CHALLENGES OF RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT FACED BY TRANSGENDER HIJRA IN BANGLADESH

MD. LITON HOSSEN

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATISATION) FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY 2019

COPYRIGHT OF MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
Thesis entitled

CHALLENGES OF RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT FACED BY TRANSGENDER HIJRA IN BANGLADESH

L. Hossen

Mr. Md. Liton Hossen
Candidate

Amalinda Savirani,
Ph.D. (Political Science)
Major advisor

Yanuar Sumarlan,
Ph.D. (Social Science)
Co-advisor

Prof. Patcharee Lertrit,
M.D., Ph.D. (Biochemistry)
Dean
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Mahidol University

Michael George Hayes,
Ph.D. (Communications and Cultural Studies)
Program Director
Master of Arts Program in Human Rights and Democratisation
Project for the Establishment of the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies
Mahidol University
Thesis entitled

CHALLENGES OF RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT FACED BY TRANSGENDER HIJRA IN BANGLADESH

was submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mahidol University for the degree of Master of Arts (Human Rights and Democratisation) on

August 9, 2019

L. Hossen

Mr. Md. Liton Hossen
Candidate

Assoc. Prof. Irwan Martua Hidayana, Ph.D. (Anthropology)
Chair

Amalinda Savirani, Ph.D. (Political Science)
Member

Yanuar Sumarlan, Ph.D. (Social Science)
Member

Prof. Patcharee Lertrit, M.D., Ph.D. (Biochemistry)
Dean
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Mahidol University

Eakpant Pindavanija, Ph.D. (Peace, Conflict and Development)
Director
Project for the Establishment of the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies
Mahidol University
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to Transgender Hijra who had allowed me to enter their community and gave me the opportunities to listen their experiences and perspective about discrimination, deprivations and especially for the exclusion process of right to employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh. Their experiences have given me the valuable lessons and made me different insights on myself how to actualize and theorize methodologically in my thesis. Especially I would like to thank to Onannya Banik, activist of Hijra community; Joya Sikder, activist of Hijra community; Ivan Ahmend Kotha, activist of Hijra community and president of Shocheton Somajsheba Hijra Shongsha; Mohona, CBO leader of Hijra community and Gorky Gowrab, Assistant Scientist of ICDDR, B. I also would like to thank to the government Officials from Department of Social Service and policy makers of Social Welfare Ministry of Bangladesh for sharing their valuable opinion regarding employment issues in formal sector of Transgender Hijra people in Bangladesh.

I also thank to the European Commission Global Campus of Human Rights who has given me this great opportunity to join this prestigious scholarship of Master of Human Rights and Democratization Program (APMA). Big gratitude is also dedicated to the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies of Mahidol University and Human Rights and Democratization Program of Gadjha Mada University who have continuously and dedicatedly helped my study progress. Moreover, this thesis would not be successfully finished without the continuous help and academic suggestions of my Major Advisor Dr. Amalinda Savirani from UGM and Dr. Yanuar Sumerlan from Mahidol University who have been guiding me so sincerely and patiently from the very beginning in this thesis.

I am also thankful to my friends of MHRD 2019 class, especially Zaw Win, Nagina Kulsoom, Tarmizi Anuar, Gubag Gubag, Games and my respected colleagues especially Mahbubul Alom Prodip, Raasheed Mahmud, Kamal Pasa, Dr. Sadikur Rahman, Kazi Robiul Alom, Tahmina Naznin, Shaghan Miha, Murshid Shapon, Golam Faruk Sarker, Syed Arman Hossian (Avik), Avijit Roy, Robiul Awal Chowdhury, Shamema Nasrin, A. K. M Zakir Hossain, Mahmudul Hasan and Nazmul Haider Syed. Last but not least, I am really grateful to my better half Irin Sultana (Shefa), my princess Nusaiba Aaravi (Semonti) and my loving Parents for sacrificing their precious time and supporting me during this intensive program.

Mr. Md. Liton Hossen
ABSTRACT

Employment is a right of every citizen of the people’s republic of Bangladesh who is capable of working according to his or her abilities. The main purpose of this thesis is to look into the major challenges of right to employment which is faced by Transgender Hijra through the existing policy analysis in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of this thesis are to find out the existing policy gap, to identify the impacts of those policies in the formal sector employment and to explore the reasons of failure of transgender Hijra to access employment.

The study employed the qualitative methodology data collection tools such as field observation, Face to Face Interview (Key Informant Interview, In-depth Interview) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as primary source of data. Observation was used to understand the Transgender Hijra’s everyday way of life and their works. Relevant secondary literatures (books, journals, magazines, scholarly articles, research reports and document, legal and policy documents, relevant thesis and daily newspapers) were reviewed to understand the Hijra identity, exclusion process from the formal employment sector. The study participants are the administrative officials of Social Welfare Ministry, Hijra Leaders, and Hijra victims of employment initiative in 2014.

The findings indicate that there are three major challenges of right to employment of Hijra people institutional: social prejudices and cultural, and religious factors. The thesis suggests some recommendations for promoting employment rights of Transgender Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh, such as the consolidated employment policy for Hijra should be addressed and the existing policy should be amended and the gender recognizing policy of Hijra should be constructed and prepared properly on the basis of international standard principles like Yogyakarta principles and ICCPR article 16.

KEYWORDS: TRANSGENDER HIJRA / EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS / CHALLENGES / POLICY / FORMAL SECTOR / BANGLADESH

80 pages
CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOSSARY</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Background and Rationale</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Research Questions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Objectives of Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Scope of Research</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Importance of Research</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Rights and Challenges of Rights on Employment in Bangladesh</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Rights and Challenges of Rights on Employment in the Global Context</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Social Exclusion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Conceptual Framework</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Study Design and Data Collection Plan</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Field Experiences</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Data Analysis Plan</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Ethical Consideration</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV FINDINGS OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Existing Employment Status of Hijra in the Formal Sector of Bangladesh</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTENTS (cont.)</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Socio-Economic and Cultural Aspect of the Hijra Participants</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Existing Policy Gap of Hijra Employment in the Government Sector</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Impacts of Policies on Access to Employment of Hijra in Formal Sector</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 A Case of Employment Initiative for Hijra in 2014</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER V DISCUSSION</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Institutional Factors</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Factor of Social Prejudices</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Cultural and Religious Factors</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Is State Class-Biased or Not?</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOGRAPHY</td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Legal Perspective of Protecting Human Rights of Transgender Hijra</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Research Design of the Study</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Quota Scheme of Vulnerable Groups in Formal Job Sector in Bangladesh</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Educational Status of Hijra Participants of This study</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Occupational Status of Hijra Participants of the Study</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Income Status of Hijra Participants of the Study</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Conceptual Framework of the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Location of the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Residence of HijraCommunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Hijra Declaration Gazette</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BPI – Bangladesh Press Institute
BSS – Bangladesh Songbad Songstha (Bangladesh Press Association)
BDT- Bangladesh Taka (Currency)
EC – Election Commission
FTM- Female to Male
FGD – Focus Group Discussion
GOB – Government of Bangladesh
HR – Human Resource
KII – Key Informant Interview
ICESCR- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICCPR- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ILO- International Labor Organization
MTF- Male to Female
NHRC- National Human Rights Commission
NGO- Non-Governmental Organization
NID – National Identity Card
SEKN- Social Exclusion Knowledge Network
UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNB – United News of Bangladesh
These local terms of *Hijra* community are incorporated into this research as technical term. I compose these terms here for the sake of the reader’s convenience to understand. All the local terms had been translated from Bangla to English. What I heard and collected these words during my fieldwork, I try to present here as a glossary.

*Badhai* – Demanding gifts after blessing the newborn baby
*Bazaar Tola* – Collecting money from the markets
*Blawous* – Female Upper part wearing clothes
*Boro Ma* – Grand leader of *Hijra* community
*Bascha Nachano* – Dancing with the newborn baby
*Chela* – Disciples
*Cholla Manga* – Begging or collecting money and stuffs from the Market, Bus, Train
*Dud Beti* – Milk daughter
*EC* – Election Commission
*Guruma* – Leader of *Hijra* community
*Guru Chela* – Disciple of *Hijra* leader
*GoB* – Government of Bangladesh
*Hijra* – Transgender Women who is neither man nor women
*Hijragiri* – The occupation of *Hijra*
*Kamiz* – Female long dress which is covered the whole body
*Maigga* – A derogatory expression for an effeminate boy
*Maigga Pola* – Effeminate boy
*Nati Chela* – Grand disciple
*Puti* – Grand daughter
*Radhuni* – Cook or chef in a restaurant
*Saree* – Female long clothes for wearing
*Saloer* – Female lower part wearing clothes
*Upozilla* – Sub District
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

In Bangladesh, transgender Hijra have been looked down upon for a long time because they do not have the gender identity approved by the society. Transgender Hijra are known as xaniths in Oman, serrar in Kenya, and ‘hijra’, ‘jogappas’, ‘jogtas’, or ‘shiv-shaktis’ (Khan et al., 2009, p-441). In South Asia, “hijra” refers to an identity category for people assigned male at birth who develop a feminine gender identity (Human Rights Watch, 2016, p.4). They are also recognized as ‘third gender’ in South Asia.

In Bangladesh, the term “hermaphrodite” or “eunuch” is commonly applied to the hijra, and their gender expression is ‘female psyche in male physique’ (Khan et al., 2009, p.444). Hijra expressions of what they are often take the form of stating that they are in-between, neither men nor women (Nanda, 1999, p.15). These behavior roles include feminine mannerisms like dressing, wearing hair long, plucking facial hair, taking on women’s name and kinship terms and using feminized vocabulary. The mainstream society of Bangladesh, as a Muslim dominated country accepts only the ‘male-female’ gender dichotomy and men are considered as the center of authority. However, beyond the dichotomous ‘male-female’ gender range, hijra have different sexual identity, orientation and practice (Khan et al., 2009, p.441). As a result, their vulnerabilities, dissatisfactions, and socio-political uncertainties remain in touched, and their socio-economic conditions, social networks and mobility produce discriminations which lead them to have low self-esteem, low income and poor social dignity.

In 2016, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh conducted the mapping study where it was showed that the Hijra population size is 10,000 according to the official source of Social Welfare Ministry in Bangladesh. The Hijra community identified themselves into three categories as ‘badhai’ who bless the
newborn children through singing and dancing, *cholla manga* and sex worker. Their traditional occupation is ‘*hijragiri*’ which includes *badhai* (*bachcha nachano* which literally means bestowing blessings on new born babies and wedding ceremonies in exchange for donations), and *cholla manga* (*bazar tola* which literally means collecting money from markets, shops and bus, train), doing sex work and *Raduni* which means cooking in restaurants (Khan et al., 2008, p.129; Human Rights Watch, 2016). Some *hijra* work in garments factories; the hijra who work in restaurants and garments factories are generally unable to continue these jobs due to experiences of sexual assault, teasing, or harassment arising from their ‘feminine behavior’ (Human Rights Watch, 2016, p.7). Some *hijra* worked in garments factories; but eventually they were dismissed when employers learned of their feminine attitudes. In some cases, many *hijra* were abused verbally, physically and sexually at workplaces for which they never received any justice (Khan et al., 2009, p.445).

Basically the *Hijra* populations are normally engaged in *Hijragiri* (bestowing blessings on newborn babies in exchange for donations) as a traditional work and also informal labor markets like garments factories, beauty parlor, security guard and as cooks in restaurants. In the informal labor market, they get involved. But after some days, they are being fired and dismissed their job because of their gender identity; they have also limited social protection and security. There is no reflection of formal sector jobs in Bangladesh for *hijra*. So as a citizen of Bangladesh, they face double impediments in the informal labor market and in the formal sector because of their gender identity. The thesis is focused on the right to employment especially in the government sectors of Bangladesh.

1.1.1 Kinship Terminology of Transgender *Hijra* in Bangladesh

The social life of transgender *Hijra* is totally different from the mainstream society. Their way of life (rules and regulations, behaviors, customs, traditional and religious practices) is much more different and unique than the mainstream society. They live all together in the same household which is called “*Gharana*” (Household) led by “*Guruma*” (leader). Several “*Chelas*” (disciples) live under one ‘*Guruma*’. Here, the social status of *Hijra* in their community is asymmetrical between *Guruma* and *Chelas* (Mal, 2018). Their society is strictly
classified and hierarchical and eunuch’s life is governed by their own regulations which are laid down by immediate superiors. According to Adnan (2013, p.89), Guru-chela relationship is just like a mother-daughter relationship where the guru acts like a mother and the chela acts like a daughter. Adnan also asserts that when a guru dies, a chela mourns and makes some rites like wearing a white sari for the next forty one days. There is a strong hierarchy between a guru and a chela and this relationship is built upon mutual respect and reciprocity. Sometimes this relationship makes thing more complicated. When a chela breaks the rules and code of conducts of Hijra community, she is punished. There are several hierarchical positions among the Hijra community. These are Boro ma/Dud guru, Nan guru, Guru, Chela, Dud beti, Nati chela and puti chela. These classifications are strongly maintained in the Hijra community (Adnan, 2013, p.90).

1.1.2 Historical Background of Hijra in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a long history of emergence as an independent country from Pakistan until the nation was liberated as a sovereign state in 1971. The country was under British colony for over 200 years (the ruling period of the British over India officially ended in 1948) and this nation was a part of the Indian subcontinent before the India-Pakistan partition took place in 1947. Anti-Hijra laws were introduced by the British to include categorizing Hijra as criminals under the criminal Tribes Act of 1871, and subjecting them to mandatory registration, strict surveillance and other forms of social stigmatization. The notorious section 377 of Penal code was adopted by the British Rulers which are still incorporated in the constitution of Bangladesh.

According to the section 377 of Penal code-

“It will be criminalized anal sex between men and other sexual acts between individuals of the same sex (men or women).”

It was introduced by the British Raj during their colonial rule in India as Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, which was later used as the model of many Sodomy Laws in many other British colonies in many cases with the same section number (Ahsan & Amin, 2015).

The partition of British India took place in 1947 which created two independent nations on the basis of major religions which are India (Hindu) and
Pakistan (Muslim). Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan at that time which was ruled and governed by West Pakistan (now Pakistan) situated 1,371 miles apart. After independence from the British Raj, while the extreme exclusion of Hijra from the society was lifted from the papers in 1952, the centuries-old stigma surrounding them, their bodies and their sexualities continued (Mahmood, 2013). In 1971, after nine months of war and resulting in being one of the largest genocides in human history, Bangladesh earned its independence. Even though Bangladesh was built in the ideals of secularism and Bengalis have a rich culture of humanism embedded within them, extremism still prevails in specific forms in the country, and the age-old stigmas around Hijras (or any other gender or gender non-conforming identities but male and female) continues.

1.1.3 Transgender Hijra Recognition Declaration in Bangladesh

The Hijra groups, human rights activists and some human rights-based organizations have been demanding the hijra recognition as the ‘third gender’ for a long time. In November 2013, the GoB granted ‘Hijra’ legal status as members of a ‘third gender’. They became entitled to identify their gender as ‘Hijra’ in the national legal documents like Passport and National ID Card, rather male and female category (New York Times, 2 July, 2015). Finally, in 26th January 2014, Ministry of Social Welfare, Bangladesh published a gazette with the declaration that “the government has officially recognized Hijra population of Bangladesh as ‘Hijra sex’ or ‘Third Gender’- which was approved by the Cabinet in 2013 (Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh [GoB], 2014). According to a Global Human Rights Defense report of 17 June 2015, enabling legislation establishing hijra rights as third gender had not been introduced in Parliament; although the need for such legislation was not explained in the report (Global Human Rights Defense, 2015, p.12). The Independent United News Agencies through the daily star newspaper (Bangladesh) reported on 24 July 2016 that the Election Commission (EC) had not yet enrolled Hijra voters as a third gender, and a third gender category had not yet been included on the NID (National Identity) card (UNB-United News agency, 24th July 2016). In May, 2017 Home Office Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) to Bangladesh noted that ‘Hijra’ status as a ‘third gender’ recognized by the Government which is not reflected on their
documentation such as passports and National ID cards (UK Home Office, 2017). Even in the last 11th national parliamentary election on 30 December 2018, *Hijra* or Third Gender identity was not reflected on the voter list or National Identity Card (NID) alongside the male and female category.

So, although the government declared this Hijra people as third gender, it has not been formalized in reality. The recognition is just like a pen and pencil. Therefore, they are automatically eliminated from their employment rights in the formal sector.

### 1.1.4 Initiatives Taken By State for Hijra Group after the Recognition

In November 2014, with this recognition, the government had taken some initiatives to make sure the overall welfare of the *hijra* people addressing discrimination in education, housing, health and employment sectors. Apart from the official recognition, the government has taken some initiatives to ensure their education, rehabilitation and social security, and funds for scholarship for the hijra children, life-skill training, financial condition and social security, and old-age allowance for the 50 and above (“Living Standard Development Project”, 15 July 2018).

After the recognition of Transgender *Hijra* as “Third Gender”, the Department of Social Service under the Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh has taken different initiatives for the betterment of the lives of *Hijra* community. In the 2013-14 fiscal year around BDT 40,731,600 was allocated for the program. In 2013-2014 more than 14 districts were included under the development program. Areas include Dhaka, Chittagong, Bogra, Dinajpur, Patuakhali, Sylhet, Khulna, Rajbari, Netrokona, Gazipur, Chadpur, Lakhhipur, Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Jhinaidah, Kushtia, Pirojpur, Jaipurhat, Serajganj, Naogaon and Faridpur. Through these development programs 1071 number of *Hijras* received the old age (like pension) allowance, 762 *Hijra* students received stipend and were benefited and about 950 *Hijra* above 18 will be skilled and trained. After training 10 *Hijra* per district got BDT 10,000 per head as rehabilitation grant. Total number of beneficiaries is 2903. (Ministry of Social Welfare, 15 July 2018)
In the 2014-15 fiscal year around BDT 45,872,000 was allotted for the program and 1300, 789 and 900 people were expected to receive the old age allowance, education scholarship and HR related training respectively. After training 20 (twenty) Hijras per district will get taka 10,000/- (ten thousand) per head as rehabilitation grant and beneficiaries will be 360 people. Total number of beneficiaries will be 3349 Hijras (Ministry of Social Welfare, 15 July, 2018). In the 2015-2016 fiscal year the livelihood development standard project had been extended to 64 districts of Bangladesh. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year around BDT 11,400000 had been allotted to develop the Hijra group in the 64 districts. The initiatives are old-age allowance under the safety net program, scholarship on education for hijra children, life-skill training programs which include cooking, beautification and small grant for business, bank loans and social security and rehabilitation and social security under the Living Standard Development Project. (Ministry of Social Welfare, 15 July 2018).

1.1.5 Employment Status of Hijra Taken by State after Recognition

In December 2014, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh took an initiative for inclusion of Hijra population in the governmental employment sector. The Social Welfare Ministry invited Hijra to apply for government low level jobs in 14 positions like peon, guard and cleaners for school, orphanage and day care centers. Around 40 Hijra applicants applied for this invitation and maintained examination procedures. 12 Hijra candidates had been primarily selected for those posts. For the first time, the transgender Hijras had been welcomed for empowerment and mainstreaming in the governmental sectors for employment. Things did not go well from the start. They had to face a lot of difficulties after the initial selection. One of the main processes of medical examination was to identify the ‘Authentic Hijra’ identity. They had been abused in various ways through this examination. They had been harassed physically in the name of medical investigation. They had been stigmatized and questioned about their actual identity by the medical team. And finally, they did not get their governmental jobs which were supposed to be given to some Hijras of Bangladesh. Many of Hijra victims said that they were harassed and asked inappropriate questions about their gender identity and sexuality (Human Rights Watch, 2016, pp.15-26).
So, after this event, the dignity and human rights of the Hijra people had been lost. They also had been victimized and questioned regarding their Hijra identity. Even it also hindered their entire employment right which was not initiated yet.

1.1.6 Protection Mechanisms of Transgender Hijra in Bangladesh

The government has already recognized them as their distinct gender identity. However, the society is not accepting them as human being because of the malicious rumors. The state has established constitution law for the protection of Transgender Hijra. The state has also ratified the ICESCR in 1998 and the ICCPR in 2000 as well. The following table shows the legal perspective for protecting the human rights of Transgender Hijra.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal perspectives</th>
<th>Constitutional Laws, Conventions and Treaties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Constitution of Bangladesh** | Article 19(1) - ‘equality of opportunity to all citizens’.  
Article 20(1) – ‘Work is a right, a duty and a matter of honour for every citizen who is capable of working’  
Article 27-‘all citizens are equal before law’.  
Article 28(1) -‘The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place or birth’.  
Article 29 (1) - ‘equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment’. |
| **UDHR** | Article 6 – ‘right to recognition everywhere as a person before law’.  
Article 23, - ‘right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable condition of work and to protection against unemployment’. |
Table 1.1 Legal Perspective of Protecting Human Rights of Transgender Hijra (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal perspectives</th>
<th>Constitutional Laws, Conventions and Treaties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICESCR</strong></td>
<td>Article 6 of ICESCR, - ‘the state recognizes the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work’. Article 7 of ICESCR, - ‘right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICCPR</strong></td>
<td>Article 6(1) – ‘Every human being has the right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of these laws, conventions and treaties, transgender Hijra have been excluded from the fundamental rights of the state for a long time. Even though, today they do not have any access to work in public and a little bit of private sectors. But, as a citizen of Bangladesh, every Hijra has the right to work, right to health, right to education, right to life and right to food and so on. Although the state has an established law, ratified conventions, and treaties for the right to employment, even the state has also the transgender recognition declaration gazette 2014; the reality is totally different in the society especially for Transgender Hijra group. This research will mainly focus on the major challenges of employment which are faced by transgender Hijra through the policy analysis in Bangladesh.

**1.2 Research Questions**

The following research questions in this study are…

1) What are the existing policies on access to right to employment in the formal sector for Transgender Hijra in Bangladesh?

2) What are the impacts of those policies on access to employment of Hijra in the formal sector job?

3) Why those policies failed to ensure/promote the employment rights of Hijra in the formal sector?
1.3 Objectives of Study

There are three specific objectives of this study. The main objectives are as the followings.

1) To find out the existing policy gap for implementing the Transgender Hijra’s employment.

2) To identify the impacts of those policies in the formal sector employment of transgender Hijra.

3) To explore the reasons of failure for not getting in access to employment of transgender Hijra.

1.4 Scope of Research

This study specially looks into the challenges of right to employment of transgender Hijra in the government sectors of Bangladesh. The specific focus of this research is the barriers of right to work, the main reasons for not getting in access to employment and the existing policy gap for implementing the transgender Hijra employment. This research is mainly focused on the right to work of transgender hijra in Bangladesh. So, this research will open up some recommendations to employment policy issues about the hijra group in Bangladesh.

1.5 Importance of Research

Transgender Hijra are the most vulnerable group in Bangladesh. They are also under privileged group in Bangladesh. They do not have proper access to health, education and employment. At the same time they do not have a smooth access to the mainstream society as a social life. They cannot enjoy their life as a citizen of Bangladesh. Although today we have a lot of scientific studies on the transgender hijra livelihood, socio-economic condition of transgender hijra and the health of transgender hijra, yet few scientific research have been on the right to employment of transgender hijra in Bangladesh. So, this study can contribute significantly for the emancipation of the transgender hijra right to employment in Bangladesh. This study
will make a great contribution of the knowledge domain regarding the right to work of hijra community in Bangladesh.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, firstly I will present the challenges of right to employment in the global and Bangladesh context. Then I will show about what kind of challenges the transgender are facing in the global and Bangladesh context. Finally I will interpret the concept of social exclusion and the exclusion process of transgender Hijra in the employment sectors in Bangladesh and the global context. I will also explain the conceptual frame of this study.

2.1 Rights and Challenges of Rights on Employment in Bangladesh

Human Rights Watch (2018, p.5) explored that ‘due to widespread prejudice, transgender face significant barriers in securing employment when their gender expression does not match the gender stereotype like male-female category’. Khatri finds out (2017, p.409) that ‘transgender have been treated as out caste or untouchables. Most hijra are either assigned menial jobs or are unable to work at all’.

Khan et al (2009, p.445) claims that ‘some got jobs but eventually were dismissed when employees learned of their feminine attitudes. In some cases, many hijra were abused verbally, physically, and sexually at workplaces for which they never received any justice’.

Human Rights Watch states (2016, p.7) that ‘some hijra work in garments factories; the hijra who work in restaurants and garment factories are generally unable to continue these jobs for long time due to experiences of sexual assault, teasing, or harassment arising from their ‘feminine behavior’

Employment is the right of human being without any kind of discrimination. As a citizen of nation, everyone has the right to get the employment opportunity in equally. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states Article 23 that ‘everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and
favorable condition of work without any discrimination’. According to the constitution of Bangladesh, Article 29(1) clearly states that ‘equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment will be ensured. No citizen will be discriminated on ground only religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth in respect of any employment in the republic’. The constitution has also ensured Article 20(1) that ‘work as a right, a duty and a matter of honor for every citizen who is capable of working’. According to Article 6 the ICESCR, ‘the state recognizes the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his or her living by work’.

These international standards include all social groups, regardless of their sexual orientation. However, in many countries with specific social and cultural context, discrimination still takes place in general, and in accessing work, in particular. For example, as a citizen of Bangladesh, although it is formally stated that every transgender hijra has the right to work or right to get the equal opportunity of work in every places of the state, in reality transgender Hijra have been denied this fundamental right for a long time. As a consequence, they are unemployed and under-employment.

For the first time, in November 2013, the Government of Bangladesh has officially granted ‘Hijra’ legal status as ‘Third Gender’. In 26th January 2014, Ministry of Social Welfare, Bangladesh published a gazette with the declaration that ‘the government has officially recognized Hijra community of Bangladesh as ‘Third Gender’ (Bangladesh Gazette, 2014, Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh). The state also clarifies that transgender becomes entitled to identify their gender as ‘Third Gender’ in national documents as passport and NID card rather than male-female category. In November 2014, the government took some initiatives to make sure the overall welfare of Hijra community. Apart from these initiatives, in December 2014, Ministry of Social Welfare took an initiative for inclusion of employment of Hijra people for governmental job (Living Standard Development project’ 2015, Ministry of Social Welfare, GoB). The transgender had been welcomed for empowerment and mainstreaming in government job. They had been primarily selected but finally they did not get these governmental jobs (Human Rights Watch, 2016).
2.2 Rights and Challenges of Rights on Employment in the Global Context

In the context of US, transgender also has been discriminated in the workplace. Sawyer et al (2016, p.26) mentions their article that ‘transgender employees have historically faced stigmatization. They also explores transgender identity is intolerant in workplace. Even the transgender employees may face high level of discrimination; they may feel unsafe and unwelcomed at work.

Brower (2016, p.157) mentions the study that “LGBT people have been harassed in workplace. The research also shows that ninety percent of the respondents report verbal harassment, physical and sexual assaults and they have preferred to leave their jobs because of distinct identity.

Suriyasarn claims (2016, p.210) that “LGBT people specially MTF and FTM transgender have been discriminated in workplace of Thailand. They do not have in special restroom. They are often not fairly treated in terms of recognition for their work. The study also mentions that they have experienced various forms of gender-based harassment and violence at workplace. Because of their gender identity, they have also limited access to job in the formal sector.

Michelle & Dentice (2009, p.122) mentions that ‘mainstream social construction of gender tends to demand conformity by adhering to only two choices of gender identity, male and female’. This binary thinking is reinforced and reconfirmed when individuals engage in activities and behaviors such as dress and self-presentation. Transgender is an umbrella term describing individuals whose identity or gender expression does not reflect the societal gender norms associated with the sex assigned at birth. So, the binary gender expression discriminates their job and employment at the workplaces.

According to Sithole (p.198), ‘GLBT students of South African University faced a lot of discriminations such as sexual abuse, marginalization and unfairness in the allocation of resources like accommodation because of sexual identity. Sithole also explored that ‘GLBT students experienced discriminations from their fellow students as well. As a group work, the fellow students often are reluctant to accept the GBLT students as a member because of their sexual identity’.
Kondurn and Hangsong say (2018, p.14) that ‘some of the important issues faced by transgender communities like most employers deny employment for even qualified and skilled transgender because of identity’.

2.3 Social Exclusion

Social exclusion has been defined as ‘the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live. According to United Nations Development program in India (2010, p.6), ‘social exclusion is used in highlighting the issues and problems faced by disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups. Social exclusion to hijra women, one can understand how TG communities have been excluded from effectively participating in social and cultural life; economy, and politics and decision-making processes.

Khan et al (2009, p.442) mentions that social exclusion has different forms. These are cultural, economic, political and social issues. Economic aspects of exclusion include barriers to employment opportunities, constrained access to commodities, and livelihood opportunities, such as income, housing, land, and working conditions. Social aspects of exclusion refer to limited or no access to social, educational, legal and health services. Cultural aspect of exclusion refers to subordination of certain norms, behaviors, cultural practices, and lifestyles which excludes certain groups. Political aspects of exclusion refer to deprivations of citizens’ rights, including restricted access to organizations, voter rights, legislations, constitutions, and decision-making policy.

Piron & Curran (2005) defines social exclusion that ‘a group of people who are excluded from social, economic, political processes and institutions based on their social identity’. So, social exclusion is a process which systematically eliminated and discriminated because of sexual orientation, social identity, caste, race, religion, gender etc.

According to the Social Exclusion Knowledge Network (SEKN) model which is developed by Popay et al., “Social exclusion is directed by unequal power dynamics and functioned in four interconnected and relational dimensions such as
cultural, economic, political and social at various forms like individual level, groups, households, communities, countries and the world as a whole" (Popay et al., 2007. p.2). So, through this model, we can see the social exclusion process of Hijra community of Bangladesh.

Transgender Hijra are one of the most excluded and vulnerable group of Bangladesh. They are discriminated and excluded from their fundamental rights in every sphere of social life. Their human rights are also violated. They do not have smooth access to employment, education, health, public ceremony, living with the mainstream society. They cannot participate in any kind of social, economic, political sphere in the society because of their gender identity although the state has already recognized them as ‘Third gender’. This study is mainly emphasized on the challenges of right to employment of Transgender Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh. This research has been used this ‘Social Exclusion’ concept as a framework.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study will be driven by the possible conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of this study is as follows:
Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology and the approach that has been used in this study to collect empirical data and to analyze data through the scientific and systematic methods. This study is qualitative in nature. Research methodology of this study has been divided into two parts. These parts are data collection plan and data analysis plan.

3.1 Study Design and Data Collection Plan

Qualitative method and tools had been used for this study in order to seek the possible answers to the research question. The study had been conducted on the basis of primary and secondary data. Purposive sampling had been applied for this study. For interviewing participants as scheduled activity, Semi-structured questionnaire guideline had been applied for Face to Face In-depth interview and KII (Key Informant Interview). The thesis also employed field observation method as a primary data collection tool. Observation has been used to understand the Transgender Hijra everyday way of life and their works.

In-depth interview had been used for general officials who are working in “Livelihood Living Development Project of Hijra” in Ministry of Social Welfare to understand the initiatives and the present status of Transgender from GoB part. And KII had been applied to GoB Policy Makers to understand the expert knowledge, the existing ‘Transgender Recognition Declaration Gazette 2014, the initiatives of employment and the implementation process of Employment of Transgender Hijra. KII had been also employed for Transgender Hijra leaders who know about the whole TG Hijra Community, the Recognition Transgender Declaration Gazette 2014 and the total process of inclusion employment status which was initiated from GoB. In-depth interview will also be employed for Hijra victims for understanding the existing status of government employment of Transgender Hijra. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) had
also been used to understand the Hijra Community, their employment status, regarding their understanding of the society and the recognition declaration 2014. Most of the data had been collected from primary sources by using these tools.

3.1.1 Location of the Study

This study had been conducted in different scattered places of Dhaka City for Hijra Participants such as Ganderia Slum beside rail station, Shyampur Slum, Posthokhola Slum beside Burigonga River and Methor Potty (Cleaning Class) beside Bolda Garden under the Southern part of Dhaka; and Mogbazar Slum, Methor Potty (Cleaning Class) beside Rajdhani Super Market under the Northern part of Dhaka and Nobi Nagor Slum beside Savar area under Western part of Dhaka.

The study also had been carried out in the Department of Social Service and Secretariat Building under the Ministry of Social Welfare for government official participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Area of Dhaka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganderia Slum beside rail line’</td>
<td>Southern Part of Dhaka City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyampur Slum, Posthokhola Slum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beside Burigonga River, Methor Potty (Cleaning Class)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beside Boldha Garden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogbazzar Slum, Methor Potty beside Rajdhani Super Market</td>
<td>Northern Part of Dhaka City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobi Nagor Slum beside Savar Area</td>
<td>Western Part of Dhaka City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Social Service</td>
<td>Agargoan, Northern Part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Social Welfare, Secretariat Building</td>
<td>New Poltan, Southern Part of Dhaka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.2 Entering in the Filed

To identify and establish a strong communication with hijra population in the study area, firstly, the identity of researcher and the purpose of the study had been be presented to the organizations (e.g., ICDDR,B, Badhan Hijra Sangha) those who are working closely with the Hijra population in the study area. The researcher had been introduced to Head of HIV/AIDS division of ICDDR,B and president of ‘Badhan Hijra Sangha’ and the researcher would begin rapport building with Hijra Community to introduce the research project to the potential respondents. Since Hijra are comfortable with those organizations and they get services from those organizations’
service centers regularly. So, the researcher introduced with the help of those organizations and it would be a reliable way to present the researcher to the Hijra population and identify potential participants, and also provide them information about the study. Through this process, the researcher met Hijra people for study purpose and makes an appointment with Hijra respondents in a convenient and secured venue to talk with them.

On the other hand, the researcher recruited the Government Officials and Policy makers of Social Welfare Ministry. They had been selected based on first an introduction by ICDDR,B and ‘Badhan Hijra Sangha’, because these organizations are working with the “Livelihood Living Standard Development Project of Hijra” of Social Welfare Ministry. Through these organizations, then the researcher provided them information and documents about researcher’s identity, purpose of the study and asked for their willingness to participate in the research. When a trustworthy and professional relation between the researcher and all participants had been established then participants had been requested to set appointment for the interviews. Besides, confidential and private venue which is secured and comfortable to them had been considered the most priority for their privacy.

3.1.3 Participants of the Research

There had been two types of participant groups in this study. The participant groups are government officials who are policy makers of ‘Third Gender’ recognition Declaration Gazette 2014 and general officers of Social Welfare Ministry of Bangladesh. And the other group is Transgender hijra group who are Transgender Hijra leader (Guruma), Hijra victims in 2014 employment initiative in the formal sector and general Hijra (Chelas). Purposive sampling had been used to identity and selects the respondents and informants. 38 respondents (5 policy makers, 5 general officers, 5 Hijra leaders, 5 Hijra victims who were the government employment opportunity’s victims and 18 general Hijra for 2 FGDs) had been recruited for conducting data collection and 2 FGDs had been conducted for general transgender Hijra as a primary source of data. There are some specific reasons for selecting these two groups. The research had selected the participant of Government officials of Social Welfare Ministry for exploring the scopes and opportunities of employment
status of *hijra* and for understanding ‘Transgender Recognition declaration gazette, 2014’. The study had also selected the participants of *hijra* group for understanding the total scenario of *hijra* livelihood especially for the existing employment status in public and private sector and the right to work. The primary data had been collected through going to the office of government officers. The data also had been collected through going to *hijra* group residence.

The following table shows at a glance the participants of the study, data type and data collection tool:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Tool</th>
<th>Targeted People/Participants</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-depth Interview</td>
<td>Government Officials (Policy Makers, General Officers)</td>
<td>Statistical data about <em>hijra</em> people, about employment policy, about employment initiatives, employment appointment process, employment rules, existing knowledge of employment policy, policy implementations, transgender recognition declaration 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth Interview</td>
<td>Transgender Hijra (Hijra leaders, Hijra Victims those were supposed to get the government job opportunity)</td>
<td>About <em>hijra</em> discrimination, about policy initiatives, transgender recognition bill, about livelihood pattern, about employment status, employment process of government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>General Transgender Hijra</td>
<td>About <em>hijra</em> discrimination, about policy initiatives, transgender recognition bill, about livelihood pattern, about employment status, employment process of government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.1.4 Secondary Data Sources

Secondary data had been used to collect the current information of employment of transgender in Bangladesh. It had been used to collect information materials such as academic books, articles, journals, reports, newspapers, government
orders, international covenants, treaties, conventions and NGO reports. In addition, online websites and portals related to this research field had also been included in this study.

3.2 Field Experiences

As a researcher, I have a lot of experiences during the data collection in the field. I have got a lot of support for entering in the Hijra Community from ICCDR, B, Shomaj Sheba Hijra Shongha and Diner Alo Hijra Shongha. Even I have also got a great support from Kazi Nemeri, Assistant Social Service Officer under the Ministry of Social Welfare for getting the appointment of Government officials those who are working in the Livelihood Living Standard Development Project of Hijra, 2014. I got the willing cooperation from Sadikur Rahman who is working as a Senior Assistant Secretary under the Ministry of Public Administration for getting the appointment of Policy Makers of Ministry of Social Welfare in Bangladesh. If I would not get their spontaneous support for data collection, this thesis would not have been possible to finish by this time.

As a researcher, first I felt the time constraints of my data collection period. Secondly sometimes, I encountered with the general Hijra Participants because of my masculine gender identity. I had to ask very sensitive questions to my Hijra participants for exploring the phenomena of truth and reality. At that time, I got confused how I would ask them regarding the sensitive question. During this time, I thought if I had been a female researcher, it would have been easier to ask and explore more information regarding Hijra Identity, their everyday struggle and their deprivation from the society and the state. So, as a researcher of male position influenced and impacted during my field sometimes. But I have recovered my researcher position through the rapport building. Thirdly, I faced different kind of challenges during my data collection with the Government officials under the Ministry of Social Welfare. I had to pay and give a lot of time for getting the appointment of Policy Makers because they were very busy with their job. Actually, they are the highest authority of Ministry of Social Welfare. And I got the appointment with them; I faced another problem like time constraints. So, I chose alternative strategies for
interviewing them. I just talked with them about very core and significant issue through my leading unstructured question. And finally I was able to explore everything from the state perspectives what I wanted to find out.

So, these are my field experiences of data collection of this research project.

3.3 Data Analysis Plan

After collecting the data, the data had been coded and thematically arranged. The data had been analyzed through the Narrative analysis (story, experience, opinion and memory). After collecting data, the data set had been analyzed thematically based on research objectives for answering the research questions. The data had been analyzed through Narrative analysis (story, experience, opinion and memory).

3.4 Ethical Consideration

This study had been started with the ethical approval process of Mahidol University Institutional Review Board (MU-IRB). Ethical issues had been maintained to not put participants in a situation where they might be at risk of harm as a result of their participation. As Hijra people are socially stigmatized and vulnerable identity group, this research had protected their rights by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent (the consent form had been clarified very carefully at the first meeting and again at the beginning of the interview) and other important components as bellow:

3.4.1 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity denotes that the individual who participates in the study remained without mentioning his or her name, and it is very crucial consideration in any study. In this study, the researcher used pseudonyms to protect the study participants from being identifiable. In the qualitative study, it is not easy to guarantee a potential anonymity for study participants in a given setting where researcher and
participants meet face to face. So, the researcher had ensured a high level of confidentiality which means the data had been kept in confidence.

So, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and the role of the researcher had been addressed as ethical guidelines in this study. The assurance of anonymity and confidentiality had been strictly maintained throughout the entire research project. In this study, the ethical issues had been strictly maintained. This research will be carried out for only academic purpose. Those participants who will engage in this study, no one will be harmed by this research.

3.4.2 Transcript, Data Store and Management

All interviews had been audio recorded and taken jotting notes with the consent of participants in this study. All audio recordings had been transcribed verbatim. For safety of data, all transcripts had been kept on a password protected device. The researcher only can access the transcripts. After report writing, the audio recorded files had been kept for a certain times according to ethical guideline and then the whole data were destroyed.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Existing Employment Status of Hijra in the Formal Sector of Bangladesh

This section will present the existing employment status of Transgender Hijra in the formal sector in Bangladesh. This part will also narrate the employment initiative of Hijra people in the government sector and the existing Quota scheme of vulnerable/excluded group in Bangladesh.

Transgender Hijra are one of the most vulnerable and excluded groups in Bangladesh. There is no employment opportunity in the existing government sector beside the male and female gender category. In 2014, the government took an initiative for employment mainstreaming the Hijra in different sectors for different positions. But finally, the initiative was not successful and functioning. That was the last initiative for mainstreaming job in the government sector. Even there is no Hijra existence of government job circulation as a quota scheme although the other minority groups like physically challenged, women, ethnic minorities, freedom fighters’ children and grandchildren and backward districts have the quota scheme for government job. This quota scheme would be revised in 2019 but this scheme is still working. But, Hijra as an excluded and one of the most discriminated groups of Bangladesh; they could not get any access into the quota scheme of government job sector.

Here is the following existing quota scheme.
Table 4.1 Quota Scheme of Vulnerable Groups in Formal Job Sector in Bangladesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vulnerable/Excluded Groups</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physically Challenged</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minorities</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Fighter’s Children and Grandchild</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backward Districts</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Daily Star (The Daily News Paper), 15th February 2018

One of the participants of Government officials depicted about the government employment status of Hijra people.

There is no special quota system of Hijra in the government job. Even the state has no policy for mainstreaming government job for them. As a concerned authority, we do not have any option for mainstreaming Hijra job in the Government sector. I think, if we want to provide job in the government sphere, first the employment policy should be revised and it should be included for Hijra job in government. (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka)

The study findings revealed that there is no employment opportunity in the existing government sector. The study also found that there is no employment quota for Hijra people in the formal sector.

4.2 Socio-Economic and Cultural Aspect of the Hijra Participants

This section explores the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the Hijra participants of this study. Socio-economic and cultural status are very important to understand the people status within the social strata which includes the societal status, economic status and their cultural traditions. To understand the socio-economic and
cultural background of Hijra participants of this research, this section also draws some
questions: what kind of family are Hijra from, what are their educational background,
what are their existing occupation for subsistence, what are their existing residence
pattern, what are their dress pattern and what are the relationship with their Guruma.
For revealing these sorts of question, there are some points have been posed like
education status, occupational and income status, residential pattern, dress pattern and
the relationship between Guruma and Chelas. As an excluded group, Hijra are
discriminated from the formal sector job not only because of their gender identity but
also for the subordinate condition of their socio-economic and cultural background
which will be looking for this section.

The Hijra Community in Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable groups
to face violence and discrimination. Most of the participants of this study experienced
discrimination and violence at primary stage from the hostile response of their own
families and neighborhood when they expose their identity publicly. This hostile
response often encourages them to flee from their own home and live independently as
a nomad or an isolated life within the Hijra community. This adverse situation they
face influences to go to the Hijra community. Most of the Hijra participants’ family
background of this study belongs to the poor section of the society. Their parents’
occupations are agriculture as a day laborer, small traders like shop keeper, tailors,
painters, building construction, and rickshaw puller. Most of the participants of this
study are from the poor and working class family. One Hijra respondent experienced
that “lutki kholer maigga” which means effeminate boy of the poorer families.

She described that “we are not born from the upper and middle classes but
only those are from the lower class family who join this community”. Another
participant reported that “The upper class is identified as gay. They have their own
family and societies but we belong to the same identity”, (KII with Hijra Leader, 27th
April 2019, Nobinagor, Savar, Dhaka).

4.2.1 Education Status

The education rate of Hijra people is very low in Bangladesh. Social
unacceptability and poverty are the main constraints for access to education of Hijra
people in Bangladesh. The societal attitudes, poverty, unacceptability of classmates
and the hostile environment of the education institutions are the main barriers of education of Hijra people. The following table presents the complete scenario of the educational status of the Hijra participants of this research:

Table 4.2 Educational Status of Hijra Participants of This study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary School (Class 1 to Class 5)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (Class 6 to Class 10)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary School (Class 11 to Class 12)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork in Dhaka, May 2019

Among the total 28 participants of Hijra group, around 71% finished primary school education; almost 21% completed high school education and rest of around 7% finished the higher secondary school. Most of the respondents reported that they could not continue and complete their education career. They had to leave the educational institutions because of the adverse environment the school, societal stigma and poverty. Among the total Hijra participants, 71% Hijra participants explained that they could not even finish class six.

One of the Hijra participants described that..

I had a desire to study. I wanted to be a doctor but I could not finish my studies. When my feminine identity was exposed, the school’s adverse condition was not congenial to study. Everybody used to insult me and put bad remarks like maigga pola (effeminate boy). All of my teachers bet me for giving up my feminine attitudes and behavior. My classmates did not want to sit with me at the same seating place. They did not take me with their playing. They always disturbed and insulted me. One day
I said to my father about this situation but my father also threatened me to change my attitudes. So, finally I could not continue my study and I was obliged to leave my school in class six. (KII with Hijra Leader, 27th April 2019, Nobinagor, Savar, Dhaka).

So, the feminine Hijra identity and societal condition are the main challenges for continuing education. Education is the key requirement for getting formal sector job. Most of the Hijra people can only read and write their name. They could not at least finish their primary level education. Finally they had to leave their school at the level of Class four and five because of their identity. They do not have any proper access to study in the mainstream school.

4.2.2 Occupation and Income Status

Hijra are the distinct identity group who has the traditional community and occupation. Most of the Hijra in Bangladesh are from very poor and working class family. Most of the hijra participant’s family backgrounds are day laborers, small traders like shop keeper, tailors, painters, building construction, and rickshaw puller. Their economic background is very vulnerable. Now, they are engaged in different kind of works but their main traditional occupations are Badhai, Cholla Manga and sex working which are called Hijragiri.

The following table will presents the occupational status of Hijra participants of this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badhai</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholla Manga</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Worker</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty Parlor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed in NGO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork in Dhaka, May 2019
Most of the Hijra in this study are working in Badhai and Cholla Manga and as sex workers. The most prominent traditional cultural occupation of Hijra community Badhai (who bless newborn babies through singing and dancing). Badhai is a traditional work of Hijra people of Bangladesh. Hijra people normally perform Badhai through dancing and clapping on the occasion of the birth of a child or a newborn baby and they demand Badhai money for the birth of the child. Cholla Manga is another source of occupation whose literal meaning is collecting money and foodstuff from the bazaar like shopkeepers, business traders, vegetable’s shop, fruit shop, grocery shop, cosmetic shop, garments shop, food hotels and etc. Cholla Manga is also the traditional occupation for their survivability. Normally once a week, Hijra collect money both in cash, any kind of food stuffs and other stationary. Basically, collection in the market places is one of most important source of livelihood of Hijra participants in this study. In the context of Bangladesh, Cholla Manga is the legitimate work or Hijragiri of Hijra people rather than sex working. The income is better for Cholla Manga than Badhai. But they are also involved in dancing in marriage ceremony, Radhuni, garment working, beauty parlor, and works in NGOs and guard recently.

The following table will present the income status based on the occupation of Hijra participants of this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of Income In BDT</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10000 -12000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sex Worker</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12000 -14000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Badhai</td>
<td>42.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14000 – 16000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cholla Manga</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16000 – 18000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beauty Parlor</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18000 – 20000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Employed in NGO</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork in Dhaka, May 2019
Among the total 28 participants, 3 Hijra are working as sex worker, 12 Hijra are doing Badhai, 10 Hijra are doing Cholla Manga, 1 Hijra is working for Beauty Parlor and the rest of 2 Hijra are working in NGO as a development worker. One of the respondents said that the monthly income of Cholla Manga is 14 to 16 thousand BDT (roughly $178 to $237 per month) but if it is during the Eid festivals, it may be 25 to 30 thousands BDT (roughly $356 to $474 per month). On the contrary, those who are working in the Badhai, the normal income of Badhai is 12 to 14 thousands BDT (roughly $118 to $178) per month. The other work is sex work. But sex work is very challenging and risky for them. It is not actually legitimated and allowed for Hijra in the Bangladeshi context. Besides these works, they are doing different type of works like as a garments worker, as a cook of any restaurant, as a peon and as a guard. But after some days of their jobs, they cannot continue their jobs because of their feminine gender identity.

The study’s respondents described about their occupation that…

We are from very poor family. When our feminine attitudes were exposed, we could not stay with our family. We were assaulted, discriminated and abused from our own family and society. Finally we were obliged to go out from our house and joined this Hijra community. Our main occupations are Badahai tolla, Cholla Manga and Sex work. But we wanted to do the mainstream jobs like garments, day laborer, Radhuni, Guard, peon and even small and medium enterprise. But we could not continue long time because the society could not accept us as a normal gender category. Even we were discriminated and assaulted from the mainstream jobs. We had been kicked out or fired from these jobs because of our Hijra gender identity. The government didn’t take any initiatives for our employment’s rights. Now, we are doing our traditional work. Our monthly income is normally 12000 to 14000 BDT. But we want to live with dignity and we want to work in the mainstream job with male and female. We want our citizen’s rights. (FGD with Hijra, 27th April 2019, Slum in Nobi Nagor, Savar, Dhaka)
Most of Hijra participants of this study are doing their traditional works. Badhai, Cholla Magna and sex work are the common works for their survival strategy. Some Hijra are also doing different type of works like beauty parlor and NGO employee. They do not have smooth access to do the mainstreaming job like garments worker, cook of a restaurant, peon of any institution, day laborer and as a guard because of feminine attitudes. Even they do not have any access to the official job in the private and public sphere because of very poor education and gender identity. So, there are no alternative for them without their traditional works.

**4.2.3 Residence of Hijra Participants**

Residence is one of the major problems of Hijra people in Bangladesh. This study had been conducted in different places of the Dhaka city where the hijra people are living. And these places belong to different locations of Dhaka city. The living places of Hijra participants are basically slum such as Ganderia Slum beside rail station, Shampur slum, Mogbazzar slum, Nobi Nagor slum beside Savar, Posthokhola slum beside Burigonga River, Methor Potty (Cleaning Class) beside Boldha Garden, Methor Potty (Cleaning Class) beside Rajdhani Super market. Being an excluded gender identity, they are not allowed to stay with mainstream people. Those who leave from the house, then they first come to Guruma of Hijra community. Guruma is the leader of Hijra community. She is also the guardian. The Hijra community normally lives in the slums and across the rail line or the river bank or alienated from the mainstream society. The residence condition is very unhealthy due to limited infrastructure of sanitation. They do not get any access to stay with the mainstream society because of their gender identity. Most of the respondents of this study are living in isolated area from the mainstream people and with the slum and beside the rail line. They are discriminated by double way. When they left their house and when they came to the Hijra community to the Guruma. Poverty and social unacceptability are the causes of the unhealthy residence.

One of the participants of this study explained that..

*I faced a severe problem when I left my house. I was looking for a residence for staying as a rent. But I could not get any house for rent*
because of my distinct identity. When the land owner could understand that I am a Hijra, they did not want to give me their house as rent. Even the mainstreaming people do not want to stay with me. So, finally I went to the Guruma through one of my Hijra friends. Now, I am living with my Guruma with Hijra community as a family member but this place is also isolated. (FGD with Hijra Group, 2nd May 2019, Posthokhola Slum beside Burigonga River, Dhaka)

Another participant of reported that…

The main problem what we are facing regarding the house rent that no one wants to give their house as rent because we are Hijra. The mainstream people owner thinks that we are aggressive, deviant, abnormal and absurd with our behavior. So, they are not interested to give their house for us. We are really deprived of our residence rights as a citizen of Bangladesh. Nobody consider us as a human being. (FGD with Hijra Group, 2nd May 2019, Posthokhola Slum beside Burigonga River, Dhaka)
The residential pattern of Hijra participants of this study is very poor. Most of the Hijra participants are living in the slum of different places of Dhaka city. They cannot get any access to stay with the mainstream society because of their distinct identity. Initially, every Hijra people tried to get a residence as rent but no one was willing to give them house rent. The Hijra experiences explored that the owner are not interested to give them house as rent because society people do not like them and another reason is that the owner thinks that they will not be able to pay the rent of house per month. So, their identity is the main barrier to stay with mainstream society.

4.2.4 Dress Pattern

In the context of Bangladesh, Hijra are represented their attitudes and behavioral expression with male body and female psyche. They usually want to dress up like female through clothes. They want to be a beautiful woman so that they wear
saree, blawous, saloer and kamiz (above mentioned glossary). They always try to give up their manly mannerisms and keeping out the beard and also make up as women. They regularly use cosmetics for making up and exposing as women. They use the lipstick and wearing a bra for showing their boobs. They also use a lot of jewelries like necklace, nose pin, ring, ear ring and nail polish. It was noticed that most of the participants of this study dressed up using ring, ear ring, necklace and nail polish. They spent the partial amount of money for their dress pattern.

One of the participants of this study reported that...

*We are born as a male but we want to be women. We always try to give up our manly behavior. We like dressing up very much. Normally, we wear saree, blouse, kamiz and saloer. We like cosmetics very much. We always try to expose as a women through our dress pattern, our behavior, and our movement and through our voice. (FGD with Hijra, 27th April 2019, Nobi Nagor Slum, Savar,Dhaka)*

### 4.2.5 Guruma-Chela Relationship in Hijra Community

The *Hijra* community is based on the occupation of the *Hijragiri*. *Hijra* social structure constructs a *guru-chela* (leader-disciple) hierarchy. *Guruma* always belong to the highest position of *Hijra* community and a *chela* belongs to a *Guruma* within the *Hijra* community. It’s like a mentor and disciple relationship. The *Guruma* is the leader of a house or *ghor*. When a new comer or a new *chela* (disciple) comes to the *Hijra* community, there are some well-established rites of initiation for her.

*Hijragiri* or the occupation of the *Hijra* is a community based *guru-chela* centric institution. *Guru* is always highly respected within the *Hijra* community. When a *guru* is sick or physically ill, the *chela* is always responsible for taking care of her/him. Misbehave with a Guru is a severe wrongdoing and for which the strict punishment is assigned. Basically the *Guruma* instructs the *Cholla* manga, *Badhai* and sex working for her *chelas* (*Disciples*). The relationship of Guru and Chela is like mutual understanding. To some extent, the relationship between Guru and Chela is like a kind of hierarchical relationship. All of the *chelas* are to abide by the rules and regulations of *Hijra* community of *Guruma*. *Guruma* belong to the highest position of
the Hijra community. She is basically an aged person. For becoming a Guru of Hijra community, she has some sorts of quality. She achieves this position after doing Hijragiri for a long time. She has her own residence where a new Hijra initially comes to live. She takes the responsibility of the new comer Hijra. Then she guides the new Hijra in their occupational works. So, the new comer hijra calls her a Guruma. She earns money and gives to her Guruma. This is the process to become a Guruma of Hijra Community.

One of the participants of this study said that..

Guruma is our mother and guardian. She gave me the permanent residence for living in Hijra community. When I was got out and kicked out from my own house, I came here and joined this community through our Guruma. I have to be always caring towards our Guruma. Basically, we are doing two type of traditional occupation here named Cholla Manga and Badhai. After collecting the money and foodstuff, I have to submit to our Gururma. She gives me some portion from the collected money and foodstuffs. Our Guruma takes the maximum portion of earning income. You can say, it’s one kind of dictatorship. But there was no alternative for living without her assistance. Even, here are some strict rules and regulations and everyone is obliged to obey these sorts of rules and regulations. So, we are living here as a family. (KII with Hijra Leader, 7th May 2019, Mogbazzar Slum, Dhaka)

The findings explored that most of the Hijra participants are from very poor and working class family. Their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are from the working class and lower class family. This socio-cultural condition and gender identity of Hijra are reinforcing to exclude from the mainstream society in different ways. These Hijra groups are excluded from the educational atmosphere because of their identity. Adnan argued (P.97) that “this class-specific nature of the Hijra influenced the form of Hijraness not only on account of their working class backgrounds but also in terms of their conditions within the wider class-inflected social structure”.
The *hijra* identity and the socio-economic context of this excluded group are not being the smooth accessible in the mainstreaming education system. Their socialization and livelihood pattern create more vulnerability in the society. Therefore, they are initially excluded from the labor market and formal sector job. So, they have the only one alternative for their subsistence which is traditional works. They are getting involved in their traditional work like *Badhai, Cholla Manga* or *Bazaar Tola* and sex working. They are not getting access to live within the mainstream society because of non-confirming gender identity. So, they are obliged to stay within the *hijra* community in a very isolated area like slum area. They have different way of life within the *Hijra* community. They have also some hierarchy like *Boro Ma, Nan Guru, Guru, Chela* and *Dud beti*. So, the overall socio-economic aspect of the vulnerable *Hijra* group is affecting their lives and from every sector they are being excluded. Therefore, as a capable candidate to enter into the formal and informal employment sector, the *Hijra* are not able to fulfill the criteria and conditions of formal and informal sector job.

### 4.3 Existing Policy Gap of *Hijra* Employment in the Government Sector

This section shows the existing policy gap of *Hijra* employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh. This section also presents what types of policies are prevailing and what the limitations of those policies are as a barrier for *Hijra* employment rights in the formal sector. Policy gap is one of the most important barriers to the mainstreaming of *Hijra* people employment in the Government sector. To understand the existing policy gap of *Hijra* employment, the relevant policy level literatures and documents had been reviewed and analyzed. There are two ministry’s named Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Labor and Employment in Bangladesh documents had been selected to find out the *Hijra* employment policy gap in the formal sector. The Implementation policy of Livelihood Development Project of *Hijra*, 2013, *Hijra* Declaration Gazette and Citizen Charter under the Department of Social Service of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Bangladesh Labor Policy, 2012
under the Ministry of Labor and Employment had been reviewed for identifying the
gaps of the existing employment policy.

This study explores the challenges of right to employment of Transgender
Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh. These two ministries policy documents are
very relevant to figure out the policy gap because the Ministry of Labor and
Employment is responsible for the labor rights, employment rights of every citizens of
Bangladesh. So, the Ministry of Labor and Employment has developed “Bangladesh
Labor Policy 2012” for ensuring the labor and employment rights of its citizens. On
the other hand, the Department of Social Service under the Ministry of Social Welfare’
“Implementation Policy of Livelihood Development Project of Hijra 2013”, Citizen
Charter and Hijra Declaration Gazette are very significant to review the gap of Hijra’s
employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh. That’s why, these two Ministry’s
policy documents had been selected for reviewing. Here will be presented in the
existing policies of employment and labor and find out the limitations of those policies
of Hijra employment in the formal sector.

4.3.1 Implementation Policy of Livelihood Development Project of
Hijra, 2013

There are 11 articles of implementation policy of Hijra livelihood development
program. Mainly the policy has been designed for the smooth functioning and activities for
the Hijra people development. The policy includes the different aspects of Hijra livelihood
development programs. The policy introduces the brief introduction of Hijra people in
Bangladesh regarding the definition of Hijra, their total numbers, the objectives and aims of
the activities of Hijra people. There are four activities mentioned in this manual; education
scholarship of school going Hijra students, different training programs of Hijra people for
mainstreaming the society, socio-economic development and social
security of Hijra People and to enhance their dignity in the family and society. This
policy also states the strategic implementation rule of the programs. This policy
clarifies the process of the education scholarship of Hijra students, the condition of
education scholarship and the selection process of education scholarship. The policy
also indicates the training activities of Hijra people like the type of trainings,
implementation strategies, training modules, and training strategies.
This policy has been reviewed according to the 11 articles. Here the policy documents will be discussed on the basis of the policy contents. Article 1 explains the background of the Hijra people in Bangladesh, their major activities and about the policy for Hijra development. Article 2 delineates the definition of Hijra people and also indicates who are belonging to Hijra people. Article 3 mentions the programs goal and objectives. There are four major objectives of Hijra livelihood development programs which are; to provide the education scholarship of school going Hijra students, to provide the different kind of training programs for Hijra people development and mainstreaming, to make sure the social safety net and socio-economic development and to ensure their dignity in the family and society.

Article 4 mentions the very specific programs of Hijra people development like the education scholarship of above five years Hijra students and the engagement of training programs to provide the skill development trainings of above 18 years Hijra people. Article 5 explains the program area and the area will be all City Corporation of Bangladesh, 64 districts of Bangladesh, all Upozilla and all Unions of Bangladesh. Article 6 mentions about the implementation of authority. There are two sub sections are here; a) This “Hijra Livelihood Development Programs” will be directed under the Department of Social Service of Ministry of Social Welfare in the People’s Republic of Bangladesh; and b) The responsible authority will be the Director General of Department of Social Service and all Deputy Commissioners of all districts of Bangladesh. Article 7 mentions about the study and data collection of Hijra people in Bangladesh and also indicates how the total data of Hijra will be preserved. The article also mentions that there are around 10000 Hijra people in Bangladesh.

Article 8 mentions about the implementation strategies of the programs. There are some sub-sections of Article 8, such as 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; Sub-section 8.1 of Article 8 mentions about the combination of government and non-government organization. Sub-section 8.2 of Article 8 mentions about the selection requirements of NGOs and Sub-section 8.3 mentions about the activities of selected NGOs.

Article 9 discusses about the different activities of implementation process of “Hijra Livelihood Development Programs” like education scholarship programs of schooling going Hijra students; providing training programs of Hijra people like types of training, implementation strategies, training module and training method.
Article 10 discusses about the selection community of school going students for scholarship such as Union committee, Upozilla committee, Municipality committee, City Corporation Committee, District Steering Committee, National Steering Committee. Article 11 mentions about the power of authority of the policy amendments, changes and insertion of new policy and clearly explained that the government will be the power of attorney to amend and change of this existing policy.

This policy is designed to function and operate the livelihood development of Hijra project. This policy clearly states the different type of activities and strategies to develop and mainstream the Hijra people in Bangladesh. This implementation policy of Hijra livelihood development mainly stressed on the accessibility of education, different trainings for skill development of Hijra as safety net programs. But there is no presence of employment rights of Hijra people in this existing Implementation Policy of Livelihood Development Project of Hijra, 2013, although employment is a right of every citizen of Bangladesh. There is no clarification of mainstreaming of Hijra employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh.

4.3.2 Bangladesh Labor Policy, 2012: Ministry of Labor and Employment

The national labor policy, 2012 was published as a gazette on 28th May, 2012. As a member state of ILO convention, the main objective of this labor policy is to recognize and implement the labor rights of laborers. This policy is concerned about the appointment and types of jobs. The policy is concerned about to mitigate the discrimination of workplace of male and female, to give up the child labor of workplace. This policy is also focused on the women participation in the labor market. One of the mandates of this policy is to create the employment opportunities of Indigenous people, ethnic groups, Dalits, autistic people, vulnerable and backward people. The policy is also committed to ensure the labor dignity, labor rights and livelihood development of labor. The policy is also focused on the mitigation of men and women in the workplace. This policy concentrates on the women labor and the equity of workplace. This policy will be implemented through the Ministry of Labor and Employment.
The national labor policy’s main mandate is to ensure the labor rights. This policy is encompassed with the appointment process and job type. This policy is prioritized to the women in the labor market. Even the policy designed about the employment opportunities of Indigenous people, Dalits, Autistic people, vulnerable and backward people but Hijra people are not included in this policy.

The labor policy is composed of 28 Articles. Article 1 sub-section 1.02 mentions about the constitutional obligation and instruction for ensuring the labor rights of every citizen of Bangladesh. Article 1 sub-section 1.03 points out that as a member state of ILO, this policy will make sure the international standard labor and will be committed to ensure the labor rights in the national and international level for every citizen of Bangladesh. Article 2 mentions some points which are as follows…discrimination in workplace will be demolished, child labor will be demolished, all of the compulsory works will be demolished.

Article 4 sub-section 4.02 explains about the goals of this policy which are as follows….

- To create eligible manpower for socio-economic development and create jobs in every sphere of society as the capacity of citizen.
- To take the necessary steps for ensuring the development of livelihood of labor class
- To diminish the discrimination of male and female in the workplace
- To create the opportunities and make sure the discrimination free working environment for indigenous people, ethnic minorities, dalits, physically and mentally challenged people, peripheral and vulnerable people.
- To demolish every kind of risky work for child labor

Article 5 mentions about the dignity of labor, labor rights and livelihood development of laborers in terms of male and female equality.

Article 6 explains about the standard works of every male and female. And that should be ensured according to this policy.

Article 7, sub-section 4 points out that there will be no discrimination between male-female and the backward people regarding the deserving salary/remuneration.
Article 9 mentions about the labor welfare of every laborer. Article 9 also mentions about the health services of every laborer. Every laborer will be given the health services in terms of physical and mental services.

Article 19 explains about the women empowerment in the labor market and equality of the job. This also indicates any kind of discrimination will be demolished in the working environment.

Article 24 mentions that the government can amend and change this policy according to the demand and the labor law in any given time. Even the government can eliminate some clauses and articles and include some clauses and articles as the demand of the new law.

Article 26 indicates that this labor policy will be implemented through the Labor and Employment Ministry of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

This labor policy had been constructed on the basis of male and female category. This policy also emphasized on some excluded and vulnerable groups employment and labor rights. As a special consideration, the policy is prioritized to the women labor rights in the labor market. Sub-section 4.03 under the article 4 mentions that this policy is committed to create the job opportunities and make sure the discrimination free working environment for indigenous people, ethnic minorities, dalits, physically and mentally challenged people, peripheral and vulnerable people. Even the article 1 sub-section 1.02 and 1.03 clearly state the constitutional obligation and instruction for ensuring the labor rights of every citizen of Bangladesh and the policy will make sure the international standard labor and will be committed to ensure the labor rights in the national and international level for every citizen of Bangladesh respectively. But in the entire labor policy, there is no presence of Hijra employment as a more vulnerable and excluded group in Bangladesh. So, this is a strong gap and limitation regarding Hijra employment in the existing labor policy.

4.3.3 Hijra Declaration Gazette: Ministry of Social Welfare

The government has officially declared the Hijra community of Bangladesh as Hijra Sex or Third Gender on 26th January 2014 in a gazette. The cabinet actually declared on 11th November, 2013 and it was published as a gazette in the following year, 2014. The gazette was only the one sentence which was “The
government has officially recognized this Hijra people as Hijra Sex or Third Gender”. There was no clarification how to recognize them in the state apparatus and how to mainstream this group. Even there is no indication of Hijra mainstreaming of Government Job.

Besides these policies, there are some special policies in the Ministry of Social Welfare. These are national disability policy 1995, national older person policy 2013, national women development policy 2011, children act 2013 and rights and protection of person’s with disability act 2013. But the government did not make any Hijra Employment Policy in the Formal sector.

![Hijra Declaration Gazette](image)

Figure 4.2 Hijra Declaration Gazette

4.3.4 Citizen Charter: Ministry of Social Welfare

The Department Social Service of the Ministry of Social Welfare has published about the services of citizens in Bangladesh. This citizen charter of Social Service Department also tries to ensure the programs clarity, accountability and good governance. The vision of this charter is to provide the services and the development
of the backward people, deprived, ultra poor and poor of the society. The following groups are included for the development of welfare like backward, poor and low come people, helpless and insolvent and old problematic people, freedom fighter, parentless, deprived, destitute, vulnerable and autistic children, socially crime prone people, autistic people, trafficked child and women and orphan, beggars community and exploited women.

The citizen charter of Social Welfare Ministry presents the services of vulnerable citizen who are ultra-poor, freedom fighter, autistic people, trafficked child, and women, orphan but there is no presence of Hijra people.

4.4 Impacts of Policies on Access to Employment of Hijra in Formal Sector

This section mainly focuses on to reveal the major challenges of right to employment of Transgender Hijra through the impact of existing policies in the formal employment sector of Bangladesh. As a citizen of nation, everyone has the right to get the employment opportunity equally. According to the constitution of Bangladesh, Article 20(1) that ‘work as a right, a duty and a matter of honor for every citizen who is capable of working’. So, Hijra, as a citizen of Bangladesh, is supposed to get the equal access to have a job in the formal and informal sector of Bangladesh. But the reality is totally different for the case of Hijra people in Bangladesh. They do not have any access to get the employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh.

There are several challenges of right to employment faced by transgender Hijra in Bangladesh. In this section, these challenges of access to employment have been divided into two folds like Challenges of Legal Aspect and Challenges of Social and Cultural Aspect. These both challenges are being explained in detail in this section through experiences of the government officials and hijra participants of this study.
4.4.1 Challenges of Legal Aspect

4.4.1.1 Absence of Employment Policy for Hijra

Employment policy is very important for mainstreaming Hijra jobs in the formal sector in Bangladesh. But there is no specific employment policy for this group. The state has only declared this group as Hijra Sex or Third Gender. But the state did not make any rules and regulations for mainstreaming in the formal sector job of this group. There is no clarification how the state will contribute and develop for this group in the government jobs.

One of the Government official participants shared that…

If we want to provide the job of this excluded group, we have to have the specific law and employment policy of this group. Actually, we do not have any employment policy for mainstreaming Hijra people in the government sector. Now, we are working for making the consolidated law and employment policy for them. And we are in the final stage. I think, there should be specific employment policy for Hijra so that the state can get engaged them in the employment sector. (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka)

Regarding the employment policy, another official participant claimed that…

We have only implementation Hijra manual of livelihood living standard development but this manual is only designed for hijra training programs, old age allowance and education scholarship. Actually, in this manual there is no clarification of hijra employment rights in formal sector. (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka)
4.4.1.2 Not Recognized of Hijra Identity in the Legal Documents

The Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh had recognized Hijra identity firstly on 11 November 2013 in the cabinet. Finally, it was published as a gazette on 26 January 2014. After the declaration of recognition, Hijra identity as a third gender was supposed to engage or to be on board in the legal documents like Passport and NID. But still it was not established in the state legal documents because of the normative thinking of gender and religious conservatism. Most of the people in Bangladesh are Muslims. So, the government officials’ mindset is driven by the conservative values although the state declared as a secular state after its independence. Moreover, the state declared this group as a third gender because of the civil society, human rights activists demand and struggle and in the name of secularization. But this recognition was not formalized in the reality because of the cultural, social prejudices and bureaucratic complexities. And even the religious value does not support beyond the normative gender category like male and female. The government is always reluctant for engaging their identity in the passport and NID because of mainstream society’s conservative values. It was only the pen and pencil. In reality, there is no incorporation of Hijra identity in the passport and National Identity Card (NID). For this reason, any kind of job circular of the state, there is no presence of this distinct identity group. When the circulation of formal sector is published, there are only male and female identity groups existed. So, they are automatically excluded from government employment opportunity. One of the government officials had been asked why the ‘third gender’ identity was not established in the NID card and Passport yet after their recognition. The official replied regarding this issue…..

The government had already done a lot of things for this group. The Hijra had been recognized officially as a third gender. The government had taken a lot of initiatives for their improvement like training program, old age salary, education scholarship and etc. It will take time for the complete recognition like in the presence of NID and Passport beside male and female category. Still we are working for the
policy formulation of Hijra people. Besides, the mainstream society does not accept them. Even the third gender identity is not normal in the society. Actually they are sexually and genitally handicapped. Religion also does not support the different identify except male and female category. So, we have a lot of constraints but still we are trying to engage them in the legal documents. (KII with Government Official of Ministry of Social Welfare, 8th May 2019, Secretariat Bhabon, Dhaka)

One of the Hijra participants reported regarding this issue that…

Actually I will say, the government is totally reluctant to mainstream for our job. We thought we would get complete recognition from the state. But it was only in pen and pencil not in the reality. We want the full recognition in the NID card and Passport as well. Otherwise our governmental job will not be ensured. (KII with Hijra Leader, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka).

It was also found that the Hijra identity is not reflected on the legal documents of state after the Hijra recognition. Gender classifications for Hijra are ignored directly and indirectly in many ways like job circulation, health services etc. The Hijra leaders said about the inaccessibility of government jobs for missing the Hijra identity of legal documents. She narrated that…

We did not get the full recognition of our gender identity. It was just like an eye wash. There is no reflection of the gazette in the legal documents. Even there is no Hijra gender identification in the job circular. We thought, our identity would be included in every sphere of our society. Everything is constructed on the basis of male and female gender category. (KII with Hijra Leader, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka)
The study also found that the recognition of *Hjira* identity did not implement in reality. One of the Hijra participants reported that…

*In this recognition, Hijras are defined as ‘Sexually and genitally handicapped’. This is very offensive and absurd. I think, this recognition is only for the pen and pencil not in reality.*

### 4.4.1.3 No Clarification Regarding Formal Employment in the Gazette

This is the first time in the history of Bangladesh; the state had officially recognized *Hijra* as *Hijra* Sex or Third gender. After that, the government had taken some initiatives for the development of *Hijra* people in Bangladesh. One of the initiatives was to provide government jobs for *Hijra* people in 2014. But finally, it had not been formalized and implemented. Actually there was no clarification about the job rights, education rights, health rights, right to food and human rights of this group in this recognition gazette. It was like the only one sentence in that gazette. From the very beginning of this recognition gazette, the state was not proactive in reality.

One of the official participants said that…

*Actually we don’t have any policy for mainstreaming government job of Hijra people. So, how can we initiate again for mainstreaming in the government jobs. Even we do not have any instructions from the Ministry of Social Welfare for giving the job opportunities of Hijra group. In 2014, we took a pilot project for mainstreaming in the government job but finally it was not effective because of their fake Hijra identity. (KII with Government Official of Ministry of Social Welfare, 8th May 2019, Secretariat Bhabon, Dhaka)*

Regarding the ignorance of *Hijra* Recognition Gazette, One of the *Hijra* Participants narrated that….
The government is always passive and reluctant for mainstreaming our job in the government sector. There is no advancement of Hijra recognition gazette after 2014. No employment policy had been constructed for us. Even there is no initiative for making legislation declaration from the constituency and Supreme Court. There is no follow up of the recognition gazette. (KII with Hijra Leader, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka)

4.4.1.4 Discriminatory Practices of Established Laws and Ratified Conventions

The government has already recognized them as their distinct gender identity. The state has established constitution law for the protection of every citizen’s rights. The state has also ratified the ICESCR in 1998 and the ICCPR in 2000 as well. Hijra, as a citizen of Bangladesh, the recognized law and ratified convention are not practiced for the protection of Hijra people’s formal sector job in Bangladesh. The government officials of Department of Social Service are not aware/conscious of these established laws and conventions for practicing the Hijra people job security in the formal sector.

One of the government officials expressed that..

The government has a constitutional law, act, and ordinance and ratified international conventions but there is no specific law and policy for Hijra people. There is no employment policy and law for Hijra. Even there is no instruction for Hijra people’s job mainstreaming in the formal sector from the Ministry of Social Affairs. So, how will we do for Hijra people employment mainstreaming in the formal sector? (KII with Government Official of Ministry of Social Welfare, 8th May 2019, Secretariat Bhabon, Dhaka)

The state has the protection mechanisms for ensuring human rights of all citizens. As a citizen of the nation, everyone has the right to get the employment opportunity equally. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states
Article 23 that ‘everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable condition of work without any discrimination’. According to the constitution of Bangladesh, Article 29(1) clearly states that ‘equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment will be ensured. No citizen will be discriminated on ground only religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth in respect of any employment in the republic’. The constitution has also ensured Article 20(1) that ‘work as a right, a duty and a matter of honor for every citizen who is capable of working’. According to Article 6 the ICESCR, ‘the state recognizes the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work.

These international standards include all social groups, regardless of their sexual orientation. However, in many countries with specific social and cultural context, discrimination still takes place in general, and in accessing work, in particular. For example, citizen of Bangladesh, although it is formally stated that every Hijra has the right to work or right to get the equal opportunity of work in every places of the state, but in reality Hijra have been denied this fundamental right for a long time. As a consequence, they are unemployed and under-employment in the formal sector.

4.4.2 Challenges of Social and Cultural Aspect

4.4.2.1 Lack of Education for Accessing Jobs in Formal Sector

Education is inevitable for every sphere of the society especially in the institutional level of the state for accessing job. Education is must for getting governmental jobs in any level. The government official’s perception about Hijra education is very poor. Hijra people are unable to complete their education in the long run. Most of Hijra participants of this study cannot finish their studies; even class five and in the primary level.

One of the official participants of this research reported that---

The government wants to provide them the job opportunities but they are not educated. The government is very enthusiastic to mainstream this group in the employment sector but how the government will
provide job for them. So, the government has taken a significant initiative for providing the education scholarship for Hijra students. The government is giving the education scholarship for them right now. (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka).

On the contrary, one of Hijra participants explained why she could not continue her study----

I know educational qualification is compulsory for getting government job. But when I went to school, the school environment was not congenial and smooth for me. Everyday my classmates used to look down upon me. They used to criticize me. They often used say ‘maiga pola (effeminate boy). I reported to my teachers but they asked me to give up my feminine attitude. Sometime I was assaulted and kicked by my classmates. Then I could not continue my study in the long run. Actually, my classmates, teachers, guards and peon’s behavior were not comfortable for me. (KII with Hijra Leader, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka).

Poor education condition of Hijra is one of the significant barriers of mainstreaming employment of Hijra people in Bangladesh. The findings stated that most of the Hijra participants of this study cannot complete their education not even class six (above mentioned table 4). That’s why they cannot come to mainstream into the formal job sector. The finding also claimed that there is no congenial atmosphere for continuing her education because of the identity. When their identity is disclosed, the whole environment of the education institute is being changed which are not easy going and smooth for their study. They do not get any proper access in the education system. So, they are automatically dropped out from the early career of their education life.
4.4.2.2 Unacceptability of Hijra in the Official Environment as Colleague

Bangladesh is a Muslim country in terms of majority. Most of the officials are religiously conservative. They cannot imagine about distinct gender identity alongside the male and female category. The government officials were trying to explain about the unacceptability of Hijra people from the official decorum and the mainstream societal perspectives. They also were trying to say about the religious value regarding the male and female gender identity. Even they were depicting their understanding and perception about gender dimension like only on the basis of sex; male and female category. They also added that ‘it is really unthinkable or unimaginable beyond the male and female sex category’. Besides, they were also trying to say that they do not know how to behave with other colleagues and even they do not know the official manner and decorum in the office environment. They also added that the other colleagues do not want to work together with the Hijra people.

One of the participants of Government official claimed as follows----

*The Hijra identity is not normal and acceptable for the mainstream society. Even the religion does not support this type of identity and there are many religious superstitions regarding them. Is there any sex or identity group beyond male and female? I think it’s really funny for identity construction. I cannot understand how a male imitate himself as like as Hijra or like women? We took an initiative for providing job to this group but according to medical test, they were not real Hijra, they all were fake Hijra. Actually, they were physically male. Even the Hijra people are severely disturbing to mainstream people. So, the mainstream people are not accepting them as normal people. They do not know how to talk with others. The other colleagues are not interested to work together with Hijra people.* (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka).
The distinct identity of *Hijra* as a third gender still did not formalize in the legal or official documents and the institutional papers. Although this identity was supposed to formalize in the state apparatus, no remarkable initiative had been taken yet. One of the reasons is social conservatism because most of the Bangladeshi people are Muslim. In the cognitive orientation of mainstream people, orthodox understanding about gender dichotomy which is only male and female category. So, this kind of recognition is not reflected in the everyday life of *Hijra* people and has no impact of it.

**4.4.2.3 Official’s Perception about *Hijra* Identity**

The government official’s perceptions are very poor understanding regarding the *Hijra* identity. They do not have clear perception about the gender diversity those who are working in the livelihood living standard project of *Hijra* from the mainstream society. In the case of Social Welfare Ministry in Bangladesh, most of the government officials and policy makers are from the conventional mainstream society. They actually believe in only two types of gender identity of the society. To some extent, they cannot imagine the different gender identity beyond the male and female category. Even there are two kind of gender, which are normatively approved by the society. Even the existing legal documents of livelihood living standard *Hijra* community project in the Social Welfare Ministry of Bangladesh, *Hijra* are defined ‘jouno o lingo protibondhi’, literally sexually and genitally handicapped.

When they had been asked about the perception and knowledge of *Hijra* identity, most of officials defined them as follows…

*Basically those who are sexually and genitally handicapped are called *Hijra*. And these people are also sexually and physically disabled by birth. Naturally I am a boy but I wouldn’t belong to as a boy. By the medical treatment or operation I want to change my gender and I want to be a feminine gender. Is it a normal phenomenon or thinking? Actually their identity is not normal and acceptable for the mainstream society. Basically they are abnormal and they are always disturbing for*
Findings of The Study / 54

One of the participants from Hijra community said that…

Hijra is an umbrella term of the South Asian perspective. I think, Hijra is a culture and tradition. Those who belong to this culture are called Hijra. I am physically male, I mean I have a penis but I am mentally female. Those who talks and acts as a feminine attitudes like sexual desire and psychologically just like a woman. I will emphasize on the mentality. Mentally what I feel, what attracts me, what I wear and how I feel and communicate. These are more important for identifying Hijra. (KII with Hijra Leader, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka)

The other hijra participant also asserted that…

Actually the government does not know about these matters. The government declared us as Hijra sex in the name of “Sexually and Genitally Handicapped”. It’s really ridiculous, dangerous, insulting, offensive and objectionable as well. Hijra is not a diseases or disability. Honestly speaking, the government doesn’t have any proper knowledge regarding us. The government should have understood/known about us before the declaration. (KII with Hijra Leader, 27th April 2019, Nobinagor, Savar, Dhaka).

4.4.2.4 Prejudices against Hijra

Attitudes and behaviors are very important for accepting people in the society. The government official’s attitudes are not engaging the positive way of thinking regarding the Hijra people. Most of the government officials bear negative attitudes about this excluded group because of the gender identity. In the legal documents, Hijra people are represented as sexually and genitally handicapped. The official’s attitudes to Hijra people are deviant, immoral, deceitful, mentally ill,
abnormal, insane, annoying, and disabled. These sorts of attitudes are affecting the Hijra people development program. The way of stigmatization is constructed.

One of the participants of government officials claimed---

_Hijra are also largely goonda as well as they always annoy and disturb people. Basically they are abnormal people. They are doing extortion for collecting money by force in the street and using slang for most of the conversation and disturbance to other people. One male imitate himself as like as Hijra, why a male person imitate himself as a Hijra? Then how will the society accept them? How is it possible? (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7\textsuperscript{th} May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka)

On the contrary, regarding the Hijra identity, when Hijra had been asked about the perception and existing knowledge of attitudes, one of the informants of Hijra participants claimed that –

When a Hijra wants to be a woman, then the society stigmatizes her as a Mad, Insane and Abnormal. Everybody hates them. The society not only beats the Hijra but also abhors her. Even, the government official’s attitudes about us are like abnormal, mentally sick and deceitful. This is the reality of this country about Hijra community. But the society and state should consider that I am a normal human being like male & female. I am energetic, industrious and I don’t have any disability. Even the mainstream people are putting bad remarks on me. (FGD with Hijra, 27\textsuperscript{th} April 2019, Nobi Nagor Slum, Savar,Dhaka).

Prejudices against Hijra people are the common phenomena in the government official mindset. Normative thinking, cultural and religious belief system are main causes of this perception of officials. People from the mainstream society cannot imagine the distinct identity beyond the male and female dichotomy. The study findings explored that all of the government are the mainstream society. The findings revealed from the official perspective that the Hijra people are abnormal,
mentally sick, deviant, immoral, deceitful, insane, annoying and even disabled in terms of sexuality and genitally handicapped. The study findings also shown from the government official context that the Hijra are aggressive, manipulative, goonda for collecting money from bus, train, shops in the Bazaar by force. These sorts of prejudices of government officials are embedded in their mindset. So, these sorts of negative connotations of the government officials think to be unacceptable issues which are regarded by various attributes that are reflected in the negative image of Hijra people. Therefore, the attitudes and prejudices of the government officials are reflected in their cognitive orientation and the Hijra people are excluded and discriminated from their rights like employment rights in the formal sector.

4.5 A Case of Employment Initiative for Hijra in 2014

4.5.1 Brief Description of Government Employment Initiative in 2014

In November 2014, with this recognition, the government had taken some initiatives to make sure the overall welfare of the Hijra people addressing for promoting the education, housing, health and employment rights. Apart from the official recognition, the government had taken some initiatives to ensure their education, rehabilitation and social security, and funds for scholarship for the Hijra children, life-skill training, financial condition and social security, and old-age allowance for the 50 and above (“Living Standard Development Project”, 15 July 2018).

After the recognition of Transgender Hijra as “Third Gender”, the Ministry of Social Welfare of Bangladesh has taken different initiatives for the betterment of the lives of Hijra community. In December 2014, Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh took an initiative for inclusion of Hijra population in governmental employment sector. The Social Welfare Ministry invited Hijra to apply for governmental job in different sectors. The positions were low-level of government jobs like peon, gourd and cleaners for 14 posts in Schools, orphanages and daycare centers. It was like a pilot project for mainstreaming Hijra people in the government level. That was the first initiative for providing jobs in
the Bangladeshi history. Around forty Hijra applicants applied for this invitation and maintained examination procedures. They had been primarily selected for those posts. For the first time, the transgender Hijra had been welcomed for empowerment and mainstreaming in formal sectors for employment. But things did not go well from the start. They had to face a lot of difficulties after the initial selection. One of the main processes of medical examination was to identify the authentic Hijra identity.

Regarding the employment initiative, some of the victims of that employment program had been asked about their experiences. One of Hijra victim participant shared her experience that…..

It was a happy moment for us because the government took this initiative for us. We had been shortlisted for interviewing. The total numbers of shortlisted applicants were 12. Actually we were 12 applicants who faced the ‘Interview’ and ‘Medical Test’. That was a bitter experience of my life. (IDI with Hijra Victim, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka).

4.5.2 Mandatory Medical Checkup for Conforming Hijra Identity

For identifying the Hijra people, the government officials think that medical examination is mandatory for government job and also identifying real Hijra. On January 27, 2015, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had to be sent a memorandum request “those necessary steps are taken to identify authentic Hijra by conducting a through medical check-up.” Actually the memo did not clarify or delineate Hijra or indicate any specific instructions about the procedures by which medical examiners were to identify “authentic Hijra” leaving the order open for interpretation and abuse (HRW, 2016, p.17).

One of the Hijra victims participant explained her experiences that..

We had been called for medical examination in the Dhaka Medical College. Then we went to medical college for our health checkup. But by the name of medical test, we had been got naked us in front of guard, cleaners and cook. First when I went to the hospital, they said to
me, stand up, and then again they said for taking everything off. We hesitated and told, in front of all of these people. They replied, you have to do this because you came here to take the test. We agreed and said, all right. We took off all of our clothes. (IDI with Hijra Victim, 8th May 2019, Posthokhola Slum, Dhaka)

Another respondent expressed her experiences that….

It was really embarrassed because they touched our sensitive body parts. They took off our clothes and touched our sensitive organ, chest and back, belly and even our penis. When they held my penis, and loudly said no, no, you are male. What type of Hijra you are? Is it a medical test for health checkup? They assumed that a Hijra would be like a woman and a Hijra would have the same features as a woman. (IDI with Hijra Victim, 8th May 2019, Shampur Slum, Dhaka)

Regarding this case, one of the Hijra leaders reported her opinion that…

That was extremely unjust. You cannot see me until I give you permission. But without my permission you got me naked in front of everyone and touched my sensitive organ in a very ugly manner. Finally the doctor said, You are male. You have to understand this matter. You get out from my room. After that incident, some victim just left this country. Even among them, three victims were going to commit suicide. So, the doctors finally said, you are not Hijra, you are men. Therefore, we were stigmatized and we did not get our government jobs. (KII with Hijra Leader, 7th May 2019, Mogbazzar Slum, Dhaka)

4.5.3 Encountering Harassment and Discriminations in the Employment Initiative

Most of the Hijra applicants were encountered harassment and discriminated in the ‘Interview Session’ and ‘Medical Test’. They were encountered
through the approaches, body languages and verbal language by the interview board members. There was no gender experts in that interview committee. They faced a lot of unusual and offensive questions from the interview board. There were huge misperceptions about this Hijra people.

One of the victims explained the interview situation that….

One of the board members asked me, “When you come to the formal interview, you want to seem beautiful and good-looking. Then he asked again, “why did you come like very informal way, why did you put so much makeup? If you want to do the job in the government office, you have to wear pant and cut off your hair. I replied, okay if I get the job, I will do everything. (IDI with Hijra Victim, 8th May 2019, Mogbazaar Slum, Dhaka)

The study explored that the identification instrument of Hijra identity is the medical examination. The study findings also found that the Hijra identification is based on the materiality of body. The study findings also claimed that the Hijra people maintained all of the procedure of that employment initiative but they had been identified as fake Hijra. The medical examination mentioned that all were male. The medical examination was carried out by the materiality of body not on ‘self-feeling or self-determination’ or the psychology and gender diversity. Most of the government officials think that for identifying Hijra people, medical check-up is the instrument for justifying ‘Authentic Hijra’.

One of the government officials said about this matter…

We took a great initiative for mainstreaming government job for the wellbeing of Hijra people but by the medical test, they had been identified as fake Hijra. They all were male. Actually they all are fraud. (KII with Government Official of Department of Social Service, 7th May 2019, Agargoan, Dhaka).
4.5.4 Misperception regarding Hijra Gender Identity

Misperception is one of the reasons for excluding Hijra job in the formal sector. The Hijra candidates fulfilled the requirements and maintained most of procedures of these jobs. But finally, they did not get their jobs. One of the Hijra victim participants explained that why they did not get the job…..

How would government give us jobs? Because they are just watching the surface of our bodies that are approved as (a) male but they never try to understand what I feel from my soul. So, whenever the government will not be clear about our Hijra identity, they cannot engage with the mainstream society. Again they will make the same mistake if it goes for the medical test. By the medical test, it would be found again, they are male because they do not have female vagina actually. Through this process, the Hijra people will be excluded for their job rights. (IDI with Hijra Victim, 9th May 2019, Ganderia Slum, Dhaka).

Hijra employment initiative in the formal sector was a remarkable and historical moment for the Hijra people in Bangladesh. It was a pilot project for mainstreaming job in the government sector. But there was a huge knowledge gap of the government officials regarding the Hijra identity. 12 Hijra applicants fulfilled the requirement of those jobs. But they were discriminated and stigmatized several times for the total employment appointment process. In the viva board, they were verbally insulted through different type offensive and very embarrassing questions. They were finally selected for circulated job in the government jobs. After that they had been sent to Dhaka Medical College for mandatory health checkup. In the name of medical examination, they were harassed, encountered and discriminated and even they had been violated of their human rights. After going to the Medical College, they understood that they would be examined for identifying for ‘Authentic Hijra’. So, they were encountered in every stage under medical test conditions. Basically, the government official had zero understanding about Hijra identity like who are Hijra, how hijra identity develops, what are the basic ideas or characteristics of Hijra. That’s
why; the government official took the decision for identifying the authentic *Hijra*. So, there were huge misperceptions regarding this distinct *Hijra* people. Finally, medical report was negative for the selected 12 *Hijra* candidates. The medical report published that they were not real *Hijra* but they all are men who tried to claim themselves as *Hijra*. 
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The study is mainly focused on the challenges of right to employment of Transgender *Hijra* people through the policy analysis in the formal sector of Bangladesh. There are some specific investigations of this study which are: what are the existing policies on access to right to employment in the formal sector job? What are the impacts of those policies on access to employment of *Hijra* in the formal sector job? Why those policies are failed to promote the employment rights of *Hijra* in the formal sector job?

In the discussion section, this chapter will analyze and discuss on the basis of major findings. The discussion part has been explored and categorized into three major factors which are as follows…..

5.1 Institutional Factors

Institutional factors are one of the challenges of ensuring the employment rights of transgender *Hijra* in the formal sector in Bangladesh. Institutional factors encompass the gap of the proper employment policy formulation of *Hijra* people, the discriminatory practices of the constitutional law and the international conventions and covenants, the gap of the proper *Hijra* identification policy formulation.

Proper employment policy is inevitable for *Hijra* people’s mainstreaming job in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The study findings explored that no employment policy had been prepared for the *Hijra* people. The study revealed that the government had only officially declared *Hijra* people as a *Hijra* sex and Third gender in the gazette. *Hijra* recognition declaration was the most significant event of *Hijra* people in Bangladesh. The study also found that it was the only one sentence of the declaration. It was not the complete recognition of *Hijra* identity as a third gender. After this declaration, *Hijra* identity was supposed to be included in the national
identity card (NID) and passport beside the male and female category but still it is not established in the legal documents. The study also asserted that there was no clarification regarding the employment rights of Hijra in the gazette.

There are some policy documents which have been reviewed for identifying the gap of Hijra employment policy in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The documents are Implementation policy of Livelihood Development of Hijra, 2013, Department of Social Services of Ministry of Social Welfare; Citizen Charter of Department of Social Services of Ministry of Social Welfare; Bangladesh Labor Policy, 2012 of Ministry of Labor and Employment and Hijra Declaration Gazette of Ministry of Social Welfare. Every policy had been constructed on the basis of male and female category. In the Bangladesh Labor policy, besides the male and female category had been focused or emphasized to create the opportunities and made sure of the discrimination free working environment for indigenous people, ethnic minorities, Dalits, physically and mentally challenged people, peripheral and vulnerable people (Article 4, sub-section 4.02, Bangladesh Labor Policy 2012). But there is no reflection of Hijra employment issues in those policies. So, the existing policy documents are not effective for engaging the formal sector job of Hijra people.

In spite of these above mentioned policies, the Ministry of Social Welfare formulated some policies on the basis of vulnerability of backward people such as National Disability Policy 1995 for disable people, National Older Person Policy 2013 for older people, National Women Development Policy 2011 for women, Children Act 2013 for children and Rights and Protection of Persons’ with Disabilities Act 2013. But still the government did not formulate any employment policy for mainstreaming Hijra employment in the formal sector although the government recognized them ‘Third Gender’ as an excluded and vulnerable group in Bangladesh.

On the other hand, there are some existing constitutional laws and international standards which are not effectively practiced for ensuring the employment rights of Hijra people. The international mechanisms are covenants of ICESCR and ICCPR for protection of human rights which are ratified by Bangladesh in 1998 and 2000 respectively. Even the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states Article 23 that ‘everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable condition of work without any discrimination’. According to the
constitution of Bangladesh, Article 29(1) clearly states that ‘equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment will be ensured. No citizen will be discriminated on ground only religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth in respect of any employment in the republic’. The constitution has also ensured Article 20(1) that ‘work as a right, a duty and a matter of honor for every citizen who is capable of working’. According to Article 6 the ICESCR, ‘the state recognizes the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his or her living by work’. These sorts of laws and convention are not practiced for the right to employment of Hijra people in Bangladesh.

Government official’s perception about the Hijra identity is the biggest challenge to mainstream job in the formal sector. The study findings pointed that Hijra had been officially defined and represented in the legal documents as ‘jouno o lingo protibondhi’, literally sexually and genitally handicapped. The study presented a remarkable case for Hijra people’s job inclusion in the formal sector. The employment initiative in the government sector was taken in 2014 and every Hijra eligible candidates were selected for the final appointment. But eventually the government officials decided to send them to Dhaka Medical College for identifying the “Authentic Hijra”. The medical test result published later and declared that all of the Hijra candidates are fake Hijra/ all are male. So, the findings also claimed that the official’s perception level of Hijra identity is not clear and recognizing process of identifying Hijra is also not clear from the state’s perspective. These sorts of thinking are excluding from the formal sector job of Hijra people in Bangladesh.

Hijra refers to culturally acceptable socio-sexual groups of people of the Indian subcontinent (i.e., India, Bangladesh and Pakistan) who do not conform to conventional notions of male-female gender dichotomy but combine or move between the two (Khan et al. 2009, p.441). Hijra claim them being “neither male nor female”. Many scholars argued that Hijra constitute a “third sex/third gender” category (Nanda 1999; Reddy 2005). Article 16 under the ICCPR mentioned that “everyone shall have the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law”. According to the Indian Supreme Court, the court has recognized transgender people as a “third gender” through a ruling in April 2014. This ruling is historical and has very boldly stated that every human being has the right to choose a gender. The ruling also stated that
“recognition of transgender as a third gender is not a social or medical issue but a human rights issue” as “transgender are also citizens of India” and they must be “provided with equal opportunity to grow”. In 2015, according to Delhi High Court reinforced that, “Everyone has a fundamental right to be recognized in their gender” and that “gender identity and sexual orientation are fundamental to the right of self-determination, dignity and freedom.”

According to the definition of Yogyakarta Principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (2007, p.6), “gender identity is understood to refer to each person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms”. In the broader context, principles 3 of Yogyakarta principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (pp.11-12) again assert that:

*Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. Persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities shall enjoy legal capacity in all aspects of life. Each person’s self-defined sexual orientation and gender identity is integral to their personality and is one of the most basic aspects of self-determination, dignity and freedom. No one shall be forced to undergo medical procedures, including sex reassignment surgery, sterilization or hormonal therapy, as requirement for legal recognition of their gender identity. No status, such as marriage or parenthood, may be invoked as such to prevent the legal recognition of a person’s gender identity. No one shall be subjected to pressure or deny their sexual orientation or gender identity."

According to the Nepal Supreme Court, the definition of third gender is that the sole criterion for being legally recognized as Third Gender on documents and in government registers was an individual’s “Self-feeling”.
5.2 Factor of Social Prejudices

Prejudices against Hijra are one of the challenges to the mainstreaming of government job. The study findings stated through the officials perception that Hijra people are aggressive, manipulative, public sphere, goonda for collecting money from bus, train, shops in the market and of immoral personal. The findings also explored that Hijra people are abnormal, mentally sick, deviant, immoral, deceitful, insane, annoying, and disabled. These sorts of prejudices of government officials are embedded in their mindset. These sorts of negative connotations in the government officials and the mainstream society of Bangladesh think to be unacceptable issues which are considered by various attributes that are reflected in the negative image. These sorts of attitudes of Hijra are not accepted by the mainstream society based on the predominant hegemonic norms. So, the normative discourses of society always produce the binary thinking of human cognition. This dichotomous ideological mechanism functions through the norms and beliefs of the existing society. These binary norms are ‘normal vs abnormal’, ‘good vs deviant’, ‘male vs female’, ‘beautiful vs ugly’, and ‘superior vs inferior’, ‘sane vs insane, ‘Man vs Women’ and ‘Gender conformity vs Gender non-conformity’. Foucault argued (Skinner, 1985, p. 67) that a new regime of truth and power exercised through the disciplinary mechanisms the stipulation of norms for human behavior. Foucault also explained that the knowledge claim always try to establish the ‘normality’ of human norms which are reproduced and legitimated the rule of life. So, this pattern of binary thinking of society produce some discursive truths which always distinguish what is bad and good, what is normal and abnormal, what is acceptable and not acceptable, who is a Man and a Woman. And this way of thinking is very much related to the power relations.

Butler also mentions that “the normative society constitutes reality through language, gesture, and all manner of symbolic social agents” (Butler, 1988, pp.519-531). The general norms of society are sanctioned modes of behavior. The normative society not only identify people but also vocabulary, speech patterns, gestures, and behaviors, objects and activities as either ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’ is called gender typing (Waters & Ellis,1996,p.94). Gender stereotype are schemata about behavior that are perceived as typical of average or “normal” men and woman. Sometimes this stereotype thinking is positively associated with one is seen as negative or abnormal
attribute in another (Waters & Ellis, 1996, p.94). So, the Hijra identity is constructed and categorized as an abnormal and absurd identity in the government official’s perspective as well as in the mainstream society. This gender dichotomy not only resides in the general public; this notion of norms is equally embedded into the mindset of the mainstream cognition which is always excluded from the mainstream society.

5.3 Cultural and Religious Factors

Cultural and religious beliefs systems are also the important challenges of inclusion Hijra employment in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The cultural norm of the mainstream society is heteronormativity regarding sex. Heteronormativity is a belief that gender identity falls into a binary opposition between male and female, both of which are supposed to be heterosexual (Butler, 2004). The idea of heteronormativity arbitrarily creates the cultural norms and reality that supports the two gender existence of Bangladeshi society. There are two predominant normative thinking of gender which is based on the materiality of the body. Sex is always constructed by heterosexual pattern of attitude and reproductive functions in Bangladeshi society. The notion of normative pattern of gender is male and female category and this is the truth of gender construction of the mainstream Bangladeshi society. It always functions as binary mechanism through the cognitive orientation of human being. For the case of Transgender Hijra in Bangladesh, there is no gender conformity beyond the binary moral code. This gender existence is not normal but also deviant. Society does not accept this gender identity. The predominant norms existing in the Bangladeshi society have more or less always forced the Hijra to give up their families, as discrimination and abuse are common features in a Hijra life (Khan et al.2009, p.444).

It was revealed that the findings of the perception about Hijra of government officials were belonging to the normative form. The government officials claimed that it is not normal thing beyond male and female dichotomy. They also added that the religion would not support the different kind of identity except male and female category. They believed that it is not practically possible to think except only
male and female gender dichotomy. So, heteronormativity is an acceptance which is normally excluding the formal employment sector in Bangladesh.

5.4 Is State Class-Biased or Not?

The state has officially recognized Hijra people as a distinct identity group “Third Gender or Hijra Sex” beside the male and female dichotomy in 2014. After this recognition, almost 6 years had been gone but the State did not take significant initiative for engaging and including Hijra identity beside the male and female gender category in the legal official documents like passport, NID and Job circulations as well. The state did not take any remarkable steps after 2014 employment initiative which could not make sure about jobs for Hijra people.

The state did not publish the complete declaration gazette and did not formulate any Policies, Act, regulations and provisions for mainstreaming their employment rights in the formal sector. Even the state did not find out / explore why the mainstreaming employment initiative of formal sector job in Bangladesh in 2014 was failed to promote employment rights of Hijra people and what should be the next steps for ensuring their employment right in the formal sector.

So, for the above mentioned reasons behind the root causes, the state has a strong tendency to be class-biased regarding Hijra people in terms of gender identity.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research’s main investigation is to explore the major challenges of right to employment of Transgender Hijra people through the policy analysis in the formal sector of Bangladesh. This study revealed three kinds of challenges of employment of Hijra in the government sector in the broad context. The challenges are the institutional challenges which included absence of Hijra employment policy; discriminatory practices of established laws and ratified conversions and absence of proper Hijra recognizing policy. The other challenges are social prejudices against Hijra and existing cultural and religious norms of the mainstream society.

The government had officially declared the Hijra people as a third gender. But it was not the complete recognition of this distinct identity group. After this recognition, no employment policy of Hijra had been formulated and even the Hijra identity is still excluded from the legal documents like national identity card, passport and the job circulations of the formal and informal employment sector. The existing employment policy is based on the male and female category and some excluded group like indigenous people, ethnic minorities, dalits, physically and mentally challenged people, peripheral and vulnerable people [Article 4 sub-section 4.02 (4)]. But, Hijra as an excluded and one of the most vulnerable groups of Bangladesh, this group does not exist in this employment policy. The established laws and conventions are not functioning for ensuring their employment rights in the formal sector as a citizen of this state although the Article 29(1) clearly states that ‘equality of opportunity for all citizens in respect of employment will be ensured. No citizen will be discriminated on ground only religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth in respect of any employment in the republic’. The constitution has also ensured Article 20(1) that ‘work as a right, a duty and a matter of honor for every citizen who is capable of working’.
Hijra identity is still ambiguous and unclear from the state perspective and the mainstream point of view. In spite of their official recognition, Hijra identity crisis is still prevailing in the mainstream society and especially in the government officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare. Because of the lack of proper understanding of Hijra people, in 2014 the eligible Hijra candidates were excluded from the government employment of Bangladesh. In that case, they had been sent to medical test for identifying ‘Authentic Hijra’. And they were being harassed which violated their human rights in the name of medical examination. So, the medical test result was all fake Hijra and all men. The government did not follow any international mechanism for identifying the sexual minority group like Yogyakarta principles and ICCPR article 16. So, they were excluded from their employment because of identity crisis. After the recognition, no gender recognizing/identification policy had been formulated.

Prejudices against Hijra are also the challenges to mainstream of government job. The study explored through the officials lens that Hijra people are aggressive, goonda for collecting money from bus, train, shops in the market, immoral and also abnormal, mentally sick, deviant, immoral, deceitful, insane, annoying, and disabled. These sorts of prejudices of government officials are still embedded in their mindset. So, the government officials are not proactive for developing this group although they all are working in the “Livelihood Development Project of Hijra”. These sorts of negative connotations in the government officials are reflected in their basic rights. So, they are automatically excluded from their employment rights in the formal sector of Bangladesh.

Religious belief systems and cultural norms are one of the vibrant and significant challenges of right to employment of Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The majority people of Bangladesh are Muslims. Religious values and conservatism are the common norms of Bangladeshi people although the State was declared as a Secular State after its independence (Article 8, sub-section 1, Constitution of Bangladesh). According to Islam, transgender or LGBTQ people are not allowed as a different identity group. Islam does not support distinct gender identity group except the male and female category. Ichwan (2014. Pp. 204-205) clearly stated that Islam is the major contribution of the gender binary imposition in
not only the society but also in the government and heteronormativity within Islamic doctrine that patronizes the society to draw a strict gender binary division, which later institutionalized in state politics. The idea of heteronormativity arbitrarily creates the cultural norm that supports the two gender existence of Bangladeshi society. There are two predominant normative thinking of gender which is based on the materiality of body. The study shows that the perception about Hijra of government officials was belonging to the normative pattern of gender. The research also explored from the official perspective that the religion does not support the different kind of gender identity except male and female. They believed that it is not practically possible to think except only male and female gender dichotomy because of the prevailing religious conservatism in the mainstream society. So, the cultural and religious beliefs of government officials are indirectly affecting to the Hijra identity and which is normally excluded from the formal employment sector in Bangladesh.

The study suggests some recommendations on the basis of research findings for promoting the employment rights of Transgender Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh. The recommendations are as follows:

- The consolidated employment policy for Hijra should be addressed and the existing policy should be amended. The Hijra employment process in the formal sector like employment rules, regulations and way of mechanisms should be included into the existing policy for ensuring the Hijra employment rights in the formal sector of Bangladesh.

- The Hijra recognition declaration gazette should be published and implemented as a law from the Supreme Court. The recognition declaration should be clearly mentioned regarding employment process of Hijra in the formal and informal sector.

- The ‘Quota Scheme’ of Hijra employment in the formal sector should be addressed and included into government service and employment policy. In the existing quota scheme, there are some vulnerable groups which are included or existed in the Bangladesh public service commission. For promoting their job rights, it should be introduced and implemented.

- The gender recognizing/identification policy of Hijra should be constructed and prepared properly on the basis of international standard principles like
Yogyakarta principles on the Application of International Human Rights Law in
relation to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, article 16 of ICCPR, Indian Hijra
recognition principles and Nepal Hijra recognition bill. For identifying Hijra identity,
Hijra leaders, gender experts, psychologists and medical expert should be included for
that committee.

- The state should make sure the implementation of constitutional laws
and specifically articles 20(1), 27, 28(1), 29(1) and article 19 (1) and ratified
international covenants like article 23 under UDHR, article 6(1) under ICCPR and
articles 6 and 7 under ICESCR for protecting the employment rights of Hijra in
Bangladesh.

- The Hijra recognition declaration gazette should be implemented in the
legal documents as a distinct identity group on the NID (National Identity Card),
Passport, in the formal sector job circulations beyond male and female gender identity.

- National Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Social Welfare,
Ministry of Labor and Employment and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
should be worked together to make a draft for legal recognition on the following of
rights-based approach so that this excluded Hijra group would be identified through
the clear perception and respectful way.

- For clear perception of Hijra identity, some sensitivity workshop and
gender/identity recognizing policy training should be arranged for the Officials and
staffs who are working in the Livelihood Development Project of Hijra in the
Department of Social Service under the Ministry of Social Welfare so that the officials
can get the transparent perception regarding this group.

- Religious leaders (Imam, Mowlana, Leaders of Islamic foundations,
Father of Church, Clergy) should make clarity regarding the Transgender Identity
group based on religious fatwa and should come forward to promote their rights on the
basis of human being perspective.

- The state has to make sure the Hijra people’s education into the
mainstream society so that the Hijra students can get equal facilities to study within
the mainstream students. Therefore, they will be eligible candidates for applying in
any kind of government job.
The National Human Rights Commission should be more concerned in fulfilling their employment rights. NHRC also should investigate why the existing national laws and international covenants concerning employment rights are not implemented. NHRC also should take some initiatives like awareness program, meeting, symposium, and seminar for ensuring normalized Hijra identity and their rights in the society.

The state should implement the ‘Third Gender’ Hijra recognition declaration and constitutional commitment of all citizens successfully for ensuring their rights. The state also should take some initiatives for normalizing the transgender Hijra identity to the mainstream people. For normalizing this identity group, the state should take some programs in national and grassroots level such as awareness program for Hijra identity, seminar, training programs for developing this group. The state also should take some initiatives for changing the mindset of mainstream people who cannot imagine without the normative construction of gender.
BIOGRAPHY

NAME
Md. Liton Hossen

DATE OF BIRTH
1 February 1983

PLACE OF BIRTH
Jessore, Bangladesh

INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED
Dhaka University, 2002-2003, Bachelor of Social Science (Anthropology), Master of Social Science (Anthropology) 2006-2007, Dhaka University

SCHOLARSHIP RECEIVED
European Commission Scholarship

RESEARCH GRANTS
No Research Grants

HOME ADDRESS
C/O: Md. Gohor Molla, Village: Potingali, Post: Vekutia, Police Station: Jessore Sador, Post Code: 7400, Bangladesh

EMPLOYMENT ADDRESS
Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh

PUBLICATION / PRESENTATION
“Challenges of right to Employment of Transgender Hijra in the formal sector of Bangladesh”. Seminar in the Human Rights and Democratization in the Asia Pacific, UGM, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
REFERENCES


People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Available at <https://msw.gov.bd/site/page/a3498c96-c94a-4fba-9518-13497bdfb46f%E0%A6%B9%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9C%E0%A7%9C%E0%A6%B%E0%A6%9C%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%97%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%B7%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%A0%E0%A7%80> [Accessed on 14 September 2018].

“12 Men Pretend to be Hijras to Attain Government Jobs”, (“wnRov †m‡R 12 cyiæl PvKwi Ki‡Z †M‡jbÓ) Prothom Alo, July 2, 2015.


