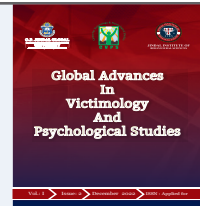


Online ISSN: 2583-5335

Global Advances in Victimology and Psychological Studies



Why the Victims of Intimate Partner Violence is Increasing in Bangladesh: Understanding the Connection between Hegemonic Masculinity and Intimate Partner Violence

Zerrin Akter Anni

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of History and Sociology, The University of British Columbia (Okanagan Campus), Canada; zerin121@mail.ubc.ca

Abstract

In Bangladeshi society, the notion of hegemonic masculinity has been existing for a long time and it has contributed to serious forms of violence against women in recent years. However, most of the empirical research that investigates the theoretical aspects of aggressive manhood, hegemonic masculinity, or gender performativity is centred on western societies. The historical and cultural contexts of intimate partner violence in South Asia have not been adequately explored in attempts to contextualize these gender norms and masculine characteristics. Although significant effort has been made in this field of interest, there is a dearth of literature concerning the conceptions of hegemonic masculinity, aggressive manhood, and gender performance to emerging and a typical patterns of violence against women. Thus, the primary objective of this research is to narrow the gap by demonstrating how the development of hegemonic masculinity and violent manhood is related to contemporary intimate partner violence in Bangladesh, specifically by examining the influence of violent manhood in intimate relationships. To conduct this research, a qualitative study has been used based on secondary data analysis that includes the theoretical analysis of Buttler, Connell, Sumerau, and other scholars. The findings of this research indicate that physical violence perpetrated by men against their spouses reinforces a gender system and culture that justifies husbands' power over their wives. Therefore, masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded just in the body or personality traits of individuals. Rather, hegemonic masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social activities due to structural, cultural, and other forces which might differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting.

Keywords: Hegemonic Masculinity, Intimate Partner Violence, Victims of Violence, Violent Manhood

1. Introduction

Women in Bangladesh experience assault in one form or another because of their poor social standing. With the advent of civilization and technological change, patterns of violence have evolved to include not only physical but also emotional, mental, sexual, and intimidatory

kinds of violence (Anwary, 2015). Domestic violence against women is frequently justified through various mechanisms. One such example is when the mother fails to maintain her children's well-being. Women who fail to adequately care for their children are considered terrible mothers in a culture like ours that regards childcare as

a woman's role and where men and women adhere to feminine prescriptions for good mothering. Similar to other societies, hegemonic masculinity has existed in Bangladeshi society for a long time and has contributed to serious forms of violence against women in recent years. Nevertheless, most of the empirical research that examines the theoretical consequences of hegemonic masculinity, aggressive manhood, or gender performativity is focused on western nations. Few attempts have been made to contextualize these gender norms and masculine attributes within the historical and cultural settings of intimate partner violence in South Asia. Although some effort has been made in this research field, a dearth of literature has been noticed connecting these notions of hegemonic masculinity, aggressive manhood, and gender performance to emerging and unusual patterns of violence against women. Thus, the objective of this research is to narrow the gap by demonstrating how the development of hegemonic masculinity and violent manhood is related to contemporary intimate partner violence in Bangladesh, specifically by examining the influence of violent manhood in intimate relationships.

Gender scholars often overlook the actions of violent Bangladeshi men, preventing them from constructing "alternative identities" for themselves and their wives, which would otherwise undermine the men's subjectivity. As such, this study explores how gender subjectivity is discursively constructed in the context of violence against women in Bangladesh through an exploration of hegemonic masculinity, violent manhood, gender performance, and violence against women to shed new light on gender and masculinity theories.

To conduct this research, Connell's (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity to determine the relationship between violence against women in Bangladesh including the social, structural, and cultural constructs of masculinity been examined. Hegemonic masculinity "embodie[s] the currently most honoured way of being a man" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). Connell (1995) outlines a hierarchy of masculinities, with hegemonic masculinity placed above subordinate, complicit, and marginalized masculinities. Thus, hegemonic masculinity strengthens the patriarchal gender system, which prioritizes certain forms of masculinity over others (Khan *et al.*, 2021). Apart from Connell's (1995) concept of hegemonic masculinity, this research has attempted to explain how offenders internalize cultural norms to preserve and reproduce hegemonic norms through their acts

of violence. Using a range of masculine theories and Sumerau's (2020) concept of violent manhood, one of the most central issues regarding masculinity, "what does it mean to be a man" to abusive males has been explored. The fundamental objective of this research is to shed light on the fact that physical violence against intimate partners is a type of masculinity and gender norm in Bangladesh, through which violent men demonstrate their hyper-masculine identities.

2. Objectives of the Study

Every research work contains certain research aims and objectives which reflect the goals of the research. This study also includes some important objectives of the study as follows:

To connect hegemonic masculinity and modern-day Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Bangladesh analyzing the impact of violent manhood in intimate relationships.

To find out the literature gap within the existing literature of Buttler, Connell and Sumerau by conducting a theoretical analysis of the research problem in the context of Bangladesh.

To explore how the idea of hegemonic masculinity is constructed, shaped, and influenced in the occurrence of different forms of violence against women in Bangladesh.

3. Literature Review

Despite being a worldwide issue, research on violence against women indicates that IPV is particularly prevalent and severe in the South Asian regional context. For example, Solotaroff and Pande (2014) analyzed IPV rates in South Asia and observed that, while worldwide comparisons are challenging, South Asia (using DHS data from India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka) has the greatest regional frequency of IPV compared to all other global regions. Besides, due to the high incidence of early marriage in South Asia and the fact that most studies indicate IPV is highest during the first few years of marriage (e.g., Mensch *et al.*, 2005; Jejeebhoy *et al.*, 2013), married adolescents in this region are extremely vulnerable. Additionally, domestic violence and domestic life are considered private, family issues in South Asia as opposed to being a public and communal concern (e.g., Surtees, 2003, P4P *et al.*, n.d.; Sahavagi *et al.*, 2015). Unless it results in murder, IPV is not often regarded as a crime (Ali & Gavino, 2008). Patriarchal hierarchies are

complicatedly justified and maintained by the notion of religion also in some parts of the region.

It is crucial to highlight that gender-based violence is also culture-specific in the South-Asian subcontinent, i.e., Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Bhutan, where forms of violence include those prevalent internationally, such as domestic violence, spousal murder, rape, marital rape, polygamy, sexual harassment, incest, and trafficking, but also honour killings, acid assaults, public mutilation, stove-burnings, and fatwa violence (e.g., Ali & Gavino, 2008; Niaz, 2003; Solotaroff & Pande, 2014; BRAC & UNDP, 2013). However, there is relatively little research that attempts to comprehend the perceptions of violent manhood concerning IPV, and there are not many studies that attempt to detangle hegemonic masculinity as a risk factor for IPV.

Research on the topic of men and masculinity is comparatively new in Bangladesh (Khan *et al.*, 2020b). Nonetheless, current scientific evidence indicates the existence of distinct masculinities based on socioeconomic background, religion, cultural traditions, and social generation (Choudhury & Clisby, 2018; Doney *et al.*, 2013; Hasan *et al.*, 2018). In Bangladesh, for example, masculinities are classified as “real men” (hegemonic masculinity), “good men” (subordinated masculinity), and “ordinary men” (marginalized masculinity) (Doney *et al.*, 2013; Imtiaz, 2013). Here, the hegemonic version of the “real man” includes the following characteristics: Being the sole breadwinner and provider within the family with regular paid work outside the home, being dominant and powerful, exercising complete authority over family matters, demonstrating strong physical and sexual competence, upholding family honour and limiting women’s mobility, having a strong physical appearance, possessing an honest and strong character, and demonstrating courage and fearlessness (Haque & Kusakabe, 2005; Anwary, 2015; Hasan *et al.*, 2018; Imtiaz, 2013; Khan & Townsend, 2014; Khan *et al.*, 2008; Khan *et al.*, 2020b).

Men fearful of “losing” their privileged positions as a result of women’s socioeconomic advancement may resort to violence and other types of repressive conduct towards women, according to some studies conducted from a Bangladeshi perspective. Thereby men might reintroduce the norm of hegemonic masculinity (Anwary, 2015; Fattah & Camellia, 2020; Karim *et al.*, 2018). This is an illustration of how violence is intertwined with dominant gender constructs and is tolerated as a means

of expressing or exhibiting manhood within a patriarchal society (Hearn *et al.*, 2021). Based on an examination of the literature on physical violence perpetrated by men against their spouses, establishes a gender system and culture that justify the notion that men and women are biologically distinct and that males should exert authority over their wives.

Connell (1987) coined the term hegemonic masculinity to counter the feminist oversimplification that strong men experience masculinity uniformly throughout cultures. It is “the pattern of practice (i.e., actions taken, not merely a set of role expectations or an identity) that enabled males to maintain their domination over women” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). According to Connell, there are different types of masculinity, and hegemonic masculinity is the idealized version of masculinity that subordinates women, excludes, and debases homosexual men. Connell’s hegemonic masculinity theory is critical in establishing that toughness and aggression are ideal characteristics of hegemonic masculinity. Men who lack these hegemonic characteristics are sidelined (Connell, 2000).

Sumerau (2020) examines how masculine conceptualizations involve aggression toward others, violence toward women, and violence toward LGBTQ persons. Sumerau synthesized theoretical frameworks, primarily taken from symbolic interactionism, in his book ‘Violent Manhood,’ and then gathered participant responses to the question “what does it mean to be a man?” Although his book covered a wide range of subjects related to manhood and violence, it was primarily directed at modern American culture and disenfranchised gender groups. Taking insights from his theoretical framework, the concept of manhood in Bangladeshi culture has been further explained and elaborated in this study by demonstrating how the construction of manhood, along with hegemonic masculinity, is formed, sculpted, and influenced to cause various types of violence against women in Bangladesh.

Butler’s (1997) theory is crucial for this inquiry. He contends that the subordination of the target establishes a causal link between the subjects and their object of subjugation. The subject’s very existence is predicated upon its ability to exert control over the subordinate. This demonstrates that aggressive husbands replicate male subjects in the setting of housework and childcare, which they view as their wives’ exclusive tasks regardless of their health or other obligations. In many

cases, domestic violence against women might well be justified when the mother fails to take good care of her children.

3.1 Research Gap

The notion of masculinity has been critiqued for being defined within a heteronormative view of gender that essentializes male-female distinction and overlooks distinction and exclusion within gender categories. Besides, the idea of masculinity is ambiguous, and undefined, and tends to downplay themes of power and dominance. Thus, my goal is to bridge this literature gap regarding the complex, blurry and ambiguous conceptualization of masculinity, as it is arguably necessary for comprehending and contesting the concept of men's power or multiple masculinities with the intent of influencing the violence in intimate relationships.

Men's controlling behaviour toward women is another limitation in our understanding of this paradigm that emerged from the intellectual debates for this study. Preventing violence against women in heterosexual relationships, according to the World Health Organization (2008), needs knowledge of men's dominating attitudes toward women. Although a growing amount of research has established the critical necessity of comprehending males who commit acts of violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1998; Hearn, 1998), further work is needed to conceptualize violent men's culturally embedded gender practices. For this purpose, relevant case studies have been analyzed to provide a clear understanding of the prevailing hegemonic masculinity and violent manhood in Bangladesh.

3.2 Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

How is the concept of hegemonic masculinity constructed, shaped, and influenced in Bangladeshi society?

What is the connection between hegemonic masculinity and violent manhood in the perpetuation of Intimate partner violence in Bangladesh?

What are the existing literature gaps in this field of research?

4. Methodology

A qualitative study has been conducted for this research based on secondary data analysis that includes journal

articles, books, news articles, and relevant research works. Theoretical analysis of Butler, Connell, Sumerau and other scholars for analyzing important data of the study was a major representation of this research. Additionally, case study analysis from newspaper articles has been used to prove evidence with my research position relying on the newspaper reports on violent physical abuse perpetrated by (former) husbands against (former) wives. For ethical considerations and protection purposes, pseudo names have been used instead of real names to represent the case subjects.

4.1 Analytical Framework and Arguments

Many previous studies have been conducted on economically disadvantaged wives in rural Bangladesh (Koenig *et al.*, 2003; Naved & Persson, 2005) or in a specific region of the country. Research that considers the different class backgrounds of the perpetrators and victims does not clearly state what physical violence is. Naved and Persson (2010) analyzed dowry demand as a predictor of domestic violence in a specific rural region and a particular city. Butler's and Connell's ideas have seldom been applied to actual evidence of violence against women in the Global South, particularly in Bangladesh. However, this paper illustrates cases of intimate partner violence and examines the relationship between hegemonic gender norms and wife abuse in Bangladesh.

According to Connell (2003), the essential thesis here is that - Masculinity is not a fixed thing inherent in an individual's physique or psychological features. Masculinities are behavioural configurations that are accomplished by social activity and hence vary according to the gender relations in a given social situation. This paper argues that violence against women occurs as a result of the intersection of structural, individual, cultural, economic, social, and legal forces embedded into hegemonic masculine norms and it is important to understand especially the impact of the structural and cultural forces to explain the violent manhood of partners who are seeking to fulfil their hegemonic masculine identities.

Butler claims that gender demonstrates to be performative — that is, constitutive of the identity it seems to be. In this sense, gender is always acting, even if it is not acting by a subject who might be considered to pre-exist the act (1990, p. 25). Gender identity is constructed

intersubjectively by the self and others. According to Butler, reiterative activities naturalize gender norms, render gender performances insecure, and shape culture. Along with reinforcing hegemonic norms, Butler cites exclusion as a tactic for shaping or undermining gender and sexual identities. This theory is extremely useful in evaluating emerging forms and patterns of violence to understand how sexual and gender identity has always been influenced by different forces, and hence how they develop over time. The primary argument of this research included that men themselves who are not living up to the normative conception of hegemonic masculine ideals may retaliate against their wives or former wives by resorting to violence to construct their subjectivity concerning intimate partners.

The nature of violence against women and hegemonic masculinity is inextricably linked to the intersections of several social categories (Jang, Lee, & Morello-Frosch, 1998). However, an actual study conducted in Bangladesh demonstrates that violence against women transcends class, religion, ethnic origin, and caste (Zaman, 1999). Previously, murder victims from the lower and middle classes, cities, villages, and extended and nuclear families were researched. They were Hindus and Muslims, respectively but, such structural distinctions have no discernible influence on the character of violence and hegemonic masculinity, particularly in contemporary intimate partner violence. While sexism, classism, religion, and nationality may overlap, and a gendered study of religious bigotry is necessary for understanding violence against women, the connection between sexism and religious bigotry should not be confounded.

According to Riseman (2004, p. 443), research indicates that the associations between age, gender, and violence against women that established and reinforced inequity between offenders and victims remain ingrained in Bangladesh's gendered institutions (exemplified by the institution of dowry). With the incidence of violence against women in the digital age, such treatment of women and disputes about the formation of hegemonic masculinity as well as manhood may result in some crucial research questions that pique interest in exploring these themes in this study.

4.2 Findings

As part of this research, a thorough literature review has been conducted and pertinent case study analyses have

been added to identify a few indicators of hegemonic masculinity in initiating violence against women. These indicators serve as a bridge between the related constructs, illuminating how the concept of hegemonic masculinity is constructed and reinforced in Bangladeshi society.

Control is a key component in the perpetration of intimate partner violence (Felson & Outlaw, 2007). Men's physical aggression toward their spouses reinforces a gender system and culture that legitimize the perception that men and women are biologically distinct and that men should exert power over their wives. As a result, violence against women occurs at the nexus of structural, individual, cultural, economic, social, and legal elements (Heise, 1998). This paper has focused on the analysis of the structural and cultural context of hegemonic masculinity in Bangladesh and the construction of intimate partner violence within this context by violent and abusive partners.

Dowry, is defined as "money, property, or any other item given to the groom, groom's parents or groom's relatives by the bride's family before, during, or after marriage as a condition of preserving the marital relationship" (Maniruzzaman, 2003, p. 26), determines the bride's worth in her husband's family (Nasreen, 2011). Many studies (e.g., Eswaran & Malhotra; Anwary, 2015; Schuler, Yount & Lenzi, 2012) demonstrate that there have been an inconceivable number of instances of dowry-related violence against women, resulting in multiple injuries, face damage, and even death. According to some evidence, one of the most common justifications for wife abuse is dowry. The rationale for this is that each culture has its own set of beliefs and ideologies. For illustration, Naved and Persson (2010) noted that wrangles often come up in homes where there was no full payment of dowry. However, this does not indicate that violence against women does not exist in individuals who have paid dowry in full; rather, there may be reduced violence.

Bangladesh enacted legislation against dowry in 1980, however, it is not implemented. Dowry-related violence against women is prevalent in Bangladesh across all socioeconomic strata and ethnic groups. The power imbalance between subjects and their abused targets reveals itself through violence, in which the subject utilizes the target as an instrument of his will in the name of dowry. It is frequently exercised in Bangladeshi society as an incentive for husbands to abuse, divorce, or murder a wife for husbands to remarry and obtain further dowries (Narayan, 1993). Therefore, failure to pay dowry demands

can be a predictor of violence, wife abandonment, and the threat of divorce. In Bangladesh, divorce is considered a stigma; women who are financially dependent on their spouses usually have a poor social position and divorced women or women who are financially dependent on their husbands, experience discrimination. Their families are under immense pressure to ensure that their daughters' marriages are saved at any cost. These attempts are interpreted by husbands as a sign of powerlessness, which may lead to an increase in violence by the husband, whose hyper-masculinity is reinforced by his wife's surrender, the "other" (Butler, 1990).

Men demonstrate their hegemonic masculine identity through the practice of violence. One of the findings of case studies for this research can be illustrated for better comprehension. Rahela (pseudo name) was killed in February 2014, by her husband, who had asked her to bring goods for daily use from her parents. He abused her whenever she failed to bring an item. When neighbours attempted to intervene in the perpetrator's assault, he warned them not to interfere in his family problems. Rahela pleaded with her husband for her life just before she died: "Please do not hit me anymore. I will die. Leave me alone. You are like my father" (The Daily Janakantha, 2014, 14 February). In Bangladesh, fathers hold absolute authority over their unmarried daughters. Rahela attempted to convince her husband that she viewed him similarly to her father's superior power to rescue herself.

To summarise, perpetrators of dowry-related abuse used violence through hyper-masculine actions, which served as a valuable resource for compensating for the harm their spouses inflicted on their sense of masculinity. An attempt to keep these men from abusing the victims by the victims' families, neighbours, local officials, or police resulted in the men's authority over their wives being challenged, which expressed themselves in more violent attacks on the women.

Most feminists argue that domestic violence is a result of women's lack of autonomy (McMillan, 2007). However, other academics argue that higher autonomy for women may increase hegemonic masculinity (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011; Afroza, 2015). This results in an upsurge in domestic violence. One rationale for this is that males may assume that regardless of a woman's status, she cannot have complete independence. Another explanation is that when a woman becomes self-determined or self-governed, males may experience feelings of insecurity as

well (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011). Having employment and relying on her earnings is one of the factors that might enable a woman to achieve independence. In these instances, if the woman is working a long distance from home, some spouses may develop an increased level of mistrust over her activities and whereabouts. As a result, husbands may develop jealousy of their wives, which may escalate into domestic violence (Anwary, 2015). Thus, women's assertiveness and independence appear to be a source of gender violence imposed by hegemonic masculine standards.

Through the violent act, men feminise women who gained power by entering paid work. Additionally, the use of violence masculinizes men and enables them to reclaim a deep sense of masculinity that had been undermined by their wives' aggressiveness in challenging these men's power over them. In underdeveloped nations, the legal prohibition of domestic violence is rarely enforced except when society accepts it (Merry, 2003). The developed world is no better in this regard. While law enforcement officers vigorously enforce domestic violence laws, they face significant difficulty when victims withdraw their accusations (Merry, 2003). One of the primary reasons victims withdraw charges is the threat they may experience from their spouses. When men become aware that their wives have outside assistance, they may intensify their battering, which may finally result in the charges being dropped. Spousal violence serves as a source of enjoyment for the offender as well as a means of controlling the victim's conduct.

While simultaneously gratifying their desires, males utilize domestic violence to diminish the autonomy of women. In situations where women have greater autonomy, men may resort to using domestic violence to decrease the autonomy of those women. (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011). Additionally, men would experience increased hegemonic masculinity, which would also increase violence against women, assuring that they have no power at all. As a result, it is evident that as women's autonomy increases, there may be an increase in violence toward them in specific circumstances (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011).

4.3 Justification of Violence against Women

In Bangladesh, the beating of a woman is considered acceptable (Schuler *et al.*, 2012). They justify that the husband has the right to beat his wife to demonstrate

his dominance and strength. It is common for women to shoulder the brunt of the blame, even though they have followed all societal expectations. A situation illustrating this is when a woman visits friends or relatives without her husband's approval. The community has conditioned women to accept such instances of male dominance and control by conditioning them to consider men's judgments as always appropriate and worthwhile. As a result, cultural norms in Bangladesh contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women to a certain level. They also recognize that males have the right to abuse their women whenever they consider it appropriate. Two case studies have been illustrated below to explain how justification is prevalent in such kind of violence.

Case Study 1 for illustration

Dr. Rita (pseudo name), who was formerly a faculty member at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh, attended the University of British Columbia in Canada as a foreign student. She had a daughter with Shahed Hasan (pseudo name). During her 2011 visit to Bangladesh, she was brutally attacked by Hasan, who opposed her return to Canada, where he claimed she was having an affair with a man. Rita was left blind and with a damaged face as a result of the attack. Hasan was taken into custody (The Daily Star, 2011, 16 June). During their 10 years of marriage, Hasan allegedly abused Rita and threatened to murder her by pouring acid on her. Hasan alleged that Rita left their kid in his care in Bangladesh and travelled to Canada to further her education. He utilized gender allusions in his media interview to accuse Dr. Rita of failing to live up to her gender role:

"She [Rita] had an extramarital affair with a man from Iran in Canada... she betrayed me and our daughter. She left our child in Bangladesh with me to pursue her education in Canada... When I deleted the name of the Iranian man from her Facebook friends list, she attacked me... My wife and the Iranian man lived like a married couple while I took care of our daughter as if I were the mother... She stated that her friend's spouse from Australia has been parenting his children. She desires that I assume the role of that husband. She stated that I am unable of demonstrating my power over her as her spouse." [Boyshakhi News (15 June 2011)]

Interpretation of the case: This report demonstrates how the offender justified his brutality by claiming responsibility for the attack on his wife. Gender

normative binary frameworks, as well as the patriarchal society of Bangladesh, served as justifications for this action. His narrative represented a man's mindset that he should have power over his wife's body just under being a husband. He is entitled to discipline his wife for failing to satisfy his sexual and emotional requirements, as well as her mother's responsibilities. His narrative aimed to re-establish his heterosexual male privilege as father and husband by disparaging any other identity, such as that of a father who would care for a kid or a man who would tolerate his wife's sexual closeness with another man (Butler, 1990). To Hasan, such forbearance represents his wife's attempt to suffocate him. Unsurprisingly, Hasan portrayed himself to the media as a powerful man in control of his wife's body and sexuality in a society where masculinity is associated with aggressiveness.

Case study 2 for illustration

In Bangladesh, where a wife's femininity is manifested through her complete surrender to her husband's authority, her assertiveness is regarded as disobedience to her husband and regarded as a significant threat to her husband's perceived masculinity. The case study illustration exemplifies this principle.

Paira Banu (pseudo name) was killed by her husband, Khuku Mia (pseudo name). Paira was Khuku's second wife. Khuku concealed his first wife's existence before marrying Paira. When Khuku married her, his previous wife was living in a different country. Khuku's first wife sued him and Paira Banu upon her return to Bangladesh. Paira addressed Khuku over the concealment of his first marriage. As a result, Khuku assaulted Paira in a violent reaction to the incident. When Paira informed her parents of this, they immediately took her away to their house without consulting Khuku Mia. His authority was jeopardized when she left the abusive family without consulting anybody. Later, Khuku travelled to the town where Paira was staying with her parents three days after she fled. He called her and urged her to return home where she would never be abused again. Paira Banu persuaded her parents to allow her to meet Khuku. Upon meeting, he stabbed Paira to death and dumped her body next to a train track (The Daily Janakantha, 2014, 18 February).

Interpretation of the case: Though Paira was subjected to serious violence at the hands of Khuku, she felt compelled to return to the violent household due to the shame associated with women who are separated from

their spouses. Khuku viewed her departure from home as a sign of his inability to manage his wife's physical mobility. The killing represented the apex of Khuku's control, as evidenced by Paira's ruined body being thrown beside the train track. Khuku Mia reinforced his male subjectivity through violence. His performance was purposefully and meticulously staged in such a way that neither Paira nor her parents suspected his real motive.

While Bangladeshi women are legally entitled to divorce their spouses, they rarely exercise this privilege. Divorce brought on by spouses is viewed as the ultimate insult to husbands' manhood. Divorced men are portrayed as feminine and incapable of living up to hegemonic masculine values as defined by the normative. Men who have been divorced frequently retaliate against their ex-wives by resorting to physical violence. Men reinforce the dichotomy between masculinity and femininity by displaying their acts of violence. The following case demonstrates this argument.

Within days of Keya Begum's (pseudo name) marriage to Molla Ruhul Amin (pseudo name), her family discovered that Molla was involved in illegal activities, causing a lot of problems between the couple. Molla was divorced by Begum. Following the divorce, Molla travelled to Begum's hometown, where he broke into her home late at night, poured gasoline over Begum, who was sleeping with her sister and burned the two of them on fire, killing them both. Begum and her sister succumbed to their injuries on their way to the hospital (The Daily Janakantha, 2014, 30 March). In summary, men who are considered by society and themselves as failing to live up to normative conceptions of hegemonic male standards may react against spouses or ex-wives through the use of violence to create their subjectivity in connection to intimate relationships.

5. Discussion

A significant lesson obtained from masculinity research is that violence is a technique for expressing masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1993; Messner, 1992). Men become aggressive as a result of witnessing and participating in acts of violence that are accepted and promoted by the greater society. Connell (2000) asserted that hegemonic masculinity is the idealized type of masculinity that is used to subjugate and oppress women in the contemporary world. Male hegemony is established by a combination of violence, persuasion, culture, and institutions (Connell

& Messerschmidt, 2005). This research emphasized that males justified their status as 'real' men through violent actions. According to Butler (1990), gender identity is performative, flexible, and culturally constructed. When society as a whole supports violence against women, violent and non-violent men equally may develop and confirm their male identity through violent acts to satisfy themselves and society. When structurally powerless women challenge conventional notions of femininity and masculinity, they create symbolic space for alternative identification (Butler, 1990).

The main purpose of this research was to identify the sources of connecting hegemonic masculinity with modern-day intimate partner violence in Bangladesh based on theoretical analysis as well as an analysis of the relevant case studies. The majority of the cases studied in this research indicate that structural inequality influences violence against women. Additionally, several examples illustrate the substantial correlation between inconsistent status and husband-inflicted violence against women. Through the findings and case studies, it has been explored to understand the impact of the structural and cultural forces although that measuring status inconsistency on violence against women is beyond the scope of this study and requires further research.

6. Conclusion

To understand violence against women, this research focuses on Bangladesh's patriarchal system and culture. According to the findings, when men physically abuse their partners, it reinforces a gendered culture and system that legitimizes men's dominance over women. The justification for wife-beating is equally prevalent in the Bangladesh setting. In addition, women who strengthen their economic circumstances may be especially vulnerable to violent attacks by husbands seeking to accomplish their hegemonic masculine identities. Moreover, in Bangladesh, divorce instigated by wives is regarded as the greatest dishonour to husbands' manhood. Thus, providing case study examples with the findings of this study, important indicators of masculinity have been analyzed and argued that this form of masculinity is often achieved through using violence against wives where abusive male partners try to live up to the normative conception of hegemonic masculine ideals. This resulted in a more nuanced understanding of the perpetrators' discursive construction of gender, women's

experiences of violence, and how violent men constructed their subjectivity through the presentation of certain types of hyper-masculinity during contexts of violence. Therefore, masculinity is not a fixed entity embedded just in the body or personality traits of individuals. Rather, hegemonic masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social activities due to structural, cultural, and other forces which might differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting.

7. References

- Ali, P.A. & Gavino, M.I.B. (2008). Violence against women in Pakistan: A framework for analysis. *Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association*, 58(4), 198-203.
- Anwary, A. (2015). Construction of hegemonic masculinity: Violence against wives in Bangladesh. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 50, 37-46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2015.02.011>
- Boyshakhi News. (2011, June 15). Rumana Manzur's Husband. YouTube video. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYz0tDCIXGY>
- BRAC & UNDP. (2013) 'Study on National Online Database on Violence Against Women'. Dhaka: Bangladesh.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1997). *The psychic life of power*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503616295>
- Choudhury, T. & Clisby, S. (2018). Masculinity in transition or patriarchy reasserted? A study of construction workers in sylhet, Bangladesh. *Studies on Home and Community Science*, 11(2), 125-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09737189.2017.1420406>
- Connell, R. (1987). *Gender and power: Society, the person and sexual politics*. Stanford, CA: University of Stanford Press.
- Connell, R. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Connell, R. (2000). *The men and the boys*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Connell, R., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and Society*, 19(6), 829-859. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639>
- Dobash, R., & Dobash, R. (1998). Violent men and violent contexts. In R. E. Dobash, & R. P. Dobash (Eds.), *Rethinking violence against women* (pp. 141-168). Thousand Oaks, C.A.: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452243306.n6>
- Doneys *et al.* (2013). The male entity of the self never dies, it just leaps like a tiger: Masculinity and gender-based violence in Bangladesh. (Working Paper No. 7). Bangkok: Partners for Prevention.
- Fattah, K. N., & Camellia, S. (2020). Gender norms and beliefs, and men's violence against women in rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 35(3-4), 771-793. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517690875> PMID:29294643
- Haque, M. & Kusakabe, K. (2005). Retrenched men workers in Bangladesh: A crisis of masculinities. *Gender, Technology and Development*, 9(2), 185-208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/097185240500900202>
- Hasan, M. K., Aggleton, P., & Persson, A. (2018). The makings of a man: Social generational masculinities in Bangladesh. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 27(3), 347-361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2017.1388773>
- Hearn, J. (1998). *Violence of men: How men talk about and how agencies respond to men's violence against women*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446279069>
- Hearn, J. (2017). Two challenges for critical studies on men and masculinities: The hegemony of men, and trans (national) patriarchies. *Casopis za Kritiko Znanosti: domisljijo in nova antropologija*, 267, 23-34.
- Hearn, J., Ratele, K., Shefer, T., & Khan, A. R. (2021). Men, masculinities, peace, and violence: A multi-level overview on justice and conflict. In T. Veärynen, S. Parashar, Feron, E., & C. C. Confortini (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of feminist peace research* (pp. 313-323). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429024160-34>
- Heise, L. (1998). Violence against women. An integrated ecological framework. *Violence Against Women*, 4, 262-290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801298004003002> PMID:12296014
- Imtiaz, S. S. (2013). Ordinary men's constructions of masculinity: Exploration of constructions of masculinity in extreme poor household in Northeast Bangladesh. Retrieved from: <http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/Bangladesh%20EMI%20report.pdf>
- Jang, D., Lee, D., & Morello-Frosch, R. (1998). Domestic violence in the immigrant and refugee community: Responding to the needs of immigrant women. In S. J. Ferguson (Ed.), *Shifting the Center: Understanding Contemporary Families*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.
- Khan, A. R., Ratele, K., Helman, R., Dlamini, S., & Makama, R. (2020b). Masculinity and Suicide in Bangladesh. *OMEGA - Journal of Death and Dying*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0030222820966239>
- Khan, A. R., Arendse, N., & Ratele, K. (2021). Intimate relationships and suicidal behavior of men in Bangladesh. *Mortality*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2021.1879755>
- Khan, M.E. & Townsend, J.W. (2014). Representation of the masculine identity in Bangladesh. In M.E., Khan, J.W., Townsend and P. J., Pelto (eds) *Sexuality, Gender Roles, and Domestic Violence in South Asia* (pp. 113-132). New York: Population Council.

- Khan, S. I., Hudson-Rodd, N., Siggers, S., Bhuiyan, M. I., Bhuiya, A., Karim, S. A., & Raayajin, O. (2008). Phallus, performance and power: Crisis of masculinity. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 23(1), 37-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681990701790635>
- Karim, R., Lindberg, L., Wamala, S., & Emmelin, M. (2018). Men's perceptions of women's participation in development initiatives in rural Bangladesh. *American Journal of Men's Health*, 12(2), 398-410. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988317735394> PMID:29025358 PMCid:PMC5818116
- Karim, R., Habib, T. Z., Arefin, S., Rahman, H., Rahman, S., & Swahnberg, K. (2020). Differences in the acceptance of wife abuse among ethnic minority Garo and Santal and mainstream Bengali communities in rural Bangladesh. *PLoS One*, 15(7), e0236733. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236733> PMID:32722707 PMCid:PMC7386579
- Maniruzzaman, A. (2003). *Nari o shishu nirjatan daman ain*. Dhaka: Shams Publication.
- Mensch, B. S., Singh, S., & Casterline, J. B. (2005). Trends in the timing of first marriage among men and women in the developing world. *The Changing Transitions to Adulthood in Developing Countries: Selected Studies*, 118-71. <https://doi.org/10.31899/pgy6.1096>
- Narayan, U. (1993). Paying the price of change: Women, modernization, and arranged marriages in India. In M. Turshen, & B. Holcomb (Eds.), *Women's lives and public policy: The international experience* (pp. 159-170). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Nasreen, S. (2011). Crime or custom? Motivation behind dowry practice in rural Bangladesh. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 18(1), 27-50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/097152151001800102>
- Naved, R. T., & Persson, L. A. (2005). Factors associated with spousal physical abuse against women in Bangladesh. *Studies in Family Planning*, 36(4), 289-300. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4465.2005.00071.x> PMID:16395946
- Naved, R. T., & Persson, L. A. (2010). Dowry and physical violence against women in Bangladesh. *Journal of Family Issues*, 31(6), 830-856. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X09357554>
- Riseman, B. (2004). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. *Gender and Society*, 18(4), 429-450. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243204265349>
- Sahavagi, DidiBahini, & Fedo. (2015). *Progress of Women in Nepal (1995-2015) Substantive Equality: Non-negotiable*. Kathmandu: UN Women Nepal.
- Schuler, S., Yount, K., & Lenzi, R. (2012). Justification of wife beating in Rural Bangladesh: A qualitative analysis of gender differences in response to survey questions. *Violence Against Women*, 18(10), 1177-1191. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801212465152> PMID:23136180 PMCid:PMC3721193
- Solotaroff, J. L., & Pande, R. P. (2014). *Violence against women and girls: Lessons from South Asia*. World Bank, Washington D.C. <https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0171-6>
- Sumerau, J. E. (2020). *Violent manhood*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Surtees, R. (2003). Negotiating violence and non-violence in Cambodian Marriages, *Gender-Based Violence*, 2074 (November), 56-69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/741954314>
- The Daily Janakantha (2014, February 14e). Housewife murdered. Retrieved from: www.dailyjanakantha.com (accessed May 4, 2014)
- The Daily Janakantha (2014, February 18g). Housewife stabbed to death. Retrieved from: www.dailyjanakantha.com (accessed April 4, 2014)
- The Daily Janakantha (2014, March 30). Wife burned to death by husband. Retrieved from: www.dailyjanakantha.com (accessed June 5, 2014)
- The Daily Janakantha (2014, March 15). Housewife burned to death in Keraniganj, husband arrested. Retrieved from: www.dailyjanakantha.com (accessed March 5, 2015)
- The Daily Star (2011, June 16). Torturer Sumon caught. Retrieved from: www.thedailystar.net (accessed June 4, 2014)
- World Health Organization (2008). *Preventing violence and reducing its impacts: How development agencies can help*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Zaman, H. (1999). Violence against women in Bangladesh: Issues and responses. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 22(1), 37-48. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-5395\(98\)00093-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0277-5395(98)00093-4)