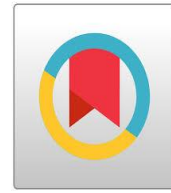


Poverty, Exploitation, and Survival: The Reality of Migrant Workers in Informal Sector of Bangladesh



Kemiskinan, Eksploitasi, dan Bertahan Hidup: Realitas Pekerja Migran di Sektor Informal Bangladesh

Md. Zahidul Islam^{1*}

¹ Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Science, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

¹ Nilkhet Rd, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh

mdzahidul-2018223165@soc.du.ac.bd^{1*}

Corresponding author: mdzahidul-2018223165@soc.du.ac.bd^{1*}

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Keywords
 Informal Labor;
 Migration;
 Poverty;
 Exploitation;

ABSTRACT

Child violence is a critical issue within the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, requiring a collaborative approach among agencies for effective management. This study examines the collaborative governance processes implemented by the South Sumatra Provincial Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, the South Sumatra Regional Police, the Class I Palembang Correctional Service, and the Class I Palembang Child Correctional Institution. Utilizing a qualitative methodology, this research gathered primary and secondary data through observation, interviews, and documentation. Analysis based on the collaboration process theory by Ansell & Gash (2008) indicates that collaborative governance has been effective, characterized by face-to-face dialogue, trust-building, joint commitment, and shared understanding, as well as the achievement of interim results. However, improvements are needed in inter-agency communication and the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for handling child violence cases, to strengthen the collaborative process and achieve sustainable outcomes.

Kata Kunci
 Pekerja Informal;
 Migrasi;
 Kemiskinan;
 Eksploitasi;

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki hubungan dua arah antara migrasi dan status sosial ekonomi pekerja informal di Dhaka, Bangladesh. Penelitian ini, yang berfokus pada isu dan pengalaman 100 pekerja migran di sektor informal ibu kota, menggunakan teknik kualitatif dan kuantitatif yang luas untuk menganalisis tantangan dan kerentanan, termasuk kemiskinan, eksploitasi, dan ketiadaan jaring pengaman sosial di antara para pekerja ini. Penelitian ini mengandalkan teori kelas Marxist dan konsep ruang serta budaya dalam kota menurut Weber untuk mengkritik manifestasi struktural eksploitasi dalam ekonomi informal. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pekerjaan informal memiliki upah rendah, jam kerja panjang, dan minimnya penyediaan layanan esensial. Penelitian ini juga menganalisis bagaimana pendidikan, keterampilan, dan gender membentuk pengalaman pekerja informal, mengungkapkan bahwa pekerja perempuan lebih terdampak oleh tantangan dan diskriminasi. Selain itu, penelitian ini menilai bagaimana migrasi memengaruhi keberadaan pekerja informal dengan menguraikan bahaya mobilitas dan kehidupan yang berat di dalam kota. Penelitian ini diakhiri dengan saran kebijakan untuk menangani masalah terkait marjinalisasi sosial ekonomi lebih lanjut dari pekerja sektor informal, kondisi kerja mereka, dan langkah tambahan untuk mendorong kesetaraan gender.

Article History
 Send 9th October 2024
 Review 18th November 2024
 Accepted 25th December 2024

Copyright ©2025 [Jurnal Aristo \(Social, Politic, Humaniora\)](#)
 This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-NC-SA](#) license.
 Akses artikel terbuka dengan model [CC-BY-NC-SA](#) sebagai lisensinya.



Introduction

The informal sector in Bangladesh is an essential but undervalued part of the economy known to involve disadvantaged persons in activities aimed at their survival. Since the informal sector has grown significantly, it has attained a level of significance comparable to that of the formal sector in cities such as Dhaka (Startup & Startup, 2021). This study aims to assess the socioeconomic condition of informal-sector migrants, their roles, and how migration affects their socioeconomic status. In countries with high population growth rates and problems in agricultural markets, the informal sector acts as a buffer zone, absorbing excess labor (Development Bank, 2010). Most young people aged between 20 and 34 move towards informal jobs in urban areas, such as dishwashers or cleaners, which eventually undervalue productivity. Even though there is much seasonal movement, especially during farming, those facing difficult situations have migrated from rural areas to metropolitan cities looking for jobs in the trade or service industries. This labor is often found in small businesses with limited access to formal resources (Startup & Startup, 2021).

Over the last 20 years, there have been substantial changes in Asian international migration patterns, particularly in temporary labor movements. Cross-country research conducted in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Vietnam, and China has revealed that almost 40% of rural Bangladeshi families dispatch adult members to metropolitan regions for employment. Migration is crucial in some areas, with more than 80% of family income originating from external sources, even though it entails significant expenses and hazards (Bangasser, 2000). The Bureau of Manpower, Employment, and Training (BMET) stated in a report that 377,591 expatriates from Bangladesh left the country for employment in 2006. This was an increase of approximately 50% compared to the previous year. This figure rose to 607,798 individuals by 2012, with the majority being employed in the UAE. Then, in the first half of 2013 alone, 208,340 crossed over to other countries, with Oman audibly pulling 34 percent (Islam, 2023). Recent research suggests that emigrants may have certain economic benefits for their home nations, such as improving global labor coordination, improving local job conditions, and causing economic upsurges through remittances, including returnees (Harun et al., 2020). However, it is also essential that further studies be conducted to explore how these migrations have affected national sovereignty and political stability. At present, stress is mostly focused on handling immigrants in receiving countries, instead of understanding the broad political effects of migration (Mujeri & Mujeri, 2021). The International Labour Organization (ILO) advanced the idea of the informal sector in its Kenya mission report in 1972, forming part of global dialogue (White & Lindstrom, 2005).

Several characteristics differentiate the informal sector, which includes utilizing local resources, family-owned enterprises, small-scale operations, labor-intensive technologies, and unregulated markets(Wichai Srikam, n.d.)

The ILO and ICFTU classified informal sector labor into three groups: self-employing micro-entrepreneurs, self-employed workers, and those who work for others(Bangasser, 2000). This classification system illustrates the diversity and growth of informal sectors in urban labor markets. The four distinct categories of informal sector employment are temporary wage, concealed wage, dependent, and genuine self-employment(White & Lindstrom, 2005). In so doing, it presents an all-encompassing structure for understanding the various forms of informal work. Furthermore, from the perspective of geographers, migration is defined as a discontinuous movement or permanent shift in the residential location of an individual or group. Therefore, this definition goes beyond just physical departure and includes settlement in a new area and the reshaping of social networks. Through discussions of residential modifications, community integration, and the transformation of social systems and environments, this concept is key to defining migration (Parker, 2015).

According to Harun et al. (2020) and Islam (2023), the present study elucidates the migration and labor market formation mechanisms based on statistics on the rise of expatriate workers from Bangladesh for overseas employment (for instance, the numbers increased from 377,591 in 2006 to 607,798 in 2012) and the effects of such emigrants in terms of remittances.

This study investigates the complex situation of living and working in an informal economy by describing the adverse conditions faced by migrant workers and reflecting on their perspectives. These factors combine to make the analysis a persuasive study of the socio-economic condition of informal-sector migrants more so than the whole of Bangladesh's urban labor markets and migration dynamics.

Method

This study applies a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both forms of work to investigate the conditions of migrants employed in the informal sector of Bangladesh (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This degenerative strategy aims to tackle on the one hand the migration theory and socioeconomic situation of informal workers. Qualitative studies focus on narratives about an individual's experiences and viewpoints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011),

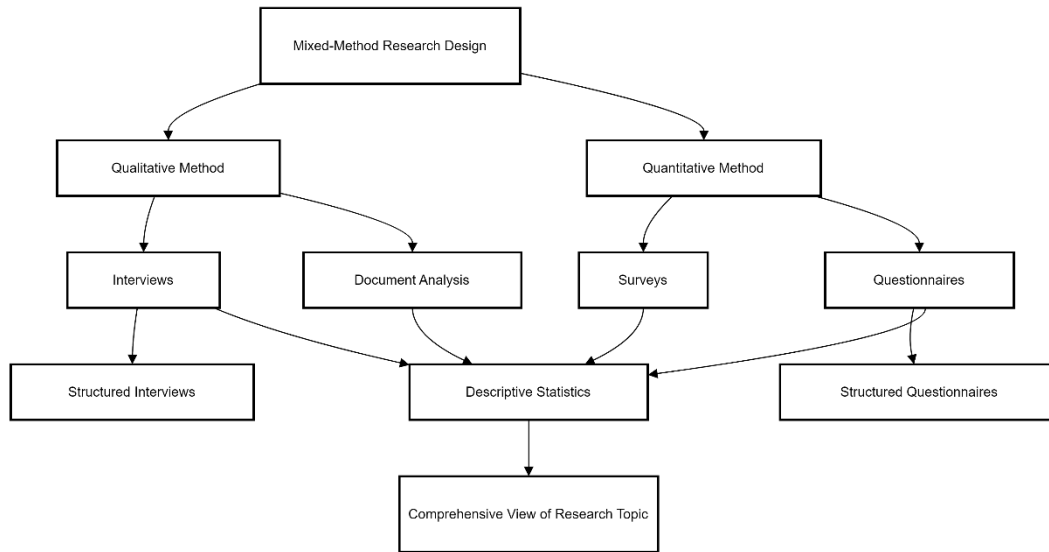
whereas quantitative studies can assert one's self across a wider demographic and obtain statistical evidence for one's claims (Bryman, 2016).

This study focuses on particular regions in Uttara, Dhaka, such as Rajlokkhi, the Azampur Super Market, and House Building. These areas have been selected because of the high presence of migrant and informal workers, which guarantees the acquisition of pertinent and credible information.

The target group of this research study consists of all the migratory informal workers living in Dhaka and those that fall within the specific areas targeted, which, in this case, is focused on Uttara. Inclusion in the study was determined by prior engagement in activities in the informal sector of the economy, such as street vending, pulling rickshaws, working in hotels and workshops, housekeeping, and construction work. This selection seeks to depict the informal employment that cuts across many sectors.

The study employed a random sampling technique, from which a sample of 100 respondents was drawn. This sample size was settled in order to provide a better comprehension of the informal labor population within Uttara, taking into account more practical limitations such as the power of the statistics, the size of the effects, and the resources available. (Kumar, 2018). There were specific requirements for potential participants that included, but were not limited to, a person aged between eighteen and sixty-five years old, a recent migrant worker in the informal sector, and the ability and willingness to participate. To protect the integrity of the research, the subjects who held formal jobs, were non-migrants, or were incapacitated to give consent were eliminated.

The key constructs for this research are poverty, exploitation, strategies of survival, socioeconomic level, job satisfaction, and quality of life. The content of poverty and socioeconomic status was measured using ordinal and interval scales in conducting the study (Johnson and Christensen (2024), while the aspect of exploitation was evaluated using ordinal and nominal scales. The other two variables, survival strategy and quality of life, were measured using nominal scales and qualitative questions. Job satisfaction was gauged using a Likert scale (Likert, 1932). An overall picture of the issues confronted by migrant workers within the informal sector of Bangladesh was formed, owing to the combination of extensive qualitative insight and quantitative data offered by the study.



Source: Developed by Author

Figure 1. Representation of the Mixed-Method Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method research design that integrated qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. Qualitative methods, including interviews and focus groups, provide depth in understanding individual experiences, whereas quantitative methods, such as surveys, allow for broader generalizations. The data collection tools included document analysis, questionnaires, and structured interviews. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately using descriptive statistics to capture a comprehensive view of the research topic (Figure 1).

For the purpose of conducting the research, data collection methods were limited to two key approaches: surveys and in-depth interviews (Patton, 2002). The surveys were conducted using a standardized questionnaire that contained questions for which there were fixed responses (DeVellis, 2021). These were researcher-administered in Bengali to guarantee their correctness and fullness, and the researcher personally monitored the execution of the process to eliminate any variations.

Furthermore, qualitative in-depth interviews were carried out with the aid of pretested structured questionnaires that included both open- and closed-ended questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Similar to the surveys, these interviews were conducted face-to-face in Bangla, which helped the researcher achieve uniformity and obtain exhaustive answers to structured questions.

Quantitative means of data collection with respect to the study participants were scrutinized to assess and make projections regarding the tendencies present in the sample or

population studied. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequency and percentage describe a number of critical variables (Field, 2013).

The analytical approach was manifested in several stages, as all data were distilled into meaningful conclusions. In this case, the qualitative analysis was performed applying thematic analysis to identify themes and patterns in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, the procedure involved becoming familiar with the data through several readings of the interview transcripts and field notes. Extraneous ideas were eliminated, and phrases and concepts subsumed under appropriate coded categories were then organized into themes.

Various measures were taken to ensure the dependability of the study and findings. For instance, credibility was enhanced by the high level of involvement of participants and the triangulation of methods for data collection, such as surveys, interviews, and observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member verification was conducted to allow participants to assess and validate the findings for accuracy. Moreover, debriefing sessions with peers were conducted to reduce the effects of researcher bias and increase the credibility of interpretations. All of these strategies were necessary to confirm the validity of the study and its findings.

The research team perceived that they might have been biased or had preconceived ideas that affected the study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The motivation for this study was based on personal and professional reasons. The researcher had previously met and interacted with moving populations, hence gaining great understanding and concern in trying to figure out their socioeconomic struggles (Berger, 2015). The study team aimed to improve the scant information concerning the informal labor market in Bangladesh, particularly focusing on how migration affects informal workers in the country. These motivations informed the research questions, design, and analysis of the findings; hence, their presentation is for purposes of clarity and relevance to the study.

Result and Discussion

Educational Level

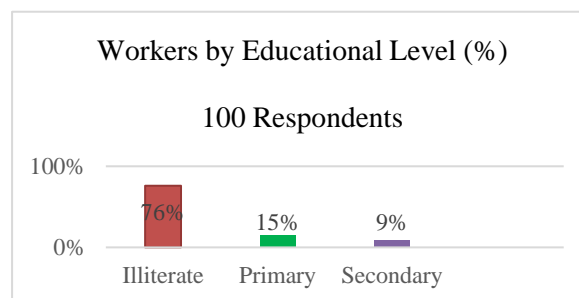


Figure 2. Distribution of Workers by Education Level

Figure 2 displays the distribution of workers based on their level of education: 76 were illiterate, 15 had completed primary school, and nine had completed secondary education. Six of the respondents who could not read or write were female. Illiteracy is primarily caused by poverty. Arshad, a respondent and fruit seller, held his father responsible.

Challenges in Education

The educational backgrounds of workers significantly influence their employment challenges. The data revealed that individuals with higher academic qualifications face more frequent work crises. This trend can be attributed to the broader range of employment opportunities accessible to those with advanced education, which exposes them to more job-market challenges. Conversely, workers with lower educational attainment encounter fewer crises as their employment options are limited.

Age Distribution

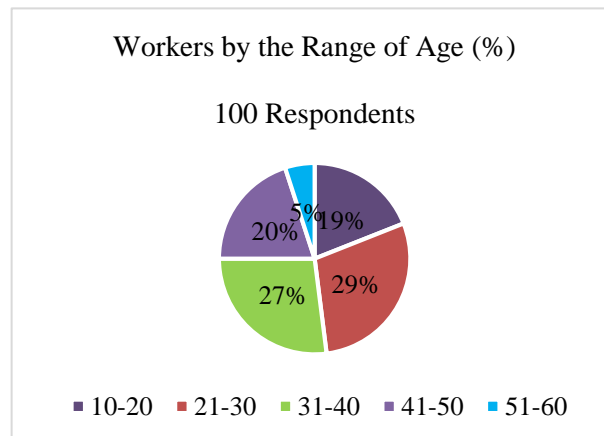


Figure 3. Distribution of Workers by the Range of Age

Figure 3 indicates that individuals of all ages were engaged in the informal sector. The respondents' ages ranged from 10 to 60. Because of their impoverished circumstances, the individuals in question have been compelled to engage in informal employment.

Status of Accommodation

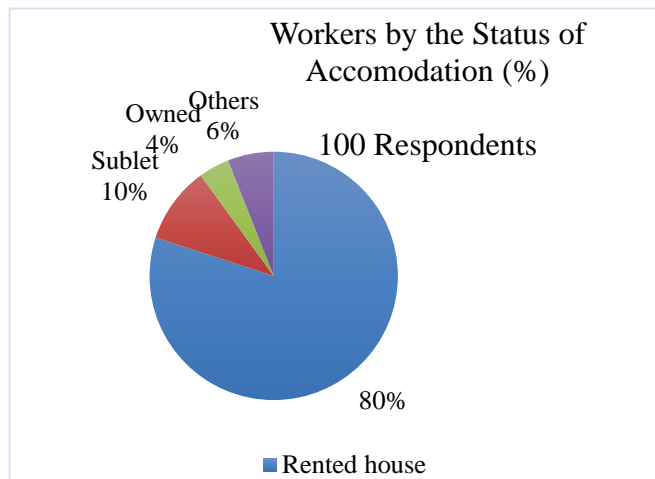


Figure 4. Distribution of Workers by the Status of Accommodation

Figure 4 indicates that 80 of the 100 respondents resided in rented housing, 10 resided in sublets, four resided in their residences, and six resided with their family and relatives.

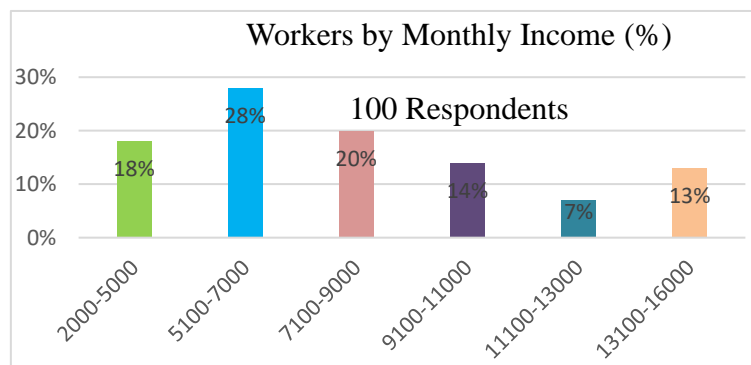


Figure 5. Distribution of Workers by Monthly Income

Monthly Income

The respondents' monthly salary varied between BDT 2000 and BDT 16000, while their daily income ranged from BDT 150 to BDT 500. Most workers in Dhaka struggle to generate a satisfactory income because of the exorbitant cost of living, which includes the exorbitant prices of vital goods that pose several difficulties in their everyday lives (**Figure 5**).

Working Hours

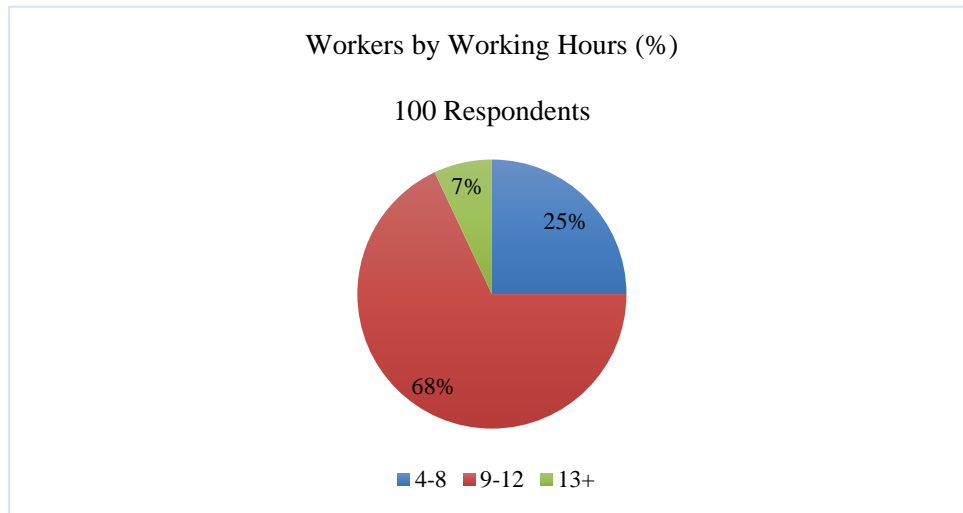


Figure 6. Distribution of Workers by Working Hours

Most employees work 11-14 hours daily, frequently seven days a week, with to 1-2 days off monthly. Self-employed individuals are granted additional vacation times, while under-employed individuals are given less. They departed from their residences in the morning and returned at night (**Figure 6**).

Gender Differences with Duration of Work

The duration of work varied significantly between male and female laborers. Male workers typically work approximately 12 hours per day, whereas female laborers usually work 8-10 hours daily. This disparity occasionally results in insufficient leisure time for female workers to fulfill their familial obligations.

Monthly Diet

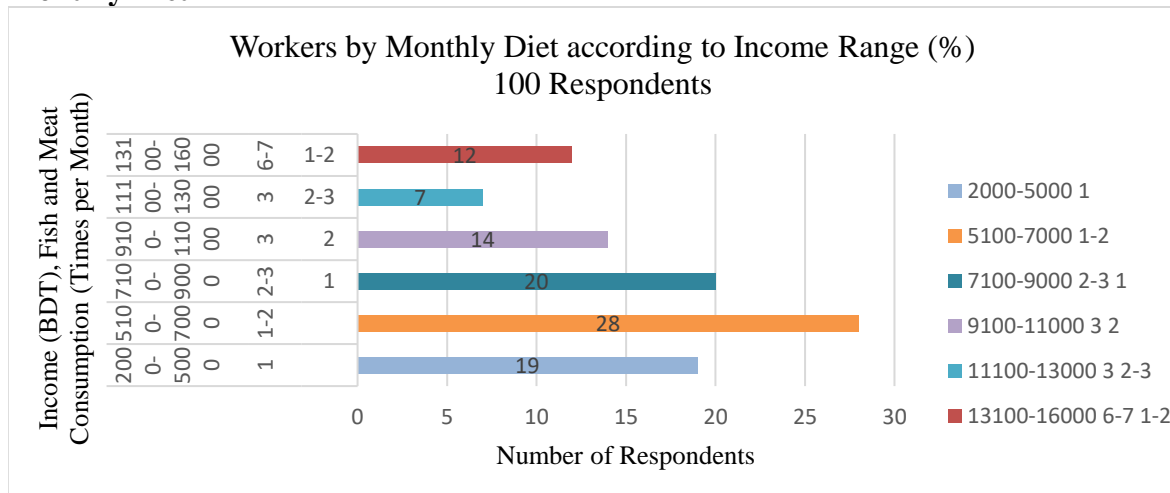


Figure 7. Distribution of Workers by Monthly Diet according to Income Range

Individuals from the working class exhibit limited food intake (as seen in **Figure 7**), mainly rice and vegetables, and seldom eat meat or fish, primarily because of elevated pricing. Due to financial constraints, they are unable to purchase healthy meals, depend on cooked ("Vaji") or mashed vegetables ("Vorta") and are unable to acquire pulses ("Dal").

Diet Issues

Dietary challenges are common in manual workers. Issues such as difficulty with mastication due to dental problems or regurgitation from unfamiliar foods are prevalent. Selective feeding and food rejection exacerbate these challenges, affecting the health and well-being of workers.

Market Area for Routine Purchase

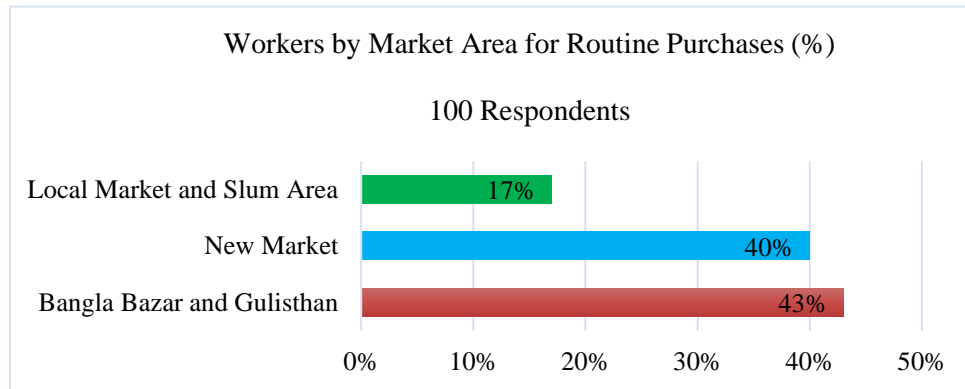


Figure 8. Distribution of Workers by Market Area for Routine Purchases

Informal laborers often receive supplies, clothing, and other goods from local marketplaces for cost-effective pricing. The survey revealed that 43% of participants patronized Bangla Bazar and Gulisthan, 40% patronized New Market, and 17% patronized local markets and neighborhoods (**Figure 8**).

Health Care Facility

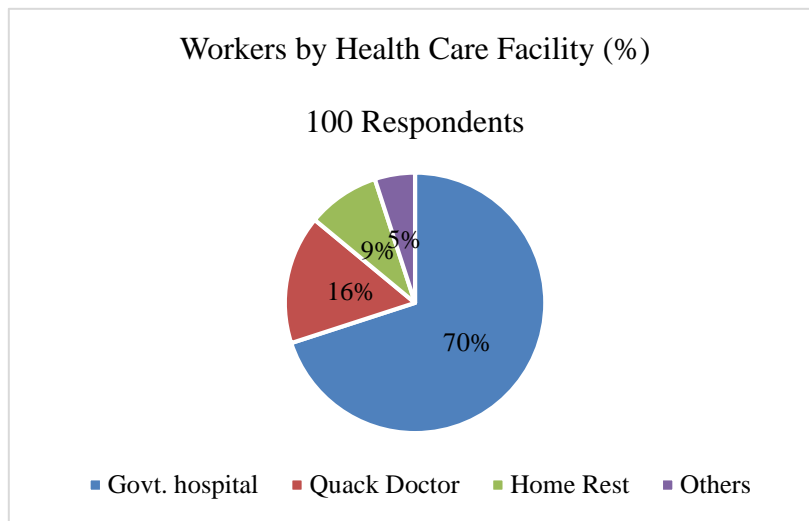


Figure 9. Distribution of Workers by Health Care Facility

Up to 70% of the participants in Dhaka opted for government medical care facilities. While they sometimes received free treatment, they encountered instances of abuse. A considerable proportion of the participants sought guidance from untrained pharmacy practitioners or returned to their communities when unwell. All participants used allopathic medicine and engaged in extended work hours with little interval, with only 66.67% of their permitted monthly vacations (Figure 9).

Media Usages

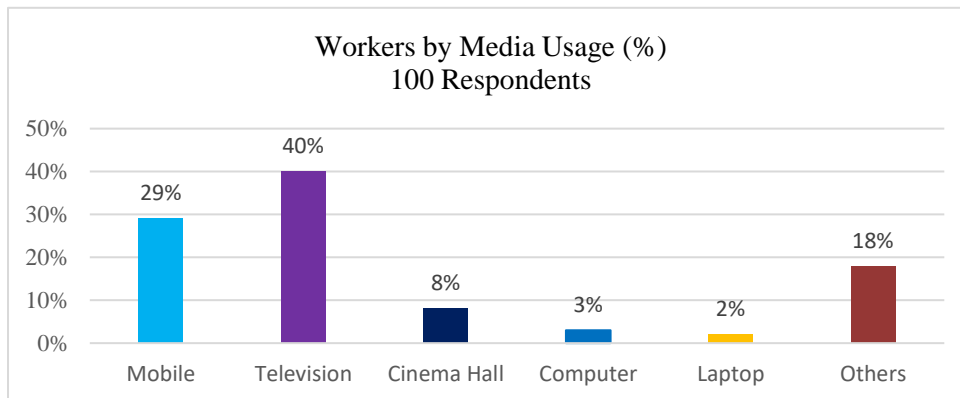


Figure 10. Distribution of Workers by Media Usage

During holidays, most workers stay home and engage in relaxation and social activities. Many individuals visit parks or adjacent regions that their families usually accompany. Some individuals frequently shop at centers but can only purchase a few items due to financial constraints. Many individuals visit their ancestral homes to gather with relatives. A single respondent engaged in the sports of crickets. Most individuals do not own television or radio; however, a few use mobile phones for entertainment (Figure 10).

Workers Life Challenges

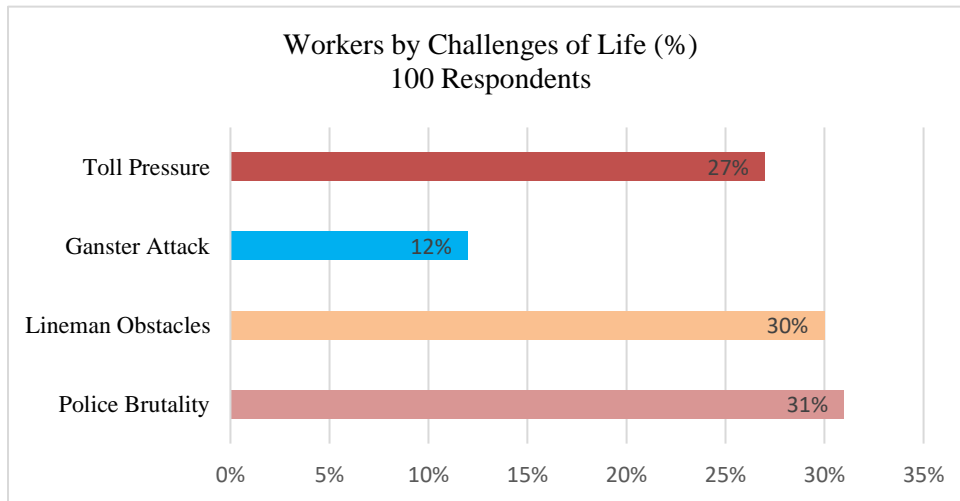


Figure 11. Distribution of Workers by Challenges of Life

The research mainly consists of low-income people who live below the poverty line and encounter various difficulties. The increasing expenses, primarily when one is sick, worsen their difficulties and affect their families. The scarcity of vital utilities further complicates their lives. As a result of their impoverished condition, they cannot afford sufficient nourishment and are compelled to work incessantly, leaving little time for leisure activities. The lack of job security in informal labor creates a hazardous existence with potential exploitation and unemployment. In addition, they face the possibility of being forcibly removed from their homes and often resort to offering bribes because 30% acknowledge having paid off law enforcement officials. Informal laborers in the New Market must pay daily fees in exchange for a sense of security (Figure 11).

Challenges Encountered by Male and Female Workers

Informal employment, characterized by a lack of legal registration and the absence of social security benefits, presents significant vulnerabilities. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) highlights that such positions often involve precarious work conditions and self-employment, leading to heightened risks and instability. The absence of social coverage has compounded these difficulties, making informal work highly precarious.

Migration Factors

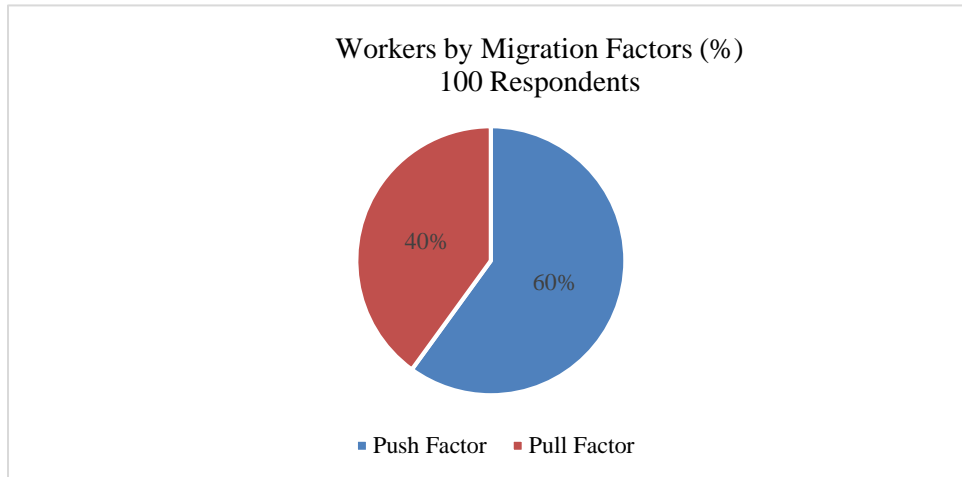


Figure 12. Distribution of Workers by Migration Factors

Poverty and unemployment in rural regions are the main driving factors of labor migration to Dhaka. Many participants highlighted improved income prospects in Dhaka as a primary motivation for relocation. By contrast, others cited natural catastrophes or physical limitations as factors that prevented them from engaging in demanding work. Some individuals were born in Dhaka or relocated to the city to pursue their personal development. Migration is mainly motivated by push and pull forces (**Figure 12**).

Residential Migration

Residential migration substantially affects informal sector participation. The survey indicated that 60% of the respondents were employed in the informal sector, compared to 40% of those who had not migrated. This disparity highlights the role of migration in shaping employment patterns and the reliance on informal work among relocated individuals.

Occupational Mobility

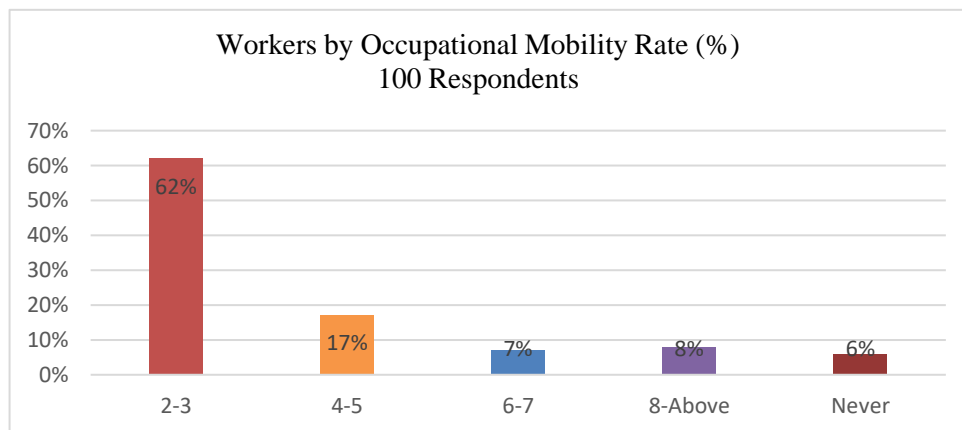


Figure 13. Distribution of Workers by Occupational Mobility Rate

Figure 13 illustrates that a significant proportion of participants (62%) tended to switch occupations often (2-3 times), while a minority (6) remained in the same employment for the whole of their career.

Job Satisfaction of the Workers

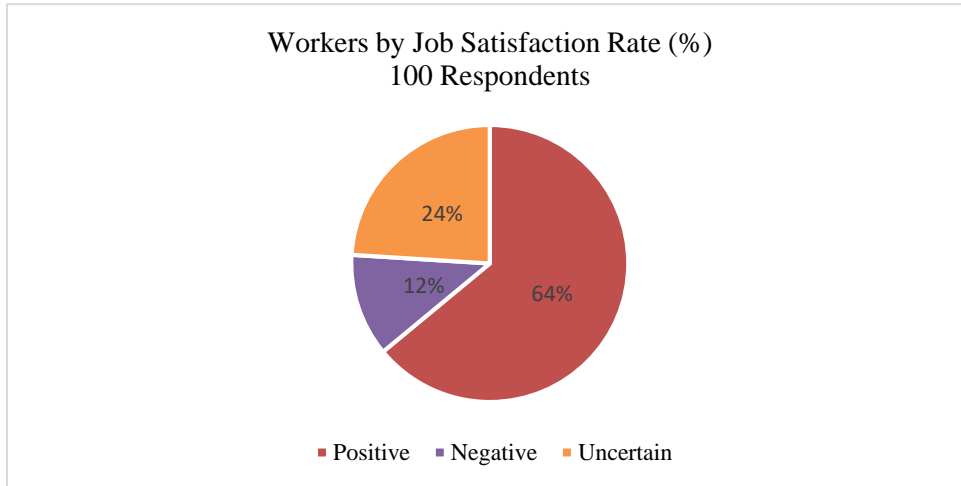


Figure 14. Distribution of Workers by Job Satisfaction Rate

Figure 14 illustrates the level of job satisfaction among workers. 64% of individuals are content with their employment, 12% are dissatisfied, and 24% are unsure about their job.

Nature of Employment

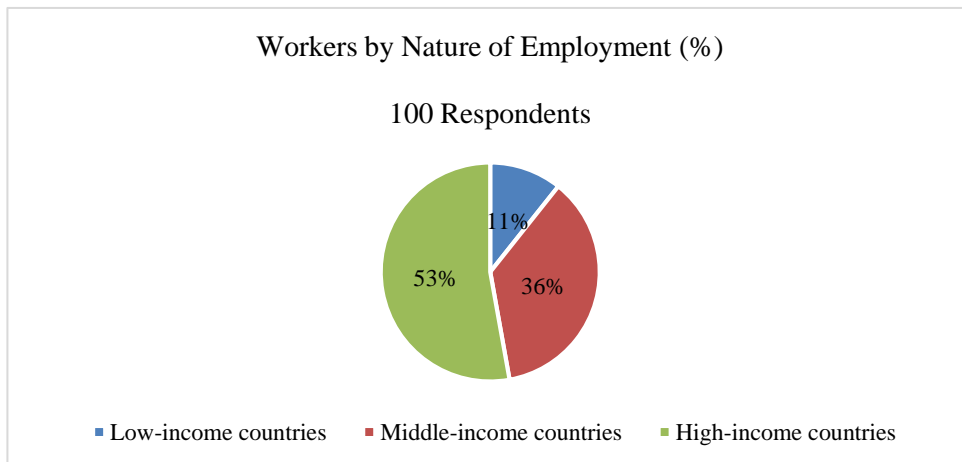


Figure 15. Distribution of Workers by the Nature of Employment

Of the 100 respondents surveyed, 64 are engaged in self-employment within businesses such as tea stalls, small-scale commerce, and fruit vending. The remaining 36 respondents were employed in occupations such as hotels, construction, and rickshaw pullers; however, their employment was deemed to be below their credentials or intended level (Figure 15).

Expertise

Workers entering the informal sector between the ages of 20 and 25 experience fewer employment crises than those aged 26 and above. This discrepancy is partly due to the older groups' lack of skills and educational attainment, which results in more severe job-related problems. Younger workers who have completed their advanced education possess limited professional experience but benefit from increased opportunities for formal employment in the future.

Issues Related to Gender

Gender played a substantial role in determining participation in the informal sector. Female laborers generally face fewer employment crises than their male counterparts. This phenomenon is linked to lower educational attainment and skill levels among female workers, which restrict their opportunities for formal employment. Consequently, women are often more likely to engage in informal sector work because of their limited access to formal job opportunities.

Monthly Expenses

Individuals with higher monthly expenses are more likely to work in the informal sector. This trend is especially prevalent among unskilled and less-educated individuals, who are compelled to seek employment in the informal economy, driven by the necessity to meet rising costs. The increasing financial burden on workers underscores the urgency to address income disparities and improve employment conditions in this sector.

Influence of Household Size

Household size significantly influenced participation in the informal sector. Families with more than six members face significant challenges in sustaining their livelihoods owing to increased food, shelter, hygiene, and clothing demands. This often results in lower literacy levels and reduced opportunities for formal employment, pushing families towards informal sector work. In contrast, families with 3-5 members experience more significant barriers to formal-sector employment. According to the survey data, 70.04% of individuals from smaller households (3-5 members) were employed in the informal sector due to employment issues, compared to 56.2% from more prominent families.

Marital Discord

Marital issues are prevalent among workers, with many experiencing delays or multiple engagements. In particular, female laborers face higher rates of divorce, reflecting the broader impact of economic instability on personal relationships.

Defecation Issues

Access to sanitary facilities poses a significant challenge, particularly for female workers. Inadequate toilet facilities can lead to health problems, while male laborers may resort to less hygienic options, further impacting their wellbeing.

Modes of Dress

There are notable differences in dress patterns based on gender. Male laborers commonly wear lungis, trousers, and shirts, whereas female laborers opt for sarees or three-piece outfits, which are often of inferior quality. These differences reflect the broader socioeconomic disparities in the informal sector.

Issues at the Recreational Level

Owing to tight work schedules, male and female laborers face a scarcity of free time. This limited availability of leisure time hampers their capacity to participate in recreational pursuits and maintain a well-rounded lifestyle.

Festivals

Laborers sometimes need more opportunities to take time off during festivals, which restricts their ability to participate in celebration festivities.

Lack of Emotional Expression

The absence of emotional or social reciprocity significantly affects laborers' general well-being and contentment with their jobs.

Effects of Sleeping Problems

Insufficient sleep substantially affects employees' physical and emotional well-being. The findings indicated an association between inadequate sleep and heightened aggression, excessive levels of activity, elevated behavioral problems, enhanced irritability, cognitive decline, difficulty in learning, and increased susceptibility to depression. Ensuring sufficient rest is essential for preserving mental and physical health.

Discussion

The findings indicate that informal workers in Dhaka experience various difficulties, such as poor compensation, excessive working hours, and limited provision of essential services. The findings align with the existing literature on these topics, which illustrates the risks associated with informal employment and the absence of benefits geared towards informal workers in Third World nations (Afsar, n.d.). ; Amin, 2021; Kaisar et al., 2022)). The study also finds that informal workers' education and skills are critical determinants of their earnings and working conditions. This is consistent with other studies demonstrating

that education and skills enable informal workers to obtain higher pay and secure employment (Afsar, n.d.) ; Amin, 2021; Goldscheider, 2019; Kaisar et al., 2022; Nurul & Director, n.d.). It was also revealed that informal workers in Dhaka were exposed to several vices, including forced removals, bribery, and job instability. These results also align with earlier studies on informal labor, where informal laborers are prone to exploitation because of their unprotected status and lack of social security (Afsar, n.d.) ; Islam, 2023; Siddiqui et al., 2004). Most importantly, the study discovered that social disparities, which relate to gender, affect the level of exploitation experienced, with female workers facing much more discrimination and harassment.

This evidence is in line with previous studies that noted that women suffer violence and discrimination in the informal sector (Afsar, n.d.) ; Siddiqui et al., 2004; Sifullah et al., 2023; Sohel et al., 2022; Zaman et al., 2024). In addition, this study investigated how the lives of informal workers in Dhaka were affected by migration. The results indicate that migration is an economic imperative for many informal workers who have no choice but to resettle away from their homes. Nevertheless, research has also established that, in some instances, migration poses dangers and is a struggle, with many whose origin is elsewhere in the country discriminated against and taken advantage of. These results are in agreement with other findings that have focused on migration. They showed that because of limited social and economic capital, even within the host country, migrants remain subject to exploitation and discrimination (Afsar, n.d.).

It has been observed that Marxist class analysis is instrumental in examining the relations between power and the systems of inequality responsible for the subjugation of the informal economy. (Afsar, n.d.; Harun et al., 2020; Kaisar et al., 2022; Sohel et al., 2022). The study's results are significant in terms of policy. They indicate a case for comprehensive policies targeting the underlying causes of poverty and degradation in the informal sector. Such policies should enhance working conditions, education and skill training access, and equality between men and women. The research also points out the need for better social provision to protect the primary needs of informal laborers.

Conclusion

The research has conducted an extensive investigation of the intricate dynamics associated with informal labor in Bangladesh, with a specific emphasis on the experiences of migrant workers in Dhaka City. It has shown these workers' many and varied difficulties, such as poverty, exploitation, and the ongoing battle for survival. The study highlights the

constraints of migrating to achieve social advancement. Despite their efforts, it demonstrates that many informal laborers remain stuck in poverty and unstable work.

The results emphasize the harsh truth of the exploitation experienced by these workers, who often lack legal agreements, social security advantages, and access to fundamental utilities. The study's theoretical frameworks, namely Marxist Class Theory, provide a perspective to comprehend the power dynamics and structural inequalities that sustain this exploitation. The informal sector, distinguished by meager salaries, extended work hours, and hazardous environments, clearly indicates the susceptibilities experienced by those on the fringes of the job market.

The study highlights the significant impact of education, skills, and gender on the experiences of informal workers. The statistics indicate that individuals with higher levels of education experience job crises more often, but women are more inclined to participate in informal employment due to restricted prospects in the official sector. The qualitative data from the research provides further insight into the difficulties experienced by these workers, such as problems in their marriages, troubles with their food, and restricted availability of healthcare and sanitary services.

The study's conclusions have substantial ramifications for policy and practice. They emphasize the immediate need for extensive initiatives to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and exploitation in the informal sector. These initiatives should include strategies to ameliorate working conditions, facilitate access to education and skills training, and foster gender parity. The study highlights the need to enhance social protection measures and guarantee that informal workers have access to basic facilities and healthcare.

To adopt a greater outlook in the study, this research encourages the designing of holistic policies directed towards alleviating the causes of poverty and informality, with emphasis on social policies, working conditions, and gender equality. In addition to this, the effectiveness of these policies should be assessed, and therefore, future studies should research the implementation and outcomes of these policies in the long run. Other studies could capture a more diverse range of the informal sector's demographics such as children, the old age, or any other groups at risk in order to appreciate the effects of informal labor to diverse strata of the population. Such research will be important in resolving new emerging issues that affect informal workers and combating their problems in a bid to create a universal labor market.

This research serves as a compelling reminder of the significant toll on human lives caused by the prevalence of informal labor in Bangladesh. It requires a collaborative effort

by policymakers, civil society organizations, and the commercial sector to establish a labor market that is fair and impartial, ensuring that all workers, irrespective of their background or vocation, may experience satisfactory employment and a respectable standard of living. The study also emphasizes the tenacity and autonomy of informal workers, who, despite encountering many obstacles, persistently pursue a better future for themselves and their families. Their narratives are evidence of the resilient human essence and the steadfast endeavor for a fair and impartial world.

Acknowledgements

I sincerely appreciate the invaluable guidance, mentorship, and unwavering support that Professor Tahsina Akter, Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka, has provided me throughout this research project. Her encouragement and expertise significantly influenced the successful completion of this endeavor. I am also profoundly grateful to Md. Sobur Hossain, Department of Sociology, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, for his collaborative spirit, incisive contributions, and willingness to share his knowledge. His support was indispensable in surmounting obstacles and guaranteeing the quality of this research.

References

- Afsar, R. (n.d.). *Internal migration and the development nexus: the case of Bangladesh Migration Development Pro-Poor Policy Choices In Asia*. Retrieved October 30, 2024, from www.livelihoods.org
- Amin, M. (2021). *Does Competition from Informal Firms Hurt Job Creation by Formal Firms? Evidence Using Firm-Level Survey Data*. <http://www.worldbank.org/prwp>.
- Bangasser, P. E. (2000). *The ILO and the informal sector : an institutional history*.
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 15(2), 219-234.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. sage.
- DeVellis, R. F., & Thorpe, C. T. (2021). *Scale development: Theory and applications*. Sage publications.
- Development Bank, A. (2010). *The Informal Sector and Informal Employment in Bangladesh*.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*.
- Goldscheider, C. (2019). Migration and rural social structure: An overview. *Rural Migration in Developing Nations: Comparative Studies of Korea, Sri Lanka, and Mali*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429305108-1/Migration-Rural-Social-Structure-Overview-Calvin-Goldscheider>
- Harun, H. H., Abdul Karim, M. K., Abd Rahman, M. A., Abdul Razak, H. R., Che Isa, I. N., & Harun, F. (2020). Establishment of CTPA Local Diagnostic Reference Levels with Noise Magnitude as a Quality Indicator in a Tertiary Care Hospital. *Diagnostics*, 10(9), 680. <https://doi.org/10.3390/DIAGNOSTICS10090680>
- Islam, F. (2023). Terrorist Attack In The Holy Artisan Café, Bangladesh: An Analysis On News Framing. *Journal of Asian and African Social Science and Humanities*, 9(4), 12–25. <https://doi.org/10.55327/JAASH.V9I4.315>
- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2024). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. Sage publications.
- Kaisar, M. J., Rahman, I., & Rahman, M. J. K. I. (2022). Religious Nationalism in Digitalscape: An Analysis of the Post-Shahbag Movement in Bangladesh. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(5), 201–218. <https://doi.org/10.4236/JSS.2022.105015>
- Kumar, R. (2018). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*.
- Kvale, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Sage.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. SAGE Publications.
- Mujeri, M. K., & Mujeri, N. (2021). *Structural Transformation of Bangladesh Economy*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-0764-6>
- Nurul, M., & Director, I. (n.d.). *Overseas Employment From Bangladesh*.
- Parker, S. (2015). Urban theory and the urban experience: Encountering the city: Second edition. *Urban Theory and the Urban Experience: Encountering the City: Second Edition*, 1–289. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203122402/Urban-Theory-Urban-Experience-Simon-Parker/Accessibility-Information>

- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research methods and evaluation. Methods, Sage, Thousand Oaks.*
- Siddiqui, T., Development, A., & Manila, B. (2004). *Efficiency of Migrant Workers' Remittance: The Bangladesh Case.*
- Sifullah, M. K., Sohel, M. S., Hossain Sarker, M. F., Islam, M., Ahmad, M., & Rahman, M. M. (2023). Mapping out the vulnerabilities of migrant women in the informal sector: A qualitative investigation in Dhaka city. *Heliyon*, 9(10), e20950. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.HELIYON.2023.E20950>
- Sohel, M. S., Hossain, B., Alam, M. K., Shi, G., Shabbir, R., Sifullah, M. K., & Mamy, M. M. B. (2022). COVID-19 induced impact on informal migrants in Bangladesh: a qualitative study. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 42(5–6), 473–497. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-02-2021-0046/FULL/PDF>
- Startup, R., & Startup, R. (2021). The Theory of the Selfish Gene Applied to the Human Population. *Advances in Anthropology*, 11(3), 179–200. <https://doi.org/10.4236/AA.2021.113012>
- White, M. J., & Lindstrom, D. P. (2005). Internal Migration. *Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research*, 311–346. https://doi.org/10.1007/0-387-23106-4_12
- Wichai Srikam, A. (n.d.). *Urbanization and Urbanism in Thailand.*
- Zaman, N. T., Hossain, M. A., Sohel, M. S., Alam, J., Zafar, A., Hasan, M. N., & Obaydullah, M. (2024). Factors shaping female migrants to the informal sector in Bangladesh. *SN Social Sciences 2024 4:10*, 4(10), 1–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S43545-024-00904-X>