit requirements*. Retrieved from Migrationsverket: October 7,  
<https://www.migrationsverket.se/Privatpersoner/Arbeta-i-Sverige/Anstalld/Krav-for-arbetsstillstand.html>

Migrationsverket. (2023). *Permanent resident in Sweden*. Retrieved from Migrationsverket: Retrieved from Migrationsverket: October 7, <https://www.migrationsverket.se/Privatpersoner/Varaktigt-bosatt/Varaktigt-bosatt-i-Sverige.html>

Migrationsverket (2023). *Changes related to Work Permit*. Retrieved from Migrationsverket: Retrieved from Migrationsverket: October 25, <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Current-topics/Changes-related-to-work-permits.html>

Dyvik, E. H. (2023). *Number of granted student residence permits in Sweden 2020, by citizenship*. Retrieved October 27, 2023, from Statista:  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1143280/number-of-granted-student-residence-permits-in-sweden-by-citizenship/>

## Appendix: One

### Informed Consent

**Research project title:** “Unfold the Untold Stories: Journey of Permanent Resident, Bangladeshi Migrant Student in Sweden”.

.Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical Procedures require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and to how the information contained in the interview is being used. We ask for your consent to the following:

- That the interview will be audio recorded and a pseudonymised transcript will be Roduced.
- That the transcript of the interview will be analyzed by the research team.
- That summaries of interview content or direct quotations that are made available.
- Through academic publication or other academic outlets will be pseudonymised so that you cannot be identified
- That any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your explicit
- approval

By signing this form I agree that:

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I do not have to take part, that I only need to respond to the questions I wish to respond to, and that my participation can be discontinued at any time
2. I have read the Information Sheet and have been given sufficient information about this research project to understand the conditions and my role
3. The pseudonymised and transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used in academic publications or other academic outlets
4. I have the right to request access to my personal data collected during the project and withdraw this data
5. I do not expect to receive payment or other benefits for my participation
6. I have been able to ask questions and I understand that I am free to contact the Researchers or project leader at any time if I have further questions

I will receive a copy of the document “Participant Information” and this Informed consent Form.

Research participant’s name, date and signature:

## **Interview Guideline: Unfold the Untold Stories, Journey of Permanent Resident, Bangladeshi Migrant Student in Sweden.**

The objective of this study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of immigrant students from Bangladesh in Sweden in their pursuit of permanent residency (PR) in Sweden. What were the Bangladeshi students' aspirations and what have they achieved? Is there a discernible disparity between these two scenarios? The challenges the Bangladeshi students faced in securing sustenance, economic stability, livelihood and political empowerment. This project will undertake an analysis of various domains encompassing political, economic, and cultural involvement where transnational practices are negotiated, enacted, and contested.

### **Mobility related question (aspiration)**

How long have you been living in Sweden? What are the aspirations for migrating to Sweden? Who helped you for migration When did you decide? How did you make the decision? Who/what inspired you? Was it difficult? What about your family and friends? Did they support you? Push you? Who helped you migrate?

When did you get PR?

### **Issues related to first *work permit***

Have you finished your education? When did you think staying in Sweden?

Was there any challenges for getting a job and applying your first work permit?

If there were challenges, how did you overcome those challenges?

### ***Second time visa - extension and PR***

How was your experiences related to Second time visa extension and PR

Did you face any legal, social and economic complications during the whole period, if yes, please mention.

When did you apply for your Permanent Residency? (Total time for getting decision).

Is there any differences for your life before and after PR? (Economic, social, legal or political)

### **Economic questions**

How did you get your job? (Social connections, references, or job advertisement)

Please describe about your workplace and nature of your job.

What was your starting position and last position? What is your current profession?

Are you experiencing any differences at your workplace before and after PR?

### **Settlement and integration process**

How do you get your first housing contract?

What was your first settlement process here in Sweden?

Schooling for your kids?

And applications process for your spouse and family members?

When you learn Swedish language?

Is there any benefits learning Swedish Language?

Do you like to practice Bangla, or Swedish both in and out of home?

Do you have any expectation from your parents regarding your cultural tradition or Activities?

Do you have any expectation from your children regarding your cultural tradition or Activities?

Do your kids face any difficulties to adjust in Sweden?

Do you think it is needed to be valued to maintain relationship with other group's from your community?

Do you think it is needed to be valued to maintain cultural identity and characteristics of your

**Transnational Belongingness as cultural unit.**

Do you think it needs to maintain the cultural identity and characteristics of your origin?

Do you have connections with Bangladeshi people in your city?

Do you organize or join community-based social, religious and cultural activities?

What is your opinion about Swedish culture?

(Behavioral, cultural, economic, or administrative facilities)?

Do you face any challenges /encounters as a Bangladeshi Swedish?

(Administrative, job related, social, political, and legal)

Do you want to move to any other countries in the future? If yes why?