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Contents

Slavery, Sugar and Sex: David Dabydeen's
Slave Song and the Colonial Experience

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Abstract

The Caribbean region, consisting of a group of islands scattered across a large area of the Atlantic saw the beginning of slave trade after Christopher Columbus' second visit in 1496. The slaves were brought mainly from the west coast of Africa, but later, when the need grew, from India and China as well. By 1836, when Emancipation brought an end to the slave trade, the number of slaves had risen to 428,000 out of the total population of 500,000. Most of the slaves were employed in the lucrative sugarcane cultivation. The slaves were routinely brutalized by their white masters to break their spirit and prevent any unrest. In the process the male slaves were de-gendered and became unfit to play any social role. Many of them turned to alcohol and sex for relief, and indulged in violence. The body thus became the site of colonial control and resistance. The slaves used their body and the liberating effect of sex as weapons of resistance, often annihilating themselves in the process. David Dabydeen, an Indo-Guyanese poet and fiction writer, picks up the interrelated themes of slavery, sugar and sex which together define the Caribbean colonial experience for his award winning book Slave Song *(1984), a collection of 14 poems written entirely in Creole. The article examines Dabydeen's treatment of the provocative race relations and the legacy of slavery in the Caribbean as well as the slaves' negotiation of the liberating power of sex and the body.*

David Dabydeen's *Slave Song*, a slim book of fourteen poems in a rough-hewn Creole was published in 1984, and immediately launched him into fame, earning the prestigious Commonwealth Poetry Prize and the Quiller-Couch Prize. *Slave Song* is Dabydeen's only collection entirely given to poems in Creole – a language he considered "broken," and "naturally tragic." Perhaps in consideration of its alienness to the English ear, Dabydeen provides Standard English translations along with fairly detailed commentaries on all but one poem preceding each translation. Most of these poems were written six years prior to their publication, when Dabydeen, an Indo-Guyanese himself, was involved in an intense reexamination of the colonial past of Guyana, particularly its brutal history of slavery, the "deforestation and ecocide" (Dabydeen 2000: 1) of Guyanese countryside as a prelude to sugarcane cultivation, and the uneasy and often violent racial landscape consisting of white plantation owners, African slaves and indentured East Indian labourers. *Slave Song* picks up all of these concerns as its themes, but also explores

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the provocative and problematic relationship between Black and White, master and slave, man and woman. It also focuses on the ambiguous position of a poet who, like the urbanized and well traveled young man of the poem "Two Cultures," is steeped in BBC culture and finds his eloquence an ironic contrast to the crude energy of the Creole speaking cane cutters and village women. The poems also narrate the backbreaking chores of the "plantation slaves'" continual debasement and dehumanization.

The term "plantation slaves" evokes a bitter legacy of slavery and forced labour that produced the much-coveted items in Atlantic trade: sugar, coffee, tobacco, cotton and cacao. In a wide swath of colonized land, these products were grown by African and East Indian slaves who were tortured and mutilated and were forced to conform to the rigid discipline of plantation economy. Sugar, in particular, had been a lucrative cash earner, and sugarcane cultivation began after Christopher Columbus planted seed canes in Santo Domingo in 1493. Soon after, sugar cultivation spread to Cuba, Jamaica and Puerto Rico. The Portuguese took sugar cultivation to Brazil by 1526. By 1540, there were more than 800 sugar mills in Santa Catalina Island, and another 2000 in the north coast of Brazil. The Dutch brought sugarcane to the Caribbean after 1625 where it was grown in most islands, and subsequently in Guyana.

Sugar planting and harvesting was a backbreaking work (it still is); it was very much labour-intensive and needed strict discipline and long hours of work in hot and stifling conditions. If sugarcane cultivation is a tiring and dangerous work, the processing part –which produces sugar, molasses etc—is no less so. From the very beginning, not many Europeans were available for work at the sugar plantations and entrepreneurs had to depend on imported indentured labour who had to work day and night in field and factory. These labourers came from Africa and East India. Between 1518 and 1870, these labourers, who were treated as slaves, were brought in such numbers that they became the largest part of the population of the Caribbean. By the time slave trade ended, about 4.7 million African slaves were shipped to the Americas, of which about 17% were given employment in the British Caribbean. Although the white people were, in numerical terms, a minority, they maintained their superior position as administrators, traders, managers and financiers.

As long as the slave system continued and plantation economy thrived, slaves were routinely exploited and brutalized. They were controlled by the use of deadly force. Their bodies were considered unclean, disgusting and abject. Deprived economically, socially, sexually and psychologically, the slaves sometimes vented their anger through violence, which meant further repression and punishment. Most found relief in alcohol and sex. Rum is what the slaves produced, and it also destroyed them. The body thus became a site of colonial control as well as resistance. Stories and poems that tell of the slaves' desire for freedom and identity also highlight the need to understand the power of the body. Much like

Shakespeare's Caliban imagining his counter-colonial control of the master in terms of corporeal and sexual domination, the slaves also imagine their bodies as a source of power and control –not only over the master, but also over land and geography.

The volatile history of subjugation and control of the Black (for Dabydeen the category includes both Africans and East Indians) by White planters has the body at its core for, it is only through the defilement and degendering of the body that total colonial control is possible. The degendering is the result of torture and mutilation that incapacitate the slave from performing gender roles. A man ceases to be a man when hard labour coupled with addiction to rum destroys his capacity to play any socially responsible male role. A woman too is broken by inhuman labour and ceases to feel like a daughter or mother. Grace Nichols, a Guyanese poet and a contemporary of Dabydeen, in her poem "Ala" paints the picture of a resistant and ungendered slave woman who kills her new born child as a ritual of defiance to enslavement.

> ... the rebel woman
> who with a pin
> stick the soft mould
> of her own child's hand
> sending the little-new-born
> soul winging its way back
> to Africa – free –
>   ("i is a long memorial woman")

The slaves, being ungendered revert to their biological, sexual selves, and employ the power of the body and the liberating effect of sex to energize them, fantasize about erotic encounters with white men and women and inscribe their resistance in the colonial topology. The colonial project of creating "docile bodies" is thus thwarted by the slaves in their act of resistance, which in *Slave Song* takes the form of imagined counter-violence against white men and women, particularly women, who are not only raped, mutilated and left to rot in the sun, but are also made to desire rape by black servants – all of course, in the realm of fantasy. "The poems in this volume (a jumble of fact and myth, past and present)," writes Dabydeen in the Introduction to *Slave Song*, "are largely concerned with an exploration of the erotic energies of the colonial experience, ranging from a corrosive to a lyrical sexuality. Even the appetite for sadistic sexual possession is life giving, the strange, vivid fruit of racial conquest and racial hatred" (Dabydeen 1984: 10). In the poem "Love Song," a cane cutter fantasizes about a white woman, but is aware of his disgusting existence and is angered by the work he has to do everyday, all day long. At the end, he is driven to despair and self-pity, and in a moment of rum-soaked melancholy desires the white woman to come to him

> When my soul's soft and my eyes wet/ And the breeze blows and my
> eyes shut/ And the bottle has no more rum/ then come/ And take me

away, where/ there's no chain/ there's no cane/ Come with milk in your breast and your white throat bare ...

The poem pretty much summarizes the textual and historical concerns of *Slave Song*: sex, sugar and slavery, more precisely the "erotic – sadomasochistic nature of slavery and plantation life" (Dabydeen, 1984:10)

The erotic evocation of the white woman by the black cane cutter in "Love Song" and other poems in *Slave Song* has echoes of Caliban's desire for Miranda and his lament for the lost opportunities to possess her. If Dabydeen's own interpretation of such erotic fantasy is given due credit, then the black slave's love song has more resonances than meet the ear. The fantasy, he says, is "describable in terms of inspiration, aspiration, assimilation into a superior scheme of things" (Dabydeen 1984: 10). It is, in other words, the colonized Other's wish to assume the privileged place of the self and to reverse his inferior and abject position and assume the power to control his own destiny. The colonial and postcolonial ambience of *The Tempest* and more particularly, Caliban's self-projection, have provided a referential framework for a section of Caribbean literature dealing with the colonial history of the region. *Slave Song* also draws on Caliban's ability "to mimic all the parts in the colonial repertory" for its subject construction (Thieme, 257). In a talk given at the Royal Festival Hall in London on 8 November 2000 (and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 three days later) on Samaroo's *Tempus Est,* a colonial rewriting of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1929), Dabydeen compares Caliban with "the field Negro, the cane cutter, the eternal labourer, dispossessed of island and of native culture." Ariel, to Dabydeen, "symbolizes the mulatto or house-Negro, the new breed of West Indian given a degree of authority and policing over his fellow black in the imperial system of divide and rule . . ." while Miranda is "the European virgin who has to be protected against heathen invasion, against native lust. She is the site of struggle between the colonizer and the colonized" (Dabydeen, 2000: 15). In Samaroo's *Tempus Est*, the Amazonian rainforest is named Miranda, which Prospero, who is a strangely ungendered character and is neither White nor Black, violates. "Caliban's sole instinct and craving," writes Dabydeen, "is to mate with Miranda and to cannibalise Prosperous, a wondrous instance of the eco-oedipal, the greening of sexual psychology" (Dabydeen, 2000: 17).

Dabydeen's own poems assume a wider significance in the context of the "greening of sexual psychology," which appears to be a form of colonial resistance against debasement of the body. The body as a site of colonial control has a long history, and along with it, the despoliation of geography. John Donne, writing at a time when the Empire was just beginning to expand beyond the seas, describes woman's body, in quite a number of his poems, in terms of displacement, otherness, alienation, possession and colonization. In Elegy 19, "Going to bed" the poet contemplates a woman disrobing before going to bed, and his contemplation leads to a replacement of her body "by a kind of 'female landscape.' Thus becoming a

microcosmic conception of the world of America or, more precisely, Virginia, a supposedly 'virgin' land" (Docherty, 79).

> O my America! My new-found-land,
> My Kingdome, safeliest when with one man man'd,
> My Myne of precious stones, My Empire,
> How blest am I'm this discovering thee!

At the centre of the volatile history of the conquest and despoliation of the Caribbean landscape lies this owning and "manning" of geography and turning it into a female space inscribed with power and primacy for man. Cultural geographers have focused on how bodies "are performed, resisted, disciplined and oppressed not simply in but *through* space" (Longhurst, 93). The othering of the body, they maintain, proceeds from the practice of privileging minds over bodies.

Slave Song extensively deploys the trope of the body to show how through torture, mutilation and rape, different power relations inscribe themselves on it. On the one hand, there is the colonial authority – represented by the master of the plantation, the white man, and his white wife – who routinely brutalize and exploit the black men and women; and on the other, the uneasy race relations between the blacks and Indians which, from time to time, explodes and unleashes unspeakable violence on people of both races. In times of racial violence, power relation shifts its axis in favour of the side that has numerical and strategic strength. The torture and violence have the unmistakable stamp of male authority: women – whether in the hands of white master or black men – are always the victims, and rape and mutilation are their usual fate. When black men violate an Indian woman, they forget their subaltern position in the colonial frame and assume absolute mastery over the woman. Their assumption of colonizing power is both a psychological assertion of their momentary freedom from the colonial paradigm – a switching of the positions of master and slave position in the ineradicable colonial binary – and a mimicry that brings home the sheer barbarity of any colonial hierarchical relation. In the poem "Mala" which quite poignantly recounts the rape and killing of a young Indian girl in Wismar on the edge of Demerera River in a particularly savage attack on the numerically weaker Indian community, Dabydeen describes "the collective violence and the collective realization of sexual fantasy on a frightening scale" (Dabydeen, 1984: 46): "Yesterday they pulled out a young girl from the river, tangled/ Up in the nets among the fish, bloated, breasts bitten/ All over, teeth marks in her throat and thigh./ It wasn't piranha." The dead girl, whose name is Mala, is described in moving details as someone who is both a human being and a sign of endless brutality in a system created, perpetrated and preserved by greed. Lust for land and lust for profit easily translate into lust for body; and the chain of lust leads to lust for blood even of someone who shares the same space and same disprivileged position as the avengers. Dabydeen uses unsettling but sensuous details and erotically charged pictures to mute the elegiac strain of the poem and to bring into a sharp focus the violent nature of Guyanese existence. In *Guyana Pastoral* which

is an ironic anti-pastoral of rape and murder of a young girl, Dabydeen again employs the same strategy to bring home the violence inherent in the community; but in this poem he adds another familiar device to the same end, that is, the violence inherent in Guyanese Creole, and its "hard, brutal rhythms" (Dabydeen, 1984: 49).

Slave Song is obsessed with torture, sexuality and sugarcane; to the extent that white women are seem to secretly desire to be raped. "The Canecutter's Song," for example, is quite explicit about a white woman wanting "to be degraded secretly . . . to be possessed and mutilated in the mud" (Dabydeen, 1984: 53). The cane cutter's song is both an individual and collective fantasy about possession of a white female body, and a regret for his inability to ever achieve "the sort of beauty, cleanliness and inner spiritual strength that are symbolized by the White Woman" (Dabydeen, 1984:53). A comparison with Caliban's desire for Miranda is unavoidable here, and quite fruitful too. While it is quite commonplace to consider the black Caliban to desire the white body of Miranda, it is not so commonplace to consider Miranda ever desiring herself to be possessed by Caliban. But a close reading of the exchange between Miranda and Caliban, particularly the spiteful passage in Act I Scene II where Miranda curses Caliban, reveals that such a possibility is not beyond the narrative frame of the play. As Dabydeen explains in his lecture on Samaroo, "Miranda's savage outburst . . . quite rightly struck critics as not quite in keeping with the fragrance of her character, but sounding more like the cursing of a cheated and revengeful harlot. So for two hundred and fifty years editors gave Prospero the violent speech to preserve Miranda's linguistic virginity" (Dabydeen 2000: 11). The speech also points at Franz Fanon's contention that colonization doesn't only contaminate the colonized, but the colonizer as well. Miranda and Caliban inhabit a space, which has already been violated, mutilated and possessed. They, like the white masters and black men in *Slave Song*, are already both contaminated. If Caliban could ever lay his hands on Ariel, he would have done the same violence on him as he would have done on Miranda if Stephano and Trinculo's drunken plot ever materialized.

Slave Song's graphic presentation of the degraded body, and the frequent references to dismembered body parts, waste, stench and other aspects of abjection can be considered in terms of the newly emerged postcolonial corporal politics. The tortured body with suggestions of the grotesque more than the tragic subverts the idealized body and aspects of formal beauty that Western literary and artistic traditions have so earnestly admired. The focus on the abject challenges the metaphor of purification Craig Houser suggests that "abject identifications are effective in disrupting 'normativeness'" (Houser, 99) in creating a space for (re)claiming power. The link between abjection and power is spelt out in terms of retrieval and recuperation of identity, history and biological power of the body. "The idealized version of the subject entirely free from its allegedly ignoble other – the base materialism of the body –" writes Martin Jay "has been successfully exploded by the new attention paid to abjection" (Jay, 156). Abjection, for Dabydeen, is also

a liberating antidote to repression, torture and violence. Much like Julia Kristeva, Dabydeen also emphasizes the seductive power of abjection, its distortion of the patriarchal gaze, and eventually, its ability to overturn categorical identities, such as White Woman, Black Man. Dabydeen maintains that "(t)he deepest mood of postcolonial writing . . . is not righteous and retaliatory anger but a song of redemption." Apart from the history of postcolonial social, political and cultural transformations and the distance between the colonial past and the postcolonial reality of most once-colonized nations, one reason why "retaliatory anger" is subsumed by "a song of redemption" is, perhaps, the body's power to regenerate and reclaim its lost identity. Abjection focuses on the absences within this identity: the disfigurement and mutilation, the "prosthetic grotesque" of Francis Bacon, for example, points to a space of completeness and wholeness, and a loss and denial. Such imaginary reconstruction of body parts and features is, in the end, suggests a poignant redemption of the body. Julia Kristeva defines abjection "in terms of mourning for an impossible, always, already lost object" (Jay: 152), which also closely reassembles what Dabydeen describes as a song of redemption. Abjection, seen in terms as impurity, mutilation, and absence, constantly questions colonialism's myth of purity, plentitude and presence. The central image in the lines "I am thirsty, dust and vinegar choke my mouth, sweat leaks over me like gutter-water/ Heat hatches lice in my hair" ("Song of the Creole Gang Women") or "And of how I hold you down, shake up your waist/ Draw blood from your womb, daub it over your face/ Till you're dirty like me ..." ("The Canecutter's Song") is shocking and repulsive; but readers do not gloss over the picture in search of more reassuring imagery. The violent image forces the reader to linger, and probably look for gaps in the narrative that speak of a "before" or an "after." What is the white woman before the cane cutter violated her, even in his fancy? What happens to the Creole Gang Women, tomorrow, day after? These are uneasy questions and bring the opposing ends of a colonial spectrum – White-Black -- together, for an examination of power, violence and sado- masochism.

Two other aspects of *Slave Song* remain to be examined for the way it reconstructs postcolonial textuality – its language and its narrative mode, and the translations and notes. The notes, which Dabydeen describes as "playful," are parodic of the tradition of TS Eliot and Alexander Pope, who also provided annotations to their poems. But critics also believe that the notes have a "peculiarly postcolonial effect and meaning." Mark McWatt, for example, sees the notes as an attempt to control the Creole voice by a translator who represents the colonial culture (McWatt, 62). There is no doubt that the notes have the appearance of spoofs – their facile summarizing of events and description of unspeakable horror, violence, pain or remorse at times appear grotesque; but the notes also perform the important role of filling up the reader's knowledge gap. There is nothing wrong in assuming that many English readers (Why only English? Why not all the readers across the globe?) may have difficulty making full textural and contextual meanings of the poems, and the notes may be of help. However, Dabydeen seems to be fully aware of his duality, "inbetweenness," his inhabiting the space between two

cultures, and the problem of talking across both. The notes and translations remind the readers of the essential hybridity underlying the postcolonial situation anywhere – of forever belong and not belong to two or more cultures – and making light of the irreversible situation.

And finally, Dabydeen's Creole and the use of Standard English for notes and translations. Despite the fact that he underrates Creole as inadequate to express a wide range of feelings, the impression the poems give is quite the opposite. His Creole is forceful, intense and driven by the kind of energy that characterizes the resistant language of the colonized anywhere, such as in the cursing and swearing speeches of Caliban in *The Tempest*. Creole is primarily an oral language, and Dabydeen writes about its "kinetic energy" in the Introduction to *Slave Song*. The poems retain the oral qualities of the language: sharp articulation, rough texture of words, alliteration, suggested bodily gestures accompanying oral presentation and the raw energy of a living discourse – what Dabydeen described sometimes as "vulgarity," sometimes as "brutality." His translations read less charged and animated in comparison, and Dabydeen himself admits that at places, "(t)he English fails where the Creole succeeds." (Dabydeen, 1984: 14). His poems, in spite of their harshness, are lyrical, and faithfully reflect the experiences of the marginalized and the colonized. The language itself cannot be tragic, as Dabydeen suggests, but the experiences of the users certainly are. These experiences, ranging from bitterly nostalgic to frighteningly violent reflect the colonial suppression of the subject and his desire for freedom and revenge. The freedom never comes though, and revenge turns inwards, into acts of fantasy, or brutality against fellow subalterns. *Slave Song* thus shows both the continuity of colonization in is different mutations across geography and culture, and the continuous history of subjugation and resistance, and different ways it manifest itself.

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Solitude and Nature of Colonial, Postcolonial and Neocolonial Times in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

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Abstract

One Hundred Years of Solitude *is explicitly a genealogical fiction of the six generations of the Buendias and their solitude—crammed and coded in the indecipherable parchments of one gipsy Melquiades but implicitly it is a paradigmatic representation of Latin America and the Latin Americans and their engagement with history and other ethno-socio-political trajectories. This paper will first examine the semantic and semiotic connotations of 'solitude', a word unique in Latin American context, and how it spreads out over the fate of a prophesized century. The paper will then show how Garcia Marquez , under the rubric of a magically real tale, articulates a parallel historiographic discourse on Colombia's or in other words, Latin America's cyclical phases of colonization, decolonization and neocolonization thus suggesting a demystification of the smug myth of theoretical sovereignty.*

One Hundred Years of Solitude, despite being primarily a work of fiction, has also been considered a seminal work on non-fictional areas like history, politics, geography, anthropology, natural and Biological sciences, religion etc. in addition to a confounding range of sub-areas both literary and non-literary. To Carlos Fuentes, the novel is a study of "Utopia, Epic and Myth" that corresponds to the "deep historicity of Spanish America" ("Second Reading" 26). To Julio Ortega, the novel linguistically acts within" the rules of fable and myth", goes beyond "the chronological margins of history" and speaks of things not only of myth but also of chronicle and legend ("Exchange System" 2-4). Frank Kermode finds in it verisimilitude of Revelations, the Biblical "patterns of creation, empire, decadence, renovation, catastrophe on to history" (qtd. in Zamora 65). To Roberto Gonzalez Echevarria, the novel is an archive in addition to myth ("Myth and Archive" 84). Gerald Martin views a broader scope of the novel: "We see the world from genesis to apocalypse, from Renaissance to Baroque, from independence to neo-colonialism; or from use values to exchange values, transparence to opaqueness, childhood innocence to adult guilt, lines and circles to labyrinth" ("On 'Magical'" 102). Mario Vargas Llosa prefers to see the novel within "the orders or levels of reality on which it stands: the individual and the collective, the legendary and the historic, the social and the psychological, the everyday and the mythical" ("Amadis" 59). Levitt, Martin, and Bell-Villada consider

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the novel paradigmatic of magic realism or of the glossy variants of realism as against the fantasy of Borges's world. Beneath all the critical conundrum Melquiades' coded horoscope most importantly remains a genealogical fiction of Latin America and Latin American colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial times–all proliferated and crammed within the predestined century of solitude.

The proliferation referred to encompasses all presumable trajectories of a sovereign solitude in its socio-political, religio-cultural, mythical and historiographical manifestations centred around a fictional Macondo, then expanded on those of colonial and postcolonial Latin America via Colombia. The journey of the first Buendia couple – Jose Arcadio Beundia and Ursula, away from society and civilization is a journey away from solitude of incest and violence towards other variants of solitude. In his "Nobel Lecture" Garcia Marquez defines Latin American solitude firstly in terms of internal "violence and pain"(90): "the immeasurable violence and pain of our history are the result of age-old inequities and untold bitterness, and not a conspiracy plotted three thousand leagues from our home"(90), secondly, in terms of a geo-political syndrome "as it were impossible to find another destiny than to live at the mercy of two great masters of the world" (90). The solitude that spread beyond the six generations of the Buendias and the territorial borders of Macondo is the non-fictional solitude summed up by Garcia Marquez in his quintessential Nobel address: "This, my friends, is the crux of our solitude"(Nobel Lecture 89). The kind of solitude Garcia Marquez deplores, solitude with strong historio-political suggestiveness is found to be formulated and developed in the novel within the fictional perimeter of a century. If Macondo is a metonym for Colombia or Latin America, and one hundred years a microscopic version of a longer linear time stretched back and forth in the directions of the past and the future, the solitude of the continent's history via the Buendias should then form the praxis of all solitudes incorporated in the prominent characters.

The Spanish *Soledad* of the source text has been transferred to solitude, a near-synonym in Gregory Rabassa's English translation. "Solitude" in everyday use refers to "the state of being alone especially when you find this pleasant ("Solitude", def.). A compound of *sol* (or Sun) and *edad* (or age), Soledad implies time, growth, degeneration and regeneration. "Soledad is an alluring, mournful, much-used Spanish noun, suggesting both doom and solace, a flight from love but also from lies, a claim to dignity which is also a submission to neglect" (Wood 34). Besides its fictional, historio-political connotations the word has a broad cultural dimension as Michael Wood further points out:

> Soledad is part of a culture which calls its streets paradise or bitterness or disenchantment; and gives girls names like Virtues, Sorrows and Mercies. Soledad is itself a girl's name, and the name of Octavio Paz's Mexican labyrinth. Soledades is the title of one of the most famous poem in the Spanish language, Gongora's evocation of a pastoral shipwreck. (34)

It is therefore evident that the literary-cultural associations of the term, its fictional variants and the novelist's own predilection for a different reading of solitude outstretch the etymological connotation of the word and grope for meaning in contexts where politics has also been engaged and history has been debated inasmuch as reconstructed.

In a desperate attempt to escape from the memories of a murder and miasma of an original sin, Jose Arcadio Buendia, in accompaniment of a sizeable entourage, undertakes an exodus of pre-historic flair that takes long twenty-six months till the young patriarch decides to settle "on the banks of a stony river" (24) – and name the place Macondo, an unheard, meaningless word retrieved from his hallucinatory dream (24). The exodus, as the narrative suggests, is a retreat from the centre of guilt, the knowledge of incest and its attending nemesis towards a distant Utopia which might serve as a release from reality and reminder. This is particularly true for Jose Arcadio Buendia while for Ursula, it is an unsolicited future, unpredictable too, for purging the Buendia generations of pig-tails and other contaminations. And for the heads of the satellite families it is an alluring call for adventure (23) in addition to their subconscious allegiance to the social high-ups like the first Buendia. This, in the course of the story, leads us to the pathological history of solitude the privileged Buendias suffer from while others outside the clan do not.

The first sign of solitude that Jose Arcadio Buendia shows proceeds straight from his contact with Melquiades who brings science to Macondo and connects the small world the senior Buendia has founded with the greater world he left behind. The most enterprising man the village has ever seen turns into a solitary scientist and explorer engaged in all frivolous experiments and expeditions: extracting impossible gold from the bowels of the earth with metal ingots (2), practising the formulas of Moses and Zosimus to double the quantity of gold (7), re-discovering the old truth of the orange-roundness of the earth with only a rudimentary astrolabe (5), spending days to have a daguerreotype of God (54) and exploring a route to civilization which ends up in discovering "an eternally sad" "paradise of dampness and silence" (11) – "a universe of grief" (12) and beyond it an enormous Spanish galleon in a space of "solitude and oblivion" (12), a reminder that subtly connects the Spanish colonial past with the Macondian present. This situates Jose Arcadio Buendia's individual solitude within the cross-roads of history. In retrospect, his solitude is not the self-absorption of a scientist with a robotic objectivity; it is rather an impulse to escape and create a Utopia (as evinced in the foundation of Macondo) as well as its associated failure due to mistransmission of knowledge that Melquiades transfers and later the intrusion of government machinery (through the arrival of Don Apolonir) that threatens his Utopia. His symbiosis of dream and science, the latter to realize the first, and the limitations he has been pig-tailed with bring no end to his solitude and tragically lead him to a continuous suspension of reality, falsely termed as lunacy, falsely because his sense never seems to have left him when he is communicated, for example, with love by Ursula or with Latin rhetoric by Father Nicanor. Jose Aradio's solitude is, therefore, paradigmatic of a dreamer, explorer, founder and colonizer that shapes the solitude of later history.

Colonel Aureliano Buendia with a history of thirty-two armed uprisings and defeat in all of them, and a further record of surviving fourteen attempts on his life, seventy-three ambushes and a firing squad (106) does not seem to rise above the commonplace Buendia solitude. As an adolescent, on sharing his elder brother's reminiscence of sexual exploits with Pilar Ternera, he tosses on "the solitary bed" as if baked with "a bottom of live coals" (36) and in a hangover of anxiety takes "refuge in solitude" of repressed desire. It is for fear of solitude he also visits Pilar Ternera, and in twenty years of civil wars he leaves a trail of seventeen Aurelianos, all recognized bastards of the colonel. Of course the figure excludes Aureliano Jose by Pilar Ternera. Much later in the twilight years of his life he reaches a different abyss of solitude. Defeated, humiliated and forlorn, the old colonel shuts himself off from wars, politics, nemesis and everything. He has the last snap-shot of solitude in the visage of death when life's allegorical circus parades out before his mortal eyes: "once more he saw the face of his miserable solitude when everything had passed by and there was nothing" (273).

The seventeen Aurelianos are also characterized by "a solitary air that would have been enough to identify them anywhere on earth" (221). The sign of the cross in ashes on their foreheads leaves an indelible mark of solitude and ironically enough, it makes them easy, distinguishable targets of the conservative assassins assigned to deracinate the Buendia line. The other bastard Aureliano Jose suffers from "abrupt solitude" (147) in his failure to consummate his incestuous attachment to his aunt Amaranta. A boisterous Aurelian Segundo speaks of "bitter solitude". Meme, despite all her fun and amusing habits, faces a solitude of irrefutable fate. For Jose Arcadio sexual orientation goes to the extent of "fearful solitude" (28). For Amaranta, solitude is the inability to love; it is also the destiny of living and dying loveless as a hardened soul that gets lost under "the measureless understanding of solitude". Rebeca attains "the privileges of solitude" through nearly fifty years of sufferings and abandonment; she dies like a fossil of solitude. In a house terribly lacking in love the last two surviving Buendias – Aureliano and Amaranta Ursula are left to play prodigal love of solitude giving birth to a pig-tailed Aureliano. The dread that once forced the founder couple to flee from the centre of guilt comes true: the mother dies; ants eat away the child and the father gets wiped out by the cyclonic wind bringing a close to the century of Buendian solitude.

In the framework of Melquiades' chronicle, the solitudes of the Buendias, particularly of the famous four: Jose Arcadio Buendia, Colonel Aureliano Buendia, Aureriano Segundo and Aureliano ,do not remain mere individual idiosyncrasies nor do they remain strictly confined to Macondo. Either the larger world intrudes upon Macondo or the Buendias grow big enough to outstrip Macondo, or both. This re-presents solitude with serious historio-political ramifications in the way Garcia Marquez has tuned it. Jose Arcadio Buendia links dream with reality, Utopia with Macondo, then with "the benefits of science" so as not to rot alive (13). This welcome invitation/invasion of science from the other world does not however jeopardize the sovereignty of his solitude inasmuch as the latter is threatened by the distant government that sends Don Apolinar, the magistrate to encroach, rule,

politicize and make the Buendian Utopia dysfunctional. The solitude of Jose Arcadio Buendia and Macondo, so far non-political and unchallenged, begins to lose its composure and power with the increasing infiltration of the government machinery and their political indoctrination. The militarization of politics brings forth the solitude of violence and war that rocks the Buendia house, Colombia and Latin America via Macondo. In the uproar of wars the discourse of solitude enters into a historic phase with the colonel leading the liberal rebels. This episode adds strong overtones of political dialectic to solitude as it drifts towards useless wars and bottomless hopelessness. The solitude is given a darker political character by Aureliano Segundo who both as a Buendia and a liberal organizes the banana strike against the North American United Fruit Company and finds himself a lone survivor at the end of a government-sponsored massacre. The solitude of the century reaches the point of oblivion through Aurenliano's death and death of the clan. Melquiades' manuscript ends up in the coded doom of a Latin American feudal dynasty. At the same time it obliquely foresees a Colombia rising out of the ruins of Macondo, no more burdened with the ruling Buendias and no more cursed with the solitude of the past century. Beyond the length of that century, there gleams the prospect of another socialist Utopia, this time to be founded by races other than the ones "condemned to one hundred years of solitude" (422) on the same space Macondo leaves behind.

While foredrawing the genesis of Macondo and the Buendias, Melquades' creator re-draws the history of a greater space and race – of Colombia and the Colombians, Latin America and the Latin Americans, and simultaneously critiques the myths attached to that history. In the process of critiquing and demythicizing history Garcia Marquez makes a literary pastel of three historical times: colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial. The historiographical revision has been done within the perimeter of fictional time that crams colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial snapshots into the smaller time-frame of a solitary century. The revision is further accomplished by stretching the solitary century past and futureward to encompass three hundred years of Spanish rule, a postcolonial century of civil wars and dictatorships, and the US infiltration into Latin America in the 1920s and 1930s. The novel, written in the years of Cuban revolution, looks back at the pig-tail of history and its growth. James Higgins rightly calls it "a deeply serious and highly ambitious book that sets out to rewrite the history of Latin America" and "debunk the official myths by offering an alternative history" ("de Soledad" 37-40).

The novel makes first reference to colonial past at page two. Jose Arcadio Buendia, in an ironical effort to unearth gold with Melquiades' iron ingots, unearths "a suit of fifteenth century armor which had all its pieces soldered together with rust and inside of which there was hollow resonance of an enormous stone-filled gourd" (2). This is followed by references to Ursula's "colonial coins" (3), and "enormous Spanish galleon" (12). The European explorers reached the Colombian territory of Guajira peninsula by the end of the fifteenth century and they made up to the coast of Caribbean Colombia in 1501-02. The Spanish explorers landed on the Caribbean coast of Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta in 1525. The armor Jose

Arcadio Buendia excavated refers to one of those armors used by caballeros or horsemen, sailors and soldiers ("Spanish Invasion" 1) in the early days of Spanish colonial occupation. The colonial armour, under layers of oblivious time, developed rust–rust of postcolonial distance and neglect. It offers a fossiled view of colonialism, and its hollow resonance is the reverberating emptiness of the colonial past. In the role of a founder colonizer of Macondo, Jose Arcadio Buendia retrieves a relic of his distant Spanish counterpart in a symbolic excavation of history. Ursula's "colonial coins", reminiscent of El Dorado and colonial inheritance, had traversed through generations from her father to her but not yet lost their monetary value and relevance. To Ursula, the colonial coins are invaluable treasure never to be parted with; to Jose Arcadio Buendia they are only colonial vestiges tradable for scientific knowledge.

The reference to the Spanish galleon brings the gamut of Spanish involvement in the South America—from navigational exploration to occupation and colonization. In a drive to connect Macondo with civilization, a drive characterized by insatiable thirst for diaspora, Jose Arcadio Buendia and his men undertake another perilous journey from Macondo. After weeks of dragging their tired bones they wake up one fine morning to discover "an enormous Spanish galleon" that makes them "speechless with fascination" (12). The text recounts:

> Before them, surrounded by ferns and palm trees, white and powdery in the silent morning light, was an enormous Spanish galleon. Tilted slightly to the starboard, it had hanging from its intact masts the dirty rags of its sails in the midst of its rigging, which was adorned with orchids. The hull, covered with an armor of petrified barnacles.(12)

 Such galleons carried the Spanish navigators, settlers and colonizers to the Caribbean coast. The discovery of such a long-lost galleon connects Macondo with the history of colonization, and ominously foretells another history of oblivion Macondo and the Buendias would end in. Subjected to neglect and abandonment of centuries the galleon has already turned into a ruin of colonial grandeur. Long ago it accomplished its mission of voyage and plunder, then got trapped in the colonized's land as a pathetic reminder. The allegorical ship is found tilted sideward in its sandy burial. Its sails that could have changed into dust have not decomposed beyond rags; its hull has got cemented with the "surface of stones". The ship is a frozen moment of Spanish colonial history reflecting how it got stuck up in South American soil and how the moss metamorphosed it into a moth-eaten skeleton. Michael Wood sums up the ship as history: "The ship is piracy and conquest, a whole patch of Spanish history" (*Solitude* 33). Iris M Zavala considers the Spanish galleon a "symbol of colony", the whole of Macondo, Spanish America being "a solitary colony" ("Chronicle" 119). The galleon, with overtones of piracy, conquest, domination and damnation provides a colonial dimension to a saga comfortably fitted into postcolonial and late postcolonial histories.

Sir Francis Drake features in the novel quite extensively, re-enforcing a sense of historicity in an otherwise fictional work. European incursion into South America

remains indebted to Sir Francis Drake inasmuch as to Columbus and other peers. He (birth 1540-43, death 1596) was the most renowned sea-man of the Elizabethan Age who, commissioned by Elizabeth I in 1577, led an expedition to South America and beyond. His raids against Spanish colonies made him a fearful sea-man and a wealthy man of his time. But ironically he had to choose sea at the age of thirteen to escape his family's poverty ("Sir Francis Drake."). The novel introduces him thus: "When the pirate Sir Francis Drake attacked Riohacha in the sixteenth century, Ursula Iguaran's great-great-grandmother became so frightened with the ringing of alarm bells and the firing of cannons that she lost control of her nerves and sat down on a lighted stove" (19). To the South Americans Drake was only a "pirate" equipped with cannons, "ferocious attack dogs" and mechanism of "shameful tortures" (19). The misfortunes of Ursula in relation to her husband are shuttled back to those moments of colonial encounter: "every time that Ursula became exercised over her husband's mad ideas, she would leap back over three hundred years of fate and curse the day that Sir Francis Drake had attacked Riohacha" (20). This is how the nightmarish colonial memories go on affecting postcolonial moments of the Latin Americans via the Buendias.

   The important colonial mementos – Ursula's gold coins, the Spanish galleon and Sir Drake's resurrection as a pirate are not snapshots of nostalgia, they are rather tools of re-writing history – critiquing, parodying and insubordinating it. Jose Arcadio Buendia's expedition for civilization is one way of putting forward the dialectic between colonial myth and reality, and repudiating the European gospel of civilizing her colonies. It is not the Spaniards but gypsy Melquiades who brings science and enlightenment to Macondo. "Latin America's isolation from intellectual developments in Europe," comments James Higgins, "is hilariously brought out when Jose Arcadio's researches lead him to the discovery that the earth is round" ("de Soledad" 40). A colony, by virtue of being a colony, discovers ice when it is already an old truth. Jose Arcadio invents a weapon of war with a telescope and a magnifying glass' unconsciously repeating an invention already old. The knowledge that Europe mastered long ago is seen to be re-discovered by her colonies. Garcia Marquez, thus through parodies and mimicry, re-creates the colonial phase of mythical Macondo and its bearing on the later political periods.

   Melquades' pastel of history covers Macondo's colonial past as well as its post-independence years up to 1930. The status of Macondo in that history remains essentially dialectical: the primitive place Jose Arcadio Buendia named Macondo was presumably free before the Spanish intrusion but colonized henceforth, then officially decolonized after the independence of its non-fictional counterpart Colombia. The history of colonization and decolonization turns ambivalent when Jose Arcadio Buendia founds his colony of Macondo with the airs of a Spanish descendant only to discover very soon that Macondo is under the rule of a distant government. The discovery relegates Macondo to a peripheral status in relation to the newly introduced centre propagating a fresh layer of ambivalence. The entrance of the magistrate Don Apolinar Moscote heralds the beginning of a political era

hitherto unknown to Macondo. His arrival also marks the arrival of the Republican era (Higgins 41). He brings a government to Macondo where they don't need judges either because "there's nothing that needs judging" (58). Macondo is self-dependent and autonomous as dreamt by the founders: "[…] they had founded the village…distributed the land, opened the roads, and introduced the improvements that necessity required without having bothered the government and without anyone having bothered them" (58). Don Apolinar exhibits his first show of power by ordering to paint all the houses in blue, the colour of the conservatives, in celebration of the anniversary of national independence day. The order that undermines the authority of the founder is however countermanded and Jose Arcadio Buendia temporarily wins. The soldiers are withdrawn; the owners are given back their right to paint their houses white or blue as they wish. But the authority of the government is simultaneously recognized by allowing the magistrate to stay and rule on behalf of his distant government.

Politics as an ideological construct, imported from the mainland to Macondo by Don Apolinar, starts vitiating the non-political character of Macondo. The magistrate, in his paradigmatic loyalty to the government / conservatives in power and in his equally paradigmatic hatred for the liberals who are not in power, re-employs the colonial doctrine of division in Macondo. The post-independence years of Colombia had seen such compartmentalization of partisanship into two ideologically antagonistic political clans: the Liberals and the Conservatives. Michael Wood observes: "The Liberals and the Conservatives who dominated nineteenth century and most of twentieth-century politics stood for quite different things – reform or reaction, free trade or protection, separation or conjugation of church and state (*Solitude* 8). The differences are sometimes suggested, sometimes exaggerated and sometimes dismissed by the characters concerned in the text. However the way they are presented and disputed forms the praxis of political dissonance the inhabitants of Macondo are now to live with and suffer. Don Apolinar defines the inherited dichotomies of the two parties with the prejudice of a conservative pontiff:

> The Liberals, he said, were freemasons, bad people, wanting to hang priests, to institute civil marriage and divorce, to recognize the rights of the illegitimate children as equal to those of legitimate ones, and to cut the country up into a federal system that would take power away from the supreme authority. (98)

His fairly distorted formulation of the Liberals and their goals is falsely balanced by his sublime version of the Conservatives:

> The conservatives, on the other hand, who had received their power directly from God, proposed the establishment of public order and family morality. They were the defenders of the faith of Christ, of the principle of authority, and were not prepared to permit the country to be broken down into autonomous entities. (98)

The monstrous distinction between the two – one as bad and the other as god-sent, one as killer of priests and the other as defender of the Church and morality etc. reflects the corrosive division of the nation. Whatever the official truth is, the ideological battles are ultimately directed to the goal of attaining absolute state power. Both the Liberals and the Conservatives in postcolonial years are found fighting each other and trading away all principles for power as Colonel Aureliano Buendia realizes after his long years of futile wars. As the narrative progresses, it contextualizes other darker facets of Colombian history via that of Macondo: election rigging, civil wars, martial law, arrival of the American Fruit Company and beginning of neocolonial era, the massacre of the plantation workers etc.

Don Apolinar not only brings the Conservative-Liberal divide to Macondo but also scandalizes election as an institution by manipulating it in favour of the Conservative government. The election is held in ostensible fairness but the switch in ballots is done at night. The whole tricky business repels Aureliano Buendia so much that he tells his father-in-law point-blank: "If I were a Liberal, I'd go to war because of those ballots" (101). The proclamation of martial law, arrival of the army in Macondo, their taking away of authority from the titular head, repression and random killing etc. literally compel Macondo to do away with her passivity. "[T]wenty-one men under the age of thirty commanded by Aureliano Buendia" take the garrison by surprise, seize the weapons, execute the captain and the four soldiers and, begin the first of the many wars Macondo/Colombia would be through (104).

In its founding years Jose Arcadio Buendia's Macondo has been unobtrusively domestic and dreamy, geographically alienated and forlorn, socially uninitiated in politics, partisanship and election, and unexposed to martial law, civil wars and other postcolonial realities. While the first Buendia honourably encounters the governmental intrusion into Macondo's sovereignty, Aureliano of the second generation does the more honourable thing by taking arms against the atrocious army. The history of Macondo then repeats the history of Colombia. Melquiades' pastel takes into serious account of Colonel Buendia's uprisings and defeat, of the ingrained antagonism between professional military personnel and revolutionaries, the latters' self-styled ranks and their acceptability / unacceptability within / beyond the space of wars (126). The text brings to the fore the premises and promises of the revolution. It seems to be inadequately defined, and then it is the one that has gone astray and turned ambivalent. General Moncada, for example, considers all "military men unprincipled loafers, ambitious plotters, experts in facing down civilians in order to prosper during times of disorder" (150). Colonel Gerineldo Marquez reduces the whole bunch of revolutionaries into a motley crowd of "idealists, ambitious people, adventurers, those with social resentments, even common criminals" (169). To Colonel Buendia it is revolution that kills people, and all killings go in the name of revolution, and "all court-martials are farces" (163). Like revolution itself he seems to be tired of "the vicious circle of that war" (171) that goes on endlessly often to the apprehension that it is not worthy of all those sacrifices. After signing the treaty of Neerlandia the colonel shoots himself but is tricked by death. The infinite wars leave him sapless and

hopeless. His only dream then remains "to die of fatigue in the oblivion and misery of his little gold fishes" (219). Ironically, to his liberal compatriots he is only an adventurer and to his conservative adversaries a bandit (133).

Whatever their judgements / misjudgements are he, like his great models – Garcia Marquez's grandfather and General Rafael Rafael Uribe Uribe, embodies the war as Lucila Ines Mena suggests: "Colonel Aureliano Buendia embodies the whole of Liberal history in the period. He is a synthesis of the rebellion, with its leaders, its ideals and its failures. On the other hand, the colonel is the war" (qtd. in Wood 92). Arithmetically Melquiades' chronicle begins in or around 1828 and ends in 1928 conforming to the fateful solitary century. As Macondo's foundation, allowing Garcia Marquez's liberal exercise of anachronism, corresponds to Colombia's independence and official decolonization in 1810, so does Macondo's fictional destruction to the anti-neocolonial struggles and the massacre of the banana plantation workers at Cienaga in 1928. The arrival of Mr Herbert and his bandwagon at Macondo is paradigmatic of US economic, political and military proliferation in Latin American countries, here specifically Colombia. The exposure to trade boom and access to money resurrect the old gospel of colonial prosperity in a postindependence period. People start basking at the sudden warmth of wealth. The gringos bring money and whores, introduce banana zones, change Macondo's topography, capitalize on cheap labour, replace the conservative functionaries by dictatorial foreigners, oust old policemen for hired assassins and herald an era of terror (244-45). "[T]hese shitty gringos" (245) stage an imperial entrance at Macondo like the Spaniards of the distant past, consolidate their entrance through exploitation and deception in connivance with the ruling regime, and finally perpetrate the most gruesome massacre in Colombian history. The massacre proves how a government, here of Miguel Abadia Mendez (1926-30) in treacherous alliance with US imperialism, here represented by United Fruit Company, can endorse and safeguard neocolonial designs even if it requires to machine gun "more than three thousand people, workers, women and children" (309). This is exactly what General Contes Vargas's army has accomplished:

> The captain gave the order to fire and fourteen machine guns answered at once… They were penned in, swirling about in a gigantic whirlwind that little by little was being reduced to its epicenter as the edges were systematically being cut off all around like an onion being peeled by the insatiable and methodical shears of the machine guns. (311)

The US interests in Macondo / Colombia, the gringo infiltration and exploitation, collaboration of the government and the military with the gringos, the killings of the striking workers – all foretell a history of rising US imperialism. In an interview with Gene H. Bell-Villada Garcia Marquez observes: "Of course, my view of Americans is a lot more complex, and I attempted to convey those events without any hate. United States may be our enemy, but it's a formidable enemy" ("Conversation" 20). The neocoloniality of the postcolonial period makes Melquiades' pastel a critique of all times – colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial.

One Hundred Years of Solitude paradoxically employs, mimics and deviates from the premises of history. It introduces the birth of a history when it is obviously an off-shoot of another old history. It revisits the colonial relics as if to remind that past is not really past; it reviews the paradox of being decolonized and recolonized in a period ostensibly postcolonial; it re-assesses the relationship between the two Americas and the dependency theory evolved therefrom, and finally it interrogates and dismantles the official history constructing a historiography potentially pro-proletariat. Like Pablo Neruda's *Canto General*, Cesar Vallejo's *Tungsten* or Miguel Angel Asturias's United Fruits trilogy (*Strong Wind*, *The Green Pope* and *The Eyes of the Interred*), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* revisits the tampered   areas of history and proffers a reconstruction. The most tampered areas of history that have been given concentration in this novel are the banana strike and the consequent carnage, distortion and obliteration of facts. The introduction and operation of the United Fruit Company can be viewed as "a textbook case of overseas imperialism and colonialism" (Bell-Villada, "Banana Strike" 133) initiating an "era of neocolonial domination by the United States" (Echevarria 87). Again the general strike organized by the workers and labour unions should be considered paradigmatic of anti-imperial movements issued from sparks of protests on lack of sanitary facilities, non-existence of medical facilities, terrible working conditions, scrip system of payment etc. Instead of reaching an amicable settlement, the company in conjunction with the government and the military chooses to wipe out protests with bullets. Gerald Martin zeros in on the episodes:

> The massacre was perpetrated by troops under General Carlos Cortes Vargas at the Cienaga (Magdalena) railway station on 5 December 1928, in direct connivance with the United Fruit Company. More than thirty thousand workers were on strike in the zone and it appears that at least four thousand at the Cienaga demonstration when the troops opened fire. The conservative government of Miguel Abadia Mendez (1926-30) reported that a mere nine strikers were killed, and like all succeeding regimes, set about suppressing the true story. ("On 'magical'" 108)

In contradiction to Miguel Abadia Mendez's "mere nine" General Cortes Vargar quotes the figure of forty dead and one hundred wounded while the strike organizer Alberto Castrillon claims fifteen hundred dead and three thousand wounded (qtd. in Bell-Villada, "Banana Strike" 134). Jose Arcadio Segundo, the survivor of the massacre in Garcia Marquez's novel confirms that there must have been "three thousand" dead (319). Garcia Marquez admits of exaggeration in Segundo's figure but considers it tenable as it fits "the proportions of the novel" (Bill-Villada, "Conversation" 20). Let us now see how the government has manipulated history and reduced the whole tragedy into a non-existent truce. The process of distortion and obliteration has been conducted in three ways: firstly through government proclamation, secondly through implied intimidation and finally by endorsing a pro-imperial national history where episodes of subaltern struggles have been blotted

out. Immediately after the massacre a government proclamation to the nation says: "…the workers had left the station and had returned home in peaceful groups" (314-15). We are further informed how truth has been amputed and banished from history: "The official version, repeated a thousand times and mangled out all over the country by every means of communication the government found at hand, was accepted: there were no dead, the satisfied workers had gone back to their families…" (315). The government agencies persist in proclaiming normality at every hour of day and night but under the umbrella of martial law soldiers go on knocking doors down with their rifle butts, hauling suspects out of their beds on trips from which no one ever returns. "The search for and extermination of the hoodlums, murderers, arsonists, and rebels of Decree No. 4" (315) continues silencing truth through intimidation. The adulteration of history reaches an absurd height when the military denies everything outright: "You must have been dreaming… Nothing has happened in Macondo, nothing has ever happened, and nothing ever will happen. This is a happy town" (316). So the strike, bullets, deaths, dumping the dead at sea – all are diligently blotted out first from public memory, then from history. On the night Jose Arcadio Segundo returns from his near-burial, all the three women he meets tell him the same thing: "There weren't any dead" (314). After the catastrophic rains and hurricanes for "four years, eleven months and two days" (320) the twist in history becomes more endemic, and more grotesque fabrications creep into it. Even Colonel Aureliano Buendia turns into "a figure invented by the government as a pretext for killing liberals" (396). Macondo's political past seems to be under a plague of obliteration. Every time the last of the Buendias, Aureliano mentions the matter, people "repudiate the myth of the workers hemmed in at the station and the train with two hundred cars loaded with dead people" (396). The extent of distortion history has been forced to suffer can be conceived when they insist: "… after all, everything had been set forth in judicial documents and in primary school textbooks: that the banana company had never existed" (396). When the banana company ceases to exist in textbook versions of history, it can be deduced that the government as surrogate maker of history has been successful at least temporarily in drowning collective memory and wiping out the entire episode of neocolonial infiltration, exploitation and carnage. Since the fiery debate launched by Jorge Eliecer Gaitan and Gabriel Turbay on the issue in the Colombian parliament in 1929, H. Rodriguez Acosta argues, "[t]his episode of Colombian history has been repeatedly ignored by our historians because to reveal it would damage the reputation of the ruling class" (qtd. in Martin, "On 'magical'" 115). It is then the writer's task to replace 'state truth', as Salman Rushdie says, "so literature can, and perhaps must, give the lie to official facts" ("Imaginary Homelands" 226). Against the backdrop of the inertia of historians, Garcia Marquez offers a deconstructionist reading of history in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and frames a proletariat historiography of Colombia through Macondo which alternately turns into a history of the Latin American 'soledad' and its colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial times..

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Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* : A Pristine Document of the Lost Identity of a Mighty Masculine

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Abstract

This paper aims at showing order and hierarchy as intrinsically related to and important for the stability of a society. Any alteration and/or mismanagement of these elements can create disaster to a society. The Igbo society as shown in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart *was initially an ordered one, but the arrival of the Europeans marks the starting point of chaos. This chaos is the resultant of the Whites' interference with Igbo traditions and culture. At such point, Okonkwo, the protagonist, finds himself at a loss from a substantial height of power in a patriarchal society. The chaos created by the British injects a sense of nothingness into the minds of the Africans like Okonkwo-ultimately forcing his premature withdrawal from the earth. This paper seeks to study Okonkwo's fragile identity, which is invoked from the patriarchal sense of honour and male power and which in an active engagement with a different kind of power, power of imperialism, simply melts into disintegration.*

> "A sense of identity can be a source not merely of pride and
> joy, but also of strength and confidence" – Amartya Sen (01)

There is little disagreement about the sagacity of the aforesaid statement by the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen. Certainly, a person who acts upon such proclamation may show the best of his/her attitudes, but what happens when someone just picks up one or more words she/he thinks apt for him/her, definitely, it's going to be a disaster. If someone just takes *identity* as a *pride* but not as a *joy,* then the whole thought process gets broken up. Perhaps, this has happened to our protagonist Okonkwo, who receives *pride* as a core of his masculinity but not as a joy of living. This paper studies the reasons of Okonkwo's hammering tale who, at first, seems to be a well equipped personality having almost all the necessary qualities to be considered a prominent figure of the Igbo society, for that matter, in any society, even in our society, but as time passes by, he confronts the unbearable socio-historical reality and ends up in suicide.

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is explored through a web of themes out of which the easily traceable ones are patriarchal power, dignity, the sense of duty, exile,

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clash of cultures, order and hierarchy. The novel shows the disorder, anarchy and the conflicting situations as outcomes of the arrival of the Europeans who in the name of civilising the Africans, brought with them their religion, their ways of lives, and their ways of thinking to execute in Igbo land towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Things Fall Apart declares the masculine power and feminine weakness as the points of concern to reflect one's social identity in the Igbo society. In fact, this novel is a testimony to the social attitudes towards gender. Considering the masculine power and feminine weakness, the Igbo people accentuate the gender stratification of their culture to ensure the continuation of patriarchy. Igbo people think "A child belongs to its father and his family and not to its mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland and not to his motherland" (Achebe 121). In the Igbo society anything strong is linked to man and anything weak to woman. People are always associating power to uphold or demean someone and because of such attitudes, power is present both at physical and social levels. At the physical level, the lethargic people in the Igbo society are called as *agbala*, i.e. a woman in the Igbo language. Okonkwo receives this word as an insult and is afraid of such labelling: "It was the fear of himself, least he should be found to resemble his father...he had suffered when a playmate had told him that his father was *agbala*" (Achebe 13). At the social level, there is the power, because of which certain number of privileges are offered to the individual by the Igbo society. The man showing masculine power is respected by the clan, which is evident through Ogbuefi Ezeudu who "had been a great and fearless warrior in his time, and was now accorded a great respect in all the clan" (Achebe 57).

All can trace the nicely poised, well structured society of Umuofia, with its political organisation and kinship system at work in the first part of the novel. Here in this phase of the book, the projection of patriarchal power is seen through the main character, Okonkwo, a courageous warrior whose fame is beyond any question:

> Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honor to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten, from Umuofia to Mbaino. (Achebe 03)

As an individual, Okonkwo never shows off any affection towards anyone; he is impulsive as he acts before he thinks: "Okonkwo was not a man of thought but of action" (Achebe 48). Being a member of the patriarchal Igbo society, his hardcore philosophy is to rule over women: "No matter how prosperous a man was, if he was unable to rule his women...he was not really a man" (Achebe 37). He forgets the normalcy that its risky to look towards the sky as the limit and denies to accept the 'absolutism' of life. In connection to this, Achebe, in his essay "Chi in Igbo Cosmology," in *Mourning Yet on Creation Day* says:

> The limit (to a man's aspirations) is not the sky; it is somewhere much closer to earth. A suitable man will turn round at the frontier of absolutism and head for home again....The Igbo are unlikely to concede to the individual an absolutism they deny....The obvious curtailment of a man's power to walk alone and do as he provided by another potent force –the will of his community....No man, however great, can win judgment against all the people. (139)

Male power is a fundamental ruling instrument in the patriarchal Igbo society, where question of identity is always connected to power and the physical strength of a male. It is evident that power, related to strength, is the cultural representation of the Igbo society, as Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam says:

> Question of identity has always occupied a central place in any discourse on race, ethnicity and gender. The stress has mostly been on historical, political and cultural representation - or misrepresentation - of identity... (05)

The protagonist Okonkwo's reputation is highlighted in the text through the illustration of his physic, his strength and power:

> That was many years ago, twenty years or more, and during this time Okonkwo's fame had grown like a bush-fire in the harmattan. He was tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him a very severe look. He breathed heavily, and it was said that, when he slept, his wives and children in their houses could hear him breathe. When he walked, his heels hardly touched the ground and he seemed to walk on springs, as if he was going to pounce on somebody. And he did pounce on people quite often. He had a slight stammer and whenever he was angry and could not get his words out quickly enough; he would use his fists. He had no patience with unsuccessful men. He had had no patience with his father. (Achebe 03-04)

Okonkwo, it can be assumed easily, accomplishes his self-fulfilment as long as his power as a man remains intact. He has done that because his society has always demanded manliness from a man.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the Nigerian society Achebe talks of is flooded with the signposts of patriarchy. Albeit the model of *Nneka*, i.e. "Mother is Supreme," (Achebe 121) which is a significant notion of Steady's claim, the reality is that "the most important factor with regard to the woman in traditional society is her role as mother" (Achebe 06). Women are always marginalised; they are looked upon as mere properties of men: "In domestic terms, women are quantified as part of men's acquisitions. As wives, women come in multiple numbers, sandwiched between yam barns and titles" (Achebe 07). And, following such concept of the role of

women, they appear in Umuofia society from whatever angles that must be in connection to and/or under the manliness. They have no personal identity. Isolation is their only identity as they are not entitled to have anything from the society: "It was clear from the way the crowd stood or sat that the ceremony was for men" (Achebe 87). This shattered picture of women is sociologically natural not only in Umuofia but also in the African societies where phallocracy is dominant, where women are usually placed in a secondary position.

Okonkwo is known throughout Umuofia to be extremely masculine. He rarely shows signs of fear or weakness. This is because Okonkwo promises himself to be the complete opposite of his father Unoka. When the Oracle of the Hills and Caves orders the death of Ikemefuna, in order to show his fearlessness and to preserve his masculinity, Okonkwo strikes the final blow with his machete, even Ikemefuna is calling him: "My father, they have killed me" (Achebe 43). It's very cruel and foolish at the same time that a person is not hearing the call of fatherly affection just to show his masculinity. This killing of Ikemefuna is a crime. And, the most important fact is that this crime is a culturally sanctioned violence in the Igbo society. Critics, like Taylor, agree that it is a mistake for Okonkwo to commit such a crime because he is having a very special relationship with Ikemefuna, i.e. father-son (Taylor 20). But many fail to give the readers the answer that why such cultural violence based on oracle is justified in the Igbo society. The answer may be they are afraid of losing their masculine posture if they stoop down to such an injustice and Okonkwo surely is afraid of this as well. In this connection, Amartya Sen's words are important: "Violence is fomented by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror" (Sen 02). Once the Igbo society is poised though with complex traditions but this tightly organized community could not resist the onset of Western colonialism and is bound to fall apart which is started with the killing of the white man by the clan: "…they killed the white man and tied his iron horse to their sacred tree because it looked as if it would run away to call the man's friends" (Achebe 123). This killing based on an oracle is nothing but violence stirs up from aggressive attitudes of a group of naive people.

The author places Okonkwo in total opposition to his father who is portrayed as a lazy and reckless drunkard:

> Unoka, for that was his father's name, had died ten years ago. In his day he was a lazy and improvident and was quite incapable of thinking about tomorrow. If any money came his way, and it seldom did, he immediately bought gourds of palm-wine, called round his neighbors and made merry. He always said that whenever he saw a dead man's mouth he saw the folly of not eating what one had in one's lifetime. Unoka was, of course, a debtor, and he owed every neighbor some money, from a few cowries to quite substantial amounts. (Achebe 04)

So, Unoka is an irresponsible man. He is unable to manage properly the money he earns. His sole interest is to get gourds of palm-wine and to celebrate it with his friends. He is a failed man, as an *agbala*, as he is without any power, consequently have no identity of his own. The Umuofian people mock at Unoka, and the strong illustration of the failure of Unoka gets colour:

> Unoka, the grown-up, was a failure. He was poor and his wife and children had barely enough to eat. People laughed at him because he was a loafer, and they swore never to lend him any more money because he never paid back…Unoka was never happy when it came to wars. He was in fact a coward and could not bear the sight of blood. And so he changed the subject and talked about music, and his face beamed. (Achebe 05-06)

The readers will be wrong if they think the negative picture of Unoka is projected here by chance. In fact, it's the writer's intentional projection to represent power as the dominant feature of a male in the Igbo society. In another way, the writer is showing how the mass receive people who have failed to achieve the required manliness. So, it's easily understandable that men's power is closely connected with their own quest for identity. And, this is the reason why Okonkwo is in a continuous attempt to reinforce and fortify his position in the society and his power in relation to other people in the society. However, on the other hand, the readers can ask how a son can forget the inspiration from a father while he experienced general crop failure, how he forgets to remember the words of his father Unoka:

> Do not despair. I know you will not despair. You have a manly and proud heart. A proud heart can survive a general failure because such a failure does not prick its pride. It is more difficult and more bitter when a man fails alone. (Achebe 18)

Any reader can catch the wisdom that lies in the aforesaid words. But as Okonkwo is so much obsessed with being everything his father was not he misses the kernel of those words.

In the patriarchal society of Igbo, Okonkwo is always busy to present himself even through a false image of a real man with all the power attributed to him. His sense of identity and social status create the central obsessions he fights with in an internal conflict. At the start of the novel, Okonkwo appears a successful man. He has achieved the self-fulfilment he desires for. His maturity through physical strength forges a powerful personality in the patriarchal Igbo society and the status of an individual as a powerful male is fortified through the image of *agbala*. It is true that the Europeans' colonial imperialism shattered the Igbo society and destroyed the normalcy. But it is also a truth that the Igbo culture that came down to Okonkwo, focuses so much on patriarchal vanity that he cannot consume the weight and gets fully lost in a maze. In an interview, Achebe had referred to how

"...the Igbo culture lays a great deal of emphasis on difference, on dualities, on otherness" (Ogbaa 02). Answering whether the Whites' culture succeeded in destroying Igbo culture completely Achebe says:

> A culture can be damaged, can be turned from its course, not only by foreigners....culture can be mutilated, can be destroyed by its own people, under certain situations.... The Igbo culture was not destroyed by Europe. It was disturbed. It was disturbed very seriously. But...a culture which is healthy will often survive. It will not survive exactly in the form in which it was met by the invading culture, but it will modify itself and move on. And this is the great thing about culture if it is alive. The people who own it will ensure that they make adjustments: they drop what can no longer be carried in transition. So I think what has happened is that we still have the fundamental principles of the Igbo culture. Its emphasis is on the worth of every man and woman.... (Ogbaa 04)

It can be said that the 'emphasis' is neglected by Okonkwo, and that is why, he loses all strength to survive. The thought of patriarchy is injected to such an extent that he cannot think of anything else, the worth of 'women' which could give him a new path to come out from his internal conflict is totally ignored by him.

Following the cosmogony of the Igbo, Okonkwo's power stems from his personal wish and will to achieve and pursue success. This is clearly expressed in the novel:

> But the Ibo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his *chi* says yes also. Okonkwo said yes very strongly; so his *chi* agreed. And not only his *chi* but his clan too, because it judged a man by the work of his hands. That was why Okonkwo had been chosen by the nine villages to carry a message of war to their enemies unless they agreed to give up a young woman and a virgin to atone for the murder of Udo's wife. (Achebe 27)

Okonkwo is always readily in a position to secure the masculine status:

> Let us not reason like cowards…If a man comes into my hut and defecates on the floor, what do I do? Do I shut my eyes? No! I take a stick and break his head. This is what a man does. These people are daily pouring filth over us, and Okeke says we should pretend not to see. (Achebe 145)

Now, the irony is that human being is not someone who will carry like the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology beating and defeating all the obstacles created by the villains like Grendel of *Beowulf*. There is a boundary waiting for each of them, which will be faced by all through whatsoever the form is. And in *Things Fall Apart* the form is colonial infiltration. It's true that there are many other reasons such as

struggle between failure and success; powerful emotions which Okonkwo finds difficult to understand and express; personal ambition which exceeds loyalty to the traditions of Umuofian culture; the effects of Okonkwo's exile from his homeland which intensify his wish to return but also detach him from the way it develops in his absence and so on but no one can deny the double standards which the white men demonstrate to the native Igbo, which is evident while Okonkwo kills the messenger at the end of the novel mimicking the whites' behaviours. Consequently the result is the ever seen one as sounded by W. B. Yeats in "The Second Coming:"

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre,
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. (1-4)

Talking about frailty, foolishness, and irresponsibility in connection to Okonkwo's identity crisis may raise ambiguity within the readers' minds. There may be question how Okonkwo's physical strength, his strong personality, his power are related to such chaos. The fact is that there are limitations of power. Okonkwo failed to make an effective use of his power. In this sense, he is victim of over-power. And, no one can deny that the motto of this failure is to show the weakness of a lonely hero (anti-hero) blinded by the honour of the Igbo patriarchy.

Present globalised world is experiencing politics, a global confrontation, through institutions such as religion and culture. An individual is summoned to be the victim of political rage whether she/he wants or not. At such a difficult time of existence divided by polarities, one has to be very cleaver to lead one's life. She/he has to be very cautious of finding the right 'choice' and 'reasoning,' because "central to leading a human life...are the responsibilities of choice and reasoning." Okonkwo is not focussing the other choice(s) he should opt for. He is not reasoning his 'priorities.' Readers can understand his approach towards life, which is chiefly because of his flimsy patriarchal thoughts and pride. And, this one dimensional approach towards life leads him towards an identity, which he finds at loss. His ignorance of the 'plurality' of 'choice' and 'reasoning' shifts him in a world, which is obscured (Sen xiii-xiv). He is in a terrible state of mind, which is aptly portrayed by Mathew Arnold in "Dover Beach":

> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night. (35-37)

After the killing of Ikemefuna, Okonkwo is no longer the image of power and fame he used to be. Furthermore, he was exiled for accidentally killing Ezeudu's son. This exile, which is an attack both physical and mental, is an insult for the patriarchal manliness of Okonkwo. It emphasises a kind of shame for him, and Okonkwo thinks of himself nothing; he is a non-presence to himself. The situation of Okonkwo is a

paradoxical one because despite the patriarchal trend, he is exiled to his mother's village. This is a kind of irony for him that being the most powerful man of a patriarchal society, he has to seek shelter in his mother's village, a woman's village, the woman who has no identity in any African society. However, Okonkwo's return to the mother's village has played very important role towards his final situation because it makes him safe from the European influences, who captured the Igbo society after his leaving. In his exile, he becomes fully aware of his depersonalisation. This effort of his identity change is noticed by his uncle who aptly remarks:

> Why is Okonkwo with us today? This is not his clan. We are only his mother's kinsmen. He does not belong here. He is an exile, condemned for seven years to live in a strange land. And so he is bowed with grief. But there is just one question I would like to ask him. Can you tell me, Okonkwo, why it is that one of the commonest names we give our children is Nneka, or "Mother is Supreme?" We all know that a man is the head of the family and his wives do his bidding. A child belongs to its father and his family and not to its mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland and not to his motherland. (Achebe 133)

The novel projects Okonkwo as an individual who is unable to reconcile himself with a new culture into an established social setting. He is in no man's land, and this is because of the struggle between his own African culture and the European invaders' culture. He is not successful in regaining his identity as he is caught between two conflicting cultures. This scenario is reflected through Simon Gikandi, as he says:

> The central theme of the novel is what happens to the values that define Okonkwo's cultural community, and his own sense of moral order, when the institution he had fought so hard to sustain collapse in the face of European colonialism. (x)

The collapse in Igbo society takes place when the colonial power had set up its government, court of justice, prison and agencies for trade and commerce. The knife of British administration supporting the cause of missionary campaign fell on the culture of happily living Igbo people and cut it to bleed and die. In the voice of Obierika:

> The white is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knif on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. (Achebe 124-25)

The author epitomises Okonkwo's awareness of the loss of identity he suffers from: "(He) knew these things. He knew that he had lost his place among the nine masked spirits who administered justice in the clan" (Achebe 171). However, his return is anticipated in the

following lines that are a clear emphasis on his male power and honour:

> He was determined that his return should be marked by his people. He
> would return with a flourish, and regain the seven wasted years... Even
> in his first year in exile he had begun to plan his return. (Achebe 171)

After his return from the exile, still Okonkwo's goal is mostly to avoid being the failure his father was. As he is the most powerful man of the Igbo patriarchal society, he is totally obsessed with his identity, which he is trying to regain once again. His search for identity can be termed as a psychological obsession. It compels him to think that his father is a failure and even finds no positivity in his father's character. However, observing the social order in Umuofia Derek Wright says:

> Okonkwo's impetuous, aggressive individualism and the belief
> behind it-that he must wipe out his father's memory by succeeding in
> everything his father has failed at-are out of harmony with a society
> which is renowned for its talent for social compromise and which
> judges anot that of his father. (78)

Furthermore, Wright argues that Okonkwo's "cult of virility, by mistaking the nature of courage and confusing gentleness with weakness, upsets the sexual equilibrium that maintains a delicate balance between male values and female and maternal ones" (78). Here we can remember Judith Butler who says that "limits are always set within the terms of a hegemonic cultural discourse predicated on binary structures" that ultimately "distorts what is assumed to be true" in the formation of an identity (09).

   Okonkwo lives in a society in which male power is at the centre of traditional beliefs. The patriarchy he is inculcated by urges him to adopt an attitude of superiority over women by beating his wives for various reasons. He who has become very famous as early as the age of eighteen is blinded by fame. Consequently, his main concern is to stay at the height of power and for that, all means are good, all steps are justified. Even he is not hesitating to curse his own son: "I will only have a son who is a man, who will hold his head up among my people. If anyone of you prefers to be a woman, let him follow Nwoye now while I am alive so that I can curse him" (Achebe 156). Okonkwo's character shifts then from a popular hero to a Machiavellian 'antihero.' That shift shows that violence is an inevitable result of the changes which have affected Okonkwo's society because, for Okonkwo, the only answer to that invasion is violence.

   On the one hand, Okonkwo's tragedy as a character is that he is the victim of the violence of society, and also of himself, on the other. Different types of violences are in existence in Umuofian society. One may take up the first violence brought and exercised over the Umuofia people by European colonisers which is a more physical kind of violence, and it opposes two peoples, or two cultures. The second type of violence is more poignant and is imposed by traditions on the individual. For

example, it is in the name of traditions that many things happen: twin children are killed deliberately to avoid a curse that may hit the village; Okonkwo is banished for seven years for having killed inadvertently a Clansman; young Ikemefuna is sacrificed to Ani, the Earth goddess to render justice after the murder of "a daughter of Umofia" and many more (Achebe 08).

However, there is also the individual violence Okonkwo exercises upon his own personality. This violence is first psychological. He believes firmly in the necessity to recapture his lost identity. For this purpose, he imposes upon himself some poignant principles to which he tries to stick. This leads to his suicide, which represents the physical aspect of his own violence. He prefers to hang himself rather than fall into captivity. Rather than assuming his actions, he tries to save the little honour that remains for him. But in doing so, he casts off that honour he tries to keep at all cost.

At the bottom of *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo is fully aware of his failure. He is no more a mighty masculine rather a feminine:

> Okonkwo was deeply grieved. And it was not just a personal grief. He mourned for the clan, which he saw breaking up and falling apart, and he mourned for the warlike men of Umuofia, who had so unaccountably become soft like woman. (Achebe 165)

He tries to regain his dignity and earlier identity but it is too late, and he laments "Those were days when men were men" (Achebe 180). After that he commits suicide. As it is an offence against the Earth, the Igbo people reject Okonkwo as a dead body: "a man who commits it will not be buried by his clansmen" (Achebe 207). However, the author shows respect and sympathy to what Okonkwo stands for through the tribute paid by Obierika to his dead friend:

> Obierika, who had been gazing steadily at his friend's body, turned suddenly to the District Commissioner and said ferociously: "*That man was one of the greatest men in Umuofia*. You drove him to kill himself; *and now he will be buried like a dog…*" He could not say any more. His voice trembled and choked his words. (Achebe 208)

This shows how a mighty black like his mighty black continent loses the war of identity and gets entrapped along with his countrymen in an endless process of disintegration.

Things Fall Apart, remaining historio-culturally faithful to the colonial encounter in Nigeria, in particular and Africa in general, documents the cross currents of change, resistance, defeat and adaptation—all centred in the fictional contact zone Umofia and its adjoining peripheries. The documentation has been done with the objectivity of a historian, and fervour of a black writer rewriting his past.

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Remaking of Self in Diasporic Situations:
A Feminist Study on Jasmine and Nazneen

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to show the self-evolution of two South-Asian women conditioned in their diasporic plights, as has been projected in Bharati Mukherjee's Jasmine *and Monica Ali's* Brick Lane. *Nazneen and Jasmine are found in a place, which is alien to them. The push of hesitant immigrant life and the pull of their Asian values, the myth of fate and urge for free choice, necessity of going ahead and prejudices that pull them back etc. set a background for the migrants to settle themselves. Undertaking this journey, they explore the 'other' in them. This paper aims at showing how two women of South Asian origin reform them by circumventing the stereotypical ideals of womanhood that gets changed with the geographical shift. The conducted study can move us to see to the condition of South-Asian women in general with its focus on the evolutionary expedition undertaken by the protagonists of the respective texts. They get merged with the values of remote vicinity and the pull of their origin. This writing also examines how, amidst the twist, they evolve with new possibilities for a 'new' identity and struggle for a breath of fresh air.*

Literature, as part of life, records how the phases of history affect human existence. Diaspora Literature has obtained a considerable attention in the literature of present day. The history of colonialism, post-colonial sentiments, new mode of relationship between the ex-colonizers and the ex-colonized has constructed the milieu of Diaspora Literature. It deals with the theme of isolation, exile, homesickness, clash of 'home' and 'host' cultures, problems and possibilities of a new place, the search for a new existence by the exploration of one's own self. All these feelings are the results of their separation from their original home. The people that generate the diaspora community are those who have undertaken a journey from his/her homeland with a view to finding a new destination for their survival. The ethos of diaspora has formed an effective ground for the settlers to conform a great hoard of creative products. In this vast arena of literary production, women voices from South-Asian origin have produced a remarkable amount of ingenious texts. Moreover, these literary creations may serve as the witness of the writing of the "*female phase* which looked particularly in female writing and female experience" (Barry 123).

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This writing concerns with two worth mentioning fictions of two emigrant women writers of South Asian Diaspora- Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. Here, the focus is on how an immigrant goes through the process of self-evolution. The protagonists, being South-Asian women, show how they remake themselves in their diasporic situations both as an immigrant and as a woman. Their geographical shift brings about several phases of transformations that energize them and sometimes bewilder them in the remaking of their selves. In the process of their evolution into a new self, they are tossed and turned between the eastern and western cultures, between the patriarchal constraints and their free choices. Their activities and movements amid their plights, tune up with the codes of feminism. The diasporic circumstances make scope to envisage how the history of power, race and gender work to form their identity and how they re-define their individual existence, or integrate it in the context of the changed situation within which they emerge.

Diasporic Situations:

In the poem "The Second Coming", the modern English poet W.B.Yeats has very adequately imparted the idea of dispersion, a spread from the centre, a sense of detachment, the pathos of unheard sound in the following lines:

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; (1-3)

such images can be used as a sensible apparatus to begin primarily with the concept of 'diaspora'. The meaning of diaspora found in the Oxford Dictionary denotes 'a shift or movement of people from any nation or group away from their own country'. Besides, this word is replete with multiple connotations derived through and modified by several historical contexts. In literature, however, diaspora connects to the experiences and life of migrant people and the flux of their life. When a person leaves from his homeland to a remote place, the crossing of geographical border ushers a new dimension in an individual's life. Borders "are intermediate locations where one contemplates moving beyond a barrier. . . . At the border the past and present, inside and outside loss its binary opposites but instead commingle and conflict" (McLeod 217). This 'commingling' in the midst of 'conflict' pushes him ahead and places him in a state of hesitation; it creates eerie feelings in his mind. The immigrant finds him in a quandary of haunting past, undefined present, and consequently sees before them an uncertain future. Nevertheless, the pressure to find a place is so sturdy that it always propels them to follow a new step. People in the diasporic situations suffer from homesickness. Being dislocated from their origin, they have to pass through with faltering steps and indecisive mind. Among this twist "personal identity emerges as the product of a process embedded in a past but open to the possibilities of future" (Hussain 10). Therefore, the Diasporic situations empower them providing 'routes'- multidimensional and full of uncertainties yet tinged with the glow of desires and

promises. They are thus on the plane of the formation of a new 'root'. As for women, in the realities of diaspora, they come out with new identity. At the beginning, diaspora becomes a state of exile to them. Because, as third world women they are naturally 'exiled' in their mind, which was established by a strong hold of patriarchy, culture and religious superstitions. Then, in the diaspora they have to fight doubly: one for renewing their feminine identity, another for securing their existence as a settler. Thus, the migrant negotiates between the instruments of his/her past life and present state. They are always on a move; on the thrasher of formation and reformation.

Moreover, the context of diaspora and female identity also alludes to the idea of modern identity. Patricia Waugh describes modern identity "as one from a world of honour to one of dignity: in a world of honour the individual discovers his true identity in his roles, and to turn away from the roles is to turn away from himself, but in a world of dignity the individual can only discover his true identity by emancipating from socially imposed roles" (121). The makeover of Jasmine and Nazneen in the consulted texts is towards the world of dignity where they cater them a new identity in their diasporic disruption, defying their former being imposed by their patriarchal society.

Remaking of Self: A Feminist Study of Jasmine:
Jasmine appears before us to be an outspoken character defying the sayings of the astrologer at the age of seven and taking hold of it in her own hand. Jasmine attempts to break from the grips of fate. Her refusal to the astrologer's foretelling focuses on her freedom loving spirit. She does not want to make a circle in her life believing the myth of fate. Naturally, she is different from the women in her village. This sensation of Jasmine voices against that of the Indian women as is represented by Jasmine's grandmother. Grandmother believed that God had sent Shuki to kill Jasmine's husband as she displeased God by going against the old-age values- by following a modern way of making money abroad. Her family, except her mother, wanted to acquaint her with their sub-continental cultural ideology that "bright ladies are bearing bright sons, that is nature's design" (51). Jasmine wishes to go beyond this cultural confinement through the light of education and she wants to be a doctor. Jasmine passed the early ages of her life in the village of Hasnapur where girls are treated like "cattle"; beating of wives by their husbands is a granted fact there. Such treatments of Indian women in their society hint at the subservice of women. Women in Jasmine's society are not free to talk for themselves. They do not have a sense of their own individual self. Their status in the society depends upon how they are treated by their husbands. Jasmine tends to go against the stereotypical image of the women of the Indian subcontinent. She wants to assert her own opinion by refuting her arranged marriage with a widower. In many ways, she challenges the patriarchal domination throughout the novel. In her activities and thinking, we come across the touch of feminist voice: "Feminism asks why women have played a subordinate role to men in human societies. It is concerned with how women's lives have changed throughout history, and it asks what about women's experience is

different from men's, either as a result of an ontological or psychological difference or as a result of historical imprinting and social construction" (Ryan 101).

Jasmine bears the guts to meet head-on the patriarchal incomparability. But things are not so easy for a woman. Hence, Jasmine becomes the object of scorn of the ship captain Half-face. This is her first experience in the alien land that foreshadows the upcoming dangers that await her sojourn. But, Mukherjee in this book has shown both the problems and possibilities of diasporic life. It is true that Jasmine comes across many uncanny situations that are common to all migrants but her path here is also guided by various chances, which ultimately help her grow with different identities. Moreover, Jasmine's battle in the diasporic upheaval is not unusual as an immigrant; what makes her movements conspicuous is her struggle as a woman to secure an individual identity, and what is more, a female identity. She possesses a strong conviction in her mind that helps her see the 'scar' on her forehead as her 'third eye'. She perceives life in the USA with this 'third eye' unlike and unthinkable to most of the sub-continental women. She believes that she brings enlightenment to Bud, an Iowan farmer through her 'third eye'. She has the firm credence that "Enlightenment meant seeing through the third eye and sensing designs in history's muddles . . . . How do I explain my third eye to men who only see an inch long pale, puckered scar?" (60)

The way she absorbs herself with the American culture for her survival and fights with the odds of her life proves the power of her third eye; this power indicates the life-force that Begum Rokeya asked for in the women, to come out of their compliance. Rokeya also argued that the women are submissive because they are deprived of the light of education. In this context, it can be viewed that Jasmine's freedom of speech is the result of her education, though not of extremely high level, at least six years in the school, which she could manage with the help of her Mataji and her Masterji. However, when she goes to a different place, this clichéd traditional and modern values appear with forceful dimensions. Life in one's homeland and life in an unknown land can never be the same. This dissimilarity necessitates the journey towards one's self. In the diasporic situations, they find themselves in such conditions that bound them to surrender to the reality, even by the means of their traditional beliefs. Thus, they pass the routes of accumulation, assimilation and adaptation, which give them hope for survival.

Jasmine was about to kill herself after being raped badly by the captain of the ship Half-Face. However, her heart whispered not to die. She is distinguished in the state of her mind from other Asian women; she rejects the idea and kills Half-Face instead. She thinks, "I could not let my personal dishonor disrupt my mission" (118). The thought of killing herself is the typical ending of life met by the women of Jasmine's native land but Jasmine's modern bent of mind and urge for free choices boost her to persist her life. Jasmine continues her life in the midst of conflict of Indian values and the values of the Americans. In Iowa Jasmine happens to live with Bud Ripplemayer and is to carry Bud's baby. She acts as a dutiful wife

as an Indian woman does. At the same time, Jasmine complies with the ideas of 'adoption' and 'widow marriage'. She is indifferent to her pregnancy by Bud. As if, it were a natural upshot in the way of her journey- both mental and physical. Jasmine now seems to be a liquid personality. This is the panorama of the diaspora. Nevertheless, this is not the flaw of her character rather it is the prerequisite for a newly- made life that demands the relocation of one's completely possessed being. Jasmine has to acquiesce with the foreign values, transform her because she has found a string of hope in her relation with Bud; because she has got a substance in him in her trouble. Her narrative also shows victimization of a woman both in patriarchal domain and in the diasporic upheaval. But, Jasmine hones the way of adaptation and survival. As says Jasmine, "I survived the sniping. My grandmother may have named me Jyoti, Light, but in surviving I was already Jane, a fighter and adapter" (40). She fights against the social and cultural constraints of her home and adapts to the new culture simultaneously. Furthermore, Jasmine wishes for prestige and self-dependence–the qualities about which the Indian women are not conscious. When she was appointed as a caregiver in the Taylor family, she became happy thinking that she is not a maidservant rather a professional, 'like a schoolteacher or a nurse'. This economic means of Jasmine gives a sense of freedom in her. Her growth as an immigrant and also as an individual go on simultaneously. On the one hand the money she earns by her own labour aspires her to grasp on the chance of settlement and on the other hand, it helps her get out of the grip of others' mercy. Eventually, she senses an impulse for freedom. "... I was a dense object. I had landed and was getting rooted" (Mukherjee 179). Thus, the possibilities of diaspora pave way to a new individuality. She is not passive and she is different from the stereotyped set-up of other sub-continental girls as is represented by Jasmine's friend Vimla, who burnt herself with kerosene after the death of her husband, finishing with Jasmine because of the latter's modern bent of mind.

Jasmine was motivated by the reincarnation story of Ma Leela. This story made Jasmine thoughtful about her own transformation from Jyoti to Jasmine, to Jazzy to Jane Ripplemayer. She becomes determined that everything is possible as she looks out over the other souls. She learns from her diasporic experiences and grows up newly. Lilian Gordon, who used to help the helpless immigrant, injected the secret spell in Jasmine's mind : "Let the past make you wary, by all means. But do not let it deform you" (131). Gordon also introduces Jasmine to the revolving door of departmental store, the escalators, and with American foods. Hence, Jasmine passes through the process of Americanization. Gordon trains her to cope with the American culture- the gait of walking, dressing and helped her transformation from Jasmine to Jazzy. Jasmine's independent spirit and her distinct frame of mind being influenced by the lessons of Gordon tickle her to find the 'other' in her. Wherever Jasmine moves she is not static. Both her inner spirit and the surroundings of diaspora drive her to step forward. Taking Gordon's lessons in mind, Jasmine starts her voluntary journey towards NewYork to meet Divendra Vehdra, the teacher of Prakash. However, as she does not wish to be confined in a circle, she does not go

on with the Indian values of Vehdra family despite being an Indian herself. Because, she wants to leave India where people live by ancient customs and rituals, she wants to go away from "everything Indian, everything Joyti-like" (145). She wants to break out the imprisonments forced upon her by diasporic complications and traditional biasness.

One major point here is to be noticed that Jasmine could have taken her chances in Vedhra's family as a means of her certain destiny. But she did not submit her will to the shabbiness of cultural domesticity. If she had no wish to face the risk of life, she would not leave them. She had no economic means, even no legal document to live in; yet she took the risk to leave the Vehdras. However, after leaving Flushing, she, with the reference of Mrs. Gordon's daughter Kate Gordon, obtains a job in the family of a young professional couple-Taylor and Wylie in Manhattan. Gradually she grows a sort of family feeling by dint of her close motherly attachment with the adopted daughter Duff and by substituting the role of Wylie who departed from Taylor for her lover Stuart. But it is threatened by the appearance of Shukhwinder, and Jasmine decides to move to Iowa. She has to leave Taylor and to live with Bud. She tries to find a new destiny for her. Thus, fate frequently threatens her way. Nonetheless, when fate offers her chances, she does not delay to hold it. Though she acts as an Asian wife to Bud, internally she wants to assert her own choice. That is why, with the force of her dynamism finally, she decides to go with Taylor. Her decision may sound hypocritical, but the various plights of her adventure remind that what she suffers more is the problem of identity: "Jyoti of Hasnapur was not Jasmine. ... that Jasmine is not Jane Ripplemayer"(27). This fluid identity of Jasmine is the unavoidable nature of diaspora. Chances may offer her various ways but it is hard to find back the sense of root. The stance of restlessness in the diasporic plights is echoed in the sensation and passion of Jasmine's mind: "in America nothing lasts ... nothing is forever, nothing is so terrible or so wonderful" (181). The amalgam of 'terrible' and 'wonderful' feelings arises with the crossing of borders and carries an immigrant over the new pages of life. Jasmine is thus taking the bitter sweetness of her adventure towards self.

Thus Jamine is fated to fall on troubles and chances in the wheel of life. But, she, like a rolling stone, always moves round. Diasporic situations help her peep into her own self. She bargains with fate and choice, Indian and American culture; constraints and freedom, and reborns with promise. Thus, Mukherjee shows a spirited fight undertaken by a Third-world woman named Jyoti, who is re-named as Jasmine, Jazzy, and Jane in the course of the novel in accordance with the pressure of time and situations she undergoes. Jasmine's movement and activities against the threats of her life in a remote place show the struggle of an immigrant in the diaspora and it gives way to anticipate the condition of South- Asian womanhood. Her transformation is an on-going process. Always she is in between problems and possibilities. In the midst of it, she explores her many identities in a single physical being.

Nazneen: A New Identity in Diasporic Situations:

Brick Lane strikingly describes the story of a family in transition. Nazneen, the protagonist of the novel experiences a journey in her inner being. In her journey towards self, she goes under a metamorphosis caused by the diasporic state of affairs. In her fighting in the diasporic circumstances, she also fights against the patriarchal dominance that brought her up. She tries to resist the troubles by taking up the possibilities of diaspora, she remakes a feminine identity, quite different from her South Asian womanhood. Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* has said, "Life for both sexes-and I looked at them, shouldering their way along the pavement- is arduous, difficult, a perpetual struggle… More than anything, perhaps, creatures of illusion as we are, it calls for confidence in oneself. Without self-confidence we are as babes in the cradle (43). Nazneen remains a 'babe in the cradle' until she takes courage in both hands. Before that, we find her leading a passive life as is characteristic of a Bangladeshi woman. In the text Ali records the condition of Bangladeshi women in the diaspora community in the following lines: "Some women spend in, twenty years here and they sit in the kitchen grinding spices all day and learn only two words of English. They go around covered from head to toe, in their little walking prisons" (Ali 83).

Nazneen's life also, before her transformation, was guided by the traditional beliefs and values of her native culture and society. After crossing the border through her marriage with Chanu , a Bangladeshi immigrant in London ,she finds herself as an intruder in the city of London where she "sit day after day in the large box with the furniture to dust, and the muffled sound of private lives sealed away above, below and around her" (Ali 18). In the isolated room of the English Council flat she passes time with household chores, often looks out of her window and observes her next door Tatoo lady, makes little wishes of her own and often goes back to the reminiscences of Gouripur. She is passing her life in London with a feeling of exile, loneliness, constant thought about her Amma, about her sister, and various matters of her village with a frequent access to the life at 'home' and to the present life in the 'host' country. As a newly arrived immigrant and as a woman, she is confined within her room. She struggles a lot in her inner self, and gradually we come across the willful desire and the urgency of her mind that initiated her transformation to a new self. Her morning starts with a repressed desire that "if I were the wishing type, I know what I would wish." She also thinks, "if she knew what the wish could be, then somewhere in her heart she had already made it" (13). However, she got lessons from her culture that woman should not go for their own wishes. They are born 'to accept the grace of God' (11). She tries to find solace in her troubled mind by reading the pages from the Quran, that only God has the power over the heaven and earth. However, she starts to go beyond her Gouripuri lessons. She is haggling over whether to abide by the grip of Fate or to take up her free choices. We see that she did not leave her dying son Raqib to fate without taking him to hospital as her mother left her in the hand of fate after her (Nazneen's) stillbirth. Slowly but surely, we will see, she starts taking the course of fate in her

own hand to settle on with the gains and losses of her life. She will learn to shape her life newly resisting the strong pull of her cultural and patriarchal constraints.

Ice-skating in TV infatuates her. She is stirred by the exigency, passion, and affirmation that come through the ice-skaters, the qualities that she lacks, and wishes to get hold of in her. These little incidents of her everyday life provide fuel for burning further for which we have to come across a great deal of the subtleties of her mind and the action she decides to take in. These constituents are the primary forces that create a sense of challenge in her. We see, one day she goes for a little adventure in the unknown streets surrounding Bricklane. She is happy thinking that she has the ability to manage to turn back her flat alone, to communicate with a stranger in English. It gives her a sense of power. It is her first step across her mental captivity that was inscribed in her mind by patriarchal enforcements, as is employed by her husband. Chanu does not want her to mix with other women in the community. He mocks at her try to learn English language and her interest in ice-skating. We see that when Nazneen fails to utter the word 'ice-skating' properly, he makes sarcastic gesture to her. When she intends to learn English in college, he answers that it is not necessary because he is supplying her necessary things from the shop. Therefore, she needs not go out. Chanu's attitudes show how the male in the subcontinent approach the female. We see Chanu's foppishness in the following lines: "I am westernized now. It is lucky for you that you married an educated man . . . . in Bangladesh you would not go out. Coming here you are not missing anything, only broadening your horizon" (35). Chanu is a lost success. We see he is trying hard for promotion but amidst the racial conflict of the West and East he fails to get it. Chanu sees Bangladesh as the 'paradise of Nations' and wants to leave when he found his dream shattered. These are the problems that he suffers from as an immigrant. Nazneen has also some difficulties to accept life here but she grasps the possibilities.

Nazneen refuses to go along with the constant state of worry and urgency of going back. She starts to take the challenges of being settled in the new place. She also goes through many stages of dilemmas: to fix on between the traditional and western culture, between the pressures of patriarchy and the pull of her inner self; to make a choice between her dream of forming an individual identity and the stern realities. As the time passes by, she becomes inquisitive about her needs, her existence. Looking at her sleeping baby she thinks, "the baby's life was more real than her own. His life was full of needs: actual and urgent needs," and she herself is the supplier of these but her own life fails to detect such needs. This retrospection plunges her into self questioning and she finds her life "a series of gnawings, ill-defined, impossible to satisfy?"(66). Hence, we see, at home she starts mini rebellions by hiding hot peepers in Chanu's food, putting dirty socks with his clean ones, nicking him on purpose when she cuts his corns, and messes up his files. These symptoms show her grudge against the indifference of her husband to her. With the passage of time, she begins to believe in herself and in the fact that everything is possible, which echoes the advice of Mrs. Islam to Nazneen: "if you

think you are powerless, then you are. Everything is in you, where God put it" (52). Nazneen's forthcoming performances would make the saying true. Gradually, we see Nazneen is trying herself with the western dress-up. She dreams to become westernized. One day in her lonely room, she tried on a pair of Chanu's trousers. Then she changed her underskirt to see what she looks like in a short skirt. She portrays a different Nazneen in her mind eye: "imagined herself swinging a handbag like the white girl . ... she raised one leg as high as she could. She closed her eyes and skated off." Once in her lonely moments she tried on sequinned vests. When she found her reflection in the mirror that her breasts looked flat, she positioned them with hand .She wants to re-setup her bodily organ in order to make her different. It indicates that she has started to think about her own existence, of which she, like many Bangladeshi women, was unconscious at the beginning of the story. She also wishes that had her life changed with the changing of clothes. Nazneen also learns many English vocabularies from her daughters. All these changes promote her way to a new destiny.

Earlier she used to think of her homeland very often but now these visions are not bearing any importance to her. This also symbolizes that she is advanced more in her journey to the self as her past is fading away. She is now more innovative in her thought and action. Therefore, Ali notices a huge change in her: "The quiet made Nazneen alert. ... When she had come she had learned first about loneliness, then about privacy, and finally she learned a new kind of community" (148). This comment reminds again the utterance of Miss Woolf as she says, "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (Woolf 13). Though we do not find her nurturing her talent in creative task, at least she comes to give a new meaning to her life by looking into her self in the lonely room. Ultimately, her economic sufficiency brings about and ensures her self-dependence. The precepts of feminism call for a sensation for consciousness of which the women are unaware and for which they have to suffer a lot. Nazneen, though takes a long time to become her own, climbs up a series of gradual development to become conscious. However, when she starts sewing job, another major turning happens in her life with the entrance of Karim as "the middle man."

In the character of Karim, Nazneen finds what she lacks in Chanu. Karim made way for Nazneen to be extrovert, to decide something for herself, which she handles through many internal conflicts. Nazneen-Karim relationship may evoke a sense of immorality. But from the perspective of Nazneen, it is justified; if not ethically, then psychologically. According to Sigmund Freud, the repressed desire of human being results in the unexpected reaction, and that all dreams are the outcome of what man hides in reality. Human being has to undergo repression what Freud called 'pleasure principle' and 'reality principle'. We may have certain unconscious wishes, which are tough to resist. If the desire forces its way from unconscious, the ego blocks it off defensively. As a result, there arise conflict and unexpected behaviour. We see, Nazneen was deprived of her mental satisfaction. Chanu is almost twice of her age, and he never cares for her wants and longings. Karim's gaits satisfy her most and

she gets involved with him. To obtain self-gratification that she repressed for years, she unconsciously engages her with him (often she forgot to cover her head before Karim, she could guess the knock of Karim at the door). Her repressed desire results in her affair with Karim. In fact, Karim had cast a special light on everything, "a dawn light after a life live in twilight. It was as if she had been born deficient and only now gifted with a missing sense" (249).

Nazneen's understanding of the 'missing sense' fertilizes the rest of her journey. She justifies herself saying 'whatever I have done is done' (282). She is not worried about her husband. She is very indifferent to what she has done. Here, we come across a new Nazneen, and Ali tells, "this is the first real stoicism she had shown to the course o her fate (287). But the next moment she is seen to be tossed by social values of her homeland. Where, such an act is sure to stop a woman's life. She looks out of her window, tries to appease her tortured soul by reading the Quran but fails. She also wants that "things go back the way they were, not the old day, but the new day: just two weeks ago, or ten minutes ago"(285). This is the muddle of her mind, a state of indecision prior to her mental settlement. She is making her choice between Chanu and Karim, but finally she rejects both and decides the track of her life. Though Nazneen, because of her eastern set of mind could neither leave Chanu forever nor could accept Karim, she cut edge to affirm her individual decision- to stay England with her daughters without Chanu.

If we go back to the early years of Nazneen's life, we see that she is introvert, passive, fatalist when she rebelled against Chanu's domination indirectly and silently. Now she can think of telling him what happened to her. She is bold enough to assert her own state. Little by little, she stepped forward on the ladder of transformation, she is "not the girl from the village any more" (320) as she can think in a new way, and have courage enough to express her opinion, she utters-'I will decide what to do. . . I will be the one" (337). The quoted phrases highlight the determination of Nazneen. Moreover, the economic means that she absorbs from her sewing makes her stronger. Even Chanu, after losing his job, allows her to earn money. Nazneen finally enables to end the debt payment, rid her family of Mrs. Islam. Then she begins to think, "God provided a way, Nazneen smiled, God provided a way, and I found it"(373).

Hence, we see how the empowerment of women can make them self-confident and also change the patriarchal outlook. Nazneen has both her own room and money that designs her as a freedom-loving individual. Finally, she stays in London with her daughters. Nazneen is self-dependent and well-off to meet up her life and her two daughters. At the final scene we find Nazneen on a surprise trip managed by her daughters and Razia. Nazneen is in front of a huge ice, thinking how she skates with sharee, but Razia reminds her it is England; one can do whatever one wants. Thus, Nazneen first starts struggling at home against Chanu's dominance. Her achieved strength to fight the force of home filled her with the courage to keep foot across the threshold of her room. She turned against the cultural teaching of the East that 'if

we were to ask question, God would have made us man'. She goes under the phases of self- questioning, goes against the dominance of her husband, and goes through a procession of 'exclusion' and 'inclusion' of social and cultural values of home and foreign country. She has taken her rebirth by her transformation in the diasporic situations. Nazneen proves that "The power is within you, where God put it." Nazneen proved her power by awakening in the mental and physical diaspora. Thus, Nazneen has already been, and marked the route for others who are asleep yet.

"Though the biological distinction between male and female is an accepted fact, the notion that woman is inferior to man is no longer acceptable to women in general and feminists in particular" (Das 64). The transformation of Nazneen and Jasmine reiterates this code of belief throughout their journey into a new phase of life. They become the icons against the stereotyped subservience of sub continental womanhood. The way they transform themselves from the silent victim of male-oriented society to the free voice of feministic urge is worthy of praise. The mental diaspora of Begum Rokeya, expressed in her *Sultana's Dream* comes into partial truth through the motivated struggle of Jasmine and Nazneen. Their struggle is full of multiple experiences. Nazneen and Jasmine are not the only pebbles on the sea. They have to beat various upheavals that challenge their pace. Despite their characteristic and situational dissimilarities, both Nazneen and Jasmine are similar in their sentiment of upholding individual power of thinking, deciding, making, and controlling the various ebbs and flows in life. Thus, they avail of the possibilities of diasporic situations. The geographical shift brings about the change in socio-cultural pattern. Their migration from the native land is like a test for survival. They face it negotiating the different social and cultural orders for the exploration of their 'self' and holding a distinct individual existence. Both Jasmine and Nazneen fought with different adversities but won the same goal that is, the rebirth of the individual self. They get merged with the values of remote vicinity and pull of their origin and within this strong twist they emerge with new possibilities, which help them 'remake' their identity.

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Poetics of Neurosis: A Study of Sylvia Plath's Poetry

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Abstract

This article is a study of one of the most brilliant and successful American poets Sylvia Plath's neurotic poetry. As a member of confessional school of poetry her poems are extremely personal yet superbly refined. She was a serious patient of neurosis. Consequently a question arises whether her confession precedes neurosis or her suffered neurosis compels her to be confessional. Neurotic or at some extreme points schizophrenic expressions in poetry do not usually reach the desirable level of poetics. But, it is interesting to observe that Sylvia Plath's neurotic spells, one after another, have transformed poetry of neurosis into poetics of neurosis. Through an analysis of Plath's history of neurosis and her poetry this article will finally show how she has been able to make a rare symbiosis of psychological strains of life and beauty of poetry.

Sylvia Plath is one of the most promising, celebrated and significant literary voices to have emerged from America in modern era. Like her predecessors Robert Lowell, John Berryman, W. D. Snodgrass and Anne Sexton she is seen as an exceptional confessional poet of her time. Plath lived a short life (1931-1963) but produced great works like *Colossus, The Bell Jar, Ariel* etc. Plath's poetry and prose works reveal what she experienced in her life. Throughout her short poetic career she desperately channeled out her feelings by writing poetry, mixing her personal life, psychic strivings and historical predicament rooted in her German- Jewish ancestry. In Anne Sexton's words, ". . . Sylvia was determined from childhood to be great, a great writer at the least of it" (qtd. in Wagner, 30). The inextricable relationship between her life and her work often overlap each other. Like Keats she experienced her own version of "The weariness, the fever, and the fret" of life, and longed for death more than ever in a rather far more brutal way ("Nightingale" 23). The struggles of her life along with the schizophrenic attacks taught her what every human being desires for. She, like Shelly, looked "before and after" and pined "for what is not" ("Skylark" 87). Search for love, roots and self-identity did not allow her a life of happiness. Whoever she turned to for love and warmth rewarded her with immense pain and sometimes betrayal. The only way she managed to ventilate her loss, grief and love was through writing poetry. P. Rajani comments: "In her poetry, the destructive forces of life are countered by the creative forces of art. It helped her retain a hold over herself, especially during periods of depression and emotional and spiritual turmoil" (4). The most productive poetic period of her life was marked by some intense episodes of depression and psychological disorders. Her poetry is, thus, immensely influenced by her mental instability. Her deep rooted

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neurosis accelerated her creativity as a poet constructively and produced a rare synthesis of neurosis and poetics.

Poetics and Neurosis: An Overview

Poetics encompasses every aspect of the creation of poetry, such as poet himself or herself, the technique of writing poem, emotion, poetic diction, aesthetics etc.. The term poetics has its origin in Greek adjective "poietikos, related to the noun poietes, 'maker' or 'poet'" (*The Penguin*, 300). According to Aristotle poetics is "the art of poetry" and he included in its range "various kinds of poetry and their characteristic functions" (*Poetics* 31). Aristotle further defined all forms of poetry as "forms of imitation or representation" (*Poetics* 31). He viewed poetics as an "integral part of Mimesis" that means imitation of reality (Macey 300). However, modern theories of poetics have gone far away detailing and encompassing different aspects of literariness. According to Todorov poetics:

> ... is not concerned with literature or poetry, and less still is it concerned with the critical evaluation of texts on a scale of 'good' and 'bad,' but with their 'poeticity' or 'literariness'. Its object consists of the properties of literary discourse as such, and particular works are exemplars of those properties. (qtd. in Macey 301).

One of the most vivid notions of poetics is given by Barthes where he recognizes poetics as "a hypothetical descriptive model which allows the analysis of how literary works are constructed" (qtd in *Penguin* 301). He further says that poetics "describes how meanings are generated by the text and how and why they are accepted as meaningful by readers" (qtd. in Macey 301). So it may well be said that poetics as a term deals with the aesthetics and mechanics of literary writing of prose and poetry. It mainly focuses on the text detailing its acceptability and features which make a literary piece time conquering.

As a general word neurosis refers to disequilibrium of human psyche which is disturbing both to the person suffering and the people living around him or her. It is a kind of mental or emotional disorder involving symptoms such as insecurity, anxiety, depression and irrational fears. A neurotic person does have extremely obsessional thoughts and often does compulsive acts. Today's psychoanalysis "describes patients presenting obsessional, phobic or hysterical symptoms as neurotic" (Macey, 268). "In traditional psychiatry" according to *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*, neurosis is "an unconscious conflict that produces anxiety and other symptoms and leads to maladaptive use of defense mechanism" (1463).

Sylvia Plath's History of Neurosis

Plath's neurosis compels us to look back on her personal life. Her psychological pangs were deeply rooted in the occurrences of her personal life such as her father's

death, suicide attempts, her German-Jewish ancestry, and her unsuccessful conjugal life with Ted Hughes. Plath suffered mental breakdown several times in her life. In one sense her whole life looped around some dreadful mental breakdowns which finally resulted in a premature suicide at the age of thirty. Neurosis had been a latent psychological problem within her since her childhood which started surfacing with her father's death. Plath's mother, Mrs. Aurelia Schober Plath, accounted in *Letters Home* how the news of Mr. Otto Plath's death plunged the young Sylvia into a world of despair. Learning the news Plath reacted violently, and told her mother, "I'll never speak to God again!" (25). Her father was the central figure in the family as well as in Plath's life. Plath had the desire to please her father because he paid less attention to her. In this regard Hayman states that, "Though her father wasn't particularly fond of young children ... assuming she must be at fault if he was less interested in her, she exerted herself more in the activities which seemed to please him; making up little rhymes, dancing, drawing, playing the piano for him" (qtd in Nedoma 12). So it is evident from the comment that Plath was focused on fulfilling her obligations that might please her father. But the death of her father devastated all her efforts of gaining father's attention and love. The absence of her father completely left her directionless and scared of real life. Jeannette Nedoma goes on clarifying her father's death as one of the greatest traumas of her life: "After his death Sylvia had no chance to take a turn for the better. The lack of father is surely the cause for her later neuroses. ... To lose a parent is the worst that can to a child or teenager and it causes unamendable problems in later life. In Plath's life the lack of a parent is reflected in the longing for male love" (12).

It took a long time for Plath to recover from the shock of her father's death. Gradually she gained her normal life. Except father she had everything that could make her happy. Plath was brilliant, talented and beautiful. She was an aspiring writer. She attended Smith College on scholarship and won a guest editorship at *Mademoiselle* in New York City in the summer of 1953. However, her experiences at Smith had not quite been sweet. Later that summer, Sylvia attempted suicide by taking a large number of sleeping pills learning the news that she had not been admitted to the Harvard Summer Writing Program which she had applied for. She was treated for depression at McLean Hospital with traumatic psychotherapy. Her neurosis started developing from that event which preceded the later depressions. Sylvia Plath's only novel *The Bell Jar* deals with her experience at Smith College. The novel is fully autobiographical which closely details the events of Plath's life.

However, Plath returned to Smith the next spring, wrote her honours thesis on the double in Dostoevsky ("The Magic Mirror"), and graduated *summa cum laude* in 1955, with a Fulbright scholarship to study at Newnham College, Cambridge (Kirk, *Sylvia*). Plath shifted from America to England to launch a special phase of her life. There she met Ted Hughes, the young and attractive British poet. Both of them were deeply in love with each other and got married in the same year they met. According to Mrs. Plath these years were "the most exciting and colorful of Sylvia's life" (qtd in Marsack, 5). Plath and Hughes were both accomplished poets. Initially

the handsome and perfect couple led a happy conjugal life. After a period of poetic and professional adjustment in England they sailed to the USA only to find their relation deteriorated day by day. By this time Plath had two children. The events were followed by the betrayal of Hughes who developed an extra-marital relationship with a woman named Assia. Consequently the poet couple got divorced in 1962 and Plath plunged into immense despair which lasted till her death.

Poetics of Neurosis:

Plath's poetry demands our attention to be read as a whole. Individual poems are best understood while they are read keeping in view the context of her oeuvre. Two most important facets of reading Plath's poetry are her neurosis and her confessional mode of writing. Sylvia Plath belongs to the confessional school of poetry initiated by a number of poets of the late 1950s and early 1960s such as Robert Lowell, Philip Roth, John Berryman, Sylvia Plath, W.D. Snodgrass and Anne Sexton. The confessional poetry of the mid-twentieth century dealt with subject matter that previously had not been openly discussed in American poetry. Private experiences, feelings about death, trauma, depression and relationships were addressed in this type of poetry often in an autobiographical manner. Plath in particular was interested in the psychological aspect of poetry. "Confessional poetry" as Denise Levertov remarks:

> ... means not just poetry with autobiographical elements clearly present in it but poetry which utilizes the poem as a place in which to confess parts of one's life which are troublesome—the kinds of things which require the act of confession.(97)

Some influential readings of Plath's work by Al Avarez, M. L. Rosenthel and others established the tendency to read her poetry as confessional: "as an extremist art characterized by 'compulsive intensity', authenticity of voice , and transparence of language" (qtd. in Gill 116). Reading Plath as a confessional poet "gives us unmediated access to the troubled mind of the poet" (Gill 116).

Now, the question arises whether Sylvia Plath's confession preceded neurosis or her neurosis compelled her to be confessional. Furthermore, it is quite natural that one can be confessional without being neurotic and vice-versa. When someone, especially a poet or writer, writes something in a confessional mode out of his or her neurotic disorder, it does not always reach the height of poetics. Neurotic or confessional expression is, almost always bizarre, incoherent and to a certain extent compartmentalized. A patient suffering from such mental ordeals remains incapable of bearing events like failure and trauma in any sphere of his or her life. Any such event may lead him or her towards self-destruction. This is what exactly happened with Sylvia Plath time and again. She also chose the path of self-destruction by committing suicide at a premature age. Before doing so she left behind a collection of stunning poetry which transforms sufferings into poetry and bleeding into poetics.

Most of Plath's famous poems have been derived from some severe psychological complexities which she has encountered in her life. In her own words her poems:

> . . . immediately come out of the sensuous and emotional experiences I have, but I must say I cannot sympathize with these cries from the heart that are informed by nothing except a needle or a knife, or whatever it is. I believe that one should be able to control and manipulate experiences, even the most terrifying, like madness, being tortured, this sort of experience, and one should be able to manipulate these experiences with an informed and intelligent mind. (qtd in M. D. Uroff, 1)

Based on her personal experiences Plath has produced the most disturbing poetry of her time. She tore apart her emotions and experiences into various facades, went deep inside to excavate the fiends that plagued her throughout– the death of her father; identifying herself as a Jew being the daughter of a German-Jew parents; her own self-defeating perfectionism that would not allow her to accept her failures; her relationship with her husband, Ted Hughes, and his adulterous affair and rejection; her inability to control the world around her; and most importantly her mental suffocation and illness. What matters about all these episodes of her life is that she could not keep them aloof from her poetic creed. Rather they make a strange synthesis of disorder and order—neurosis and poetry as we will see in the following study of some of her very crucial poems.

The poem "Daddy" reveals Plath's love for her father in an obsessive way. Plath herself comments on the poem that it is uttered "by a girl suffering from Electra Complex" (qtd in Raichura 79). The way she frantically treats her love and hate relationship with her father and the historical guilt of inheriting a Nazi-Jewish lineage in "Daddy" suggests a neurotic dimension of an otherwise filial love. She opens the poem with the fact that her father is no more in a pathetically unornamental statement:

> You do not do, you do not do
> Any more, black shoe
> In which I have lived like a foot
> For thirty years, poor and white,
> Barely daring to breathe or Achoo. (1-5)

What strikes the reader is the symbol of shoe. The black shoe, a symbol, a memorabilia is left behind. The poet has fitted her life and existence within the space of a shoe and she has been living there for thirty years which is a long stretch of time to live and grow under the imposing personality of a German father. This gloomy German personality of Sylvia Plath has made her one with the ramifications of the War.

Plath lived her whole life under the overbearing shadow of her father and it was a suffocation for her: "For thirty years, poor and white,/ Barely daring to breathe or Achoo" (4-5). As a patient of neurosis she wants to kill her father: "Daddy, I have

had to kill you./ You died before I had time" (6-7). These lines show how troubled she felt because of the sudden death of her father. This is not a commonplace statement of anger or grief. She has a burning heart inside her. She can feel the absence of her father. She deplores that her father is not there to talk to her: "I never could talk to you" (24). She had only eight years of her life to live with him and the memory she had was of an imposing and fearful father. This personal fear of the poet towards her father is nicely expressed in the following lines of the poem:

> I have always been scared of you,
> With your Luftwaffe, your gobbledygoo.
> And your neat mustache
> And your Aryan eye, bright blue.
> Panzer-man, panzer-man, O You---- (41-45)

This is the fear which initiated and accelerated the symptoms of neurosis in Plath. This fear is the demon which made Plath's father a devilish Nazi character to her.

We find Plath wriggling with her historical predicaments in this poem especially with those deriving from her German – Jewish ancestry. The essential conflict with her Jewish inheritance from her mother's side and German guilt from her father's side aggravate the situation and she therefore thinks that she could "well be a Jew" ("Daddy" 35). The conflict of her split self gives birth to a series of ambivalences in her life. Her existence is grievously questioned by her ambivalences. Vic Olvir writes: "This, then, was the central feature of Sylvia's existence: being German was a thing of shame; it was to carry a blood guilt that somehow must be expiated" (5). "Daddy", like most of her poems, grows within the premise of identity crisis and historical guilt referred earlier. Her divided self compelled her to see things in terms of races, nations and politics. During the last few years of her life, Sylvia Plath became increasingly interested in history and politics. As a result references to Nazism, concentration camp, Holocaust imagery and the hangover of the World War II became very common in her poetry.

Plath's neurosis puts her poetic sensibility to a test when she says, "I thought every German was you" (29). Putting her father in the role of Hitler she starts thinking like a Jew and envisages the inhuman deeds committed by those Nazis in those concentration camps:

> An engine, an engine
> Chuffing me off like a Jew.
> A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen.
> I began to talk like a Jew.
> I think I may well be a Jew. (31-35)

The extent she has been obsessed by warfare and her personal losses is clearly evident in her reference to the notorious concentration camps 'Dachau, Auscwitz,

Belsen' and her hallucinatory identification with the atrocities. Her psychological complexity compels her to identify her father among the Nazis whereas she herself imagines her as a Jew of "weird luck" (38). In this poem Plath's misleading identities of her father and her own create a big confusion among the readers and the critics. What she identifies as 'weird luck' similar to those of the Jews in World War II, however, demeans the actual oppression experienced by the real victims. Her 'weird luck' stems from her very self-induced guilt and unintended neurosis but what the Jews experienced was a real, not imagined, holocaust. She associates her father with the crime he never committed by calling him, 'panzer-man.' This association is horrific to those who experienced the atrocity of war. A daughter's admission, rather invention, of her father being a panzer man is absolutely shocking. Identifying her father as a Nazi-German and she as a Jew of 'weird luck' are vivid manifestations of her neurotic bend of mind. The appropriateness of her aligning Nazism with her father has been, however, questioned by critics. It is to be noted that Otto Plath migrated to America in 1900 and he died in 1940. The World War II began in 1939 when Plath was only seven years old and Otto Plath was wriggling on his death-bed. So neither the father nor the daughter could have any role to play in the Nazi holocaust. Leon Wieseltier concurs with the pain felt by Plath in this poem but goes further blaming her for inappropriate juxtaposition of holocaust imagery in the poem:

> There can be no disputing the genuineness of the pain here. But the Jews with whom she identifies were victims of something worse than 'weird luck.' Whatever her father did to her, it could not have been what the Germans did to the Jews. The metaphor is inappropriate. (qtd in Harold Bloom, 22)

This remark of Leon, however, does not demean the greatness of the poem. George Steiner has applauded "Daddy" in the highest term. " It is the 'Guernica' of modern poetry. And it is both histrionic and in some ways 'arty', as is Picasso's outcry" (qtd.in Marsack 51).

In many other poems of Sylvia Plath, Holocaust imagery has been used to convey different themes. This historical event in Plath's poetry is one of the factors that has made her poems so great. She uses the sufferings of the Jews during the holocaust as an analogy for her own plight and it has been exemplified in her another seminal poem "Lady Lazarus". Right from the beginning the poem reveals Plath's juxtaposition of genius and dismaying image of Holocaust:

> A sort of walking miracle, my skin
> Bright as a Nazi lampshade,
> My right foot
> A paperweight, (4-7)

The effect is shocking. Lazarus is a Biblical male figure but in this poem the character is given a female shape with a Jewish identity. The references to Nazi lampshades which were supposedly made from the skin of murdered Jews and so

the paperweights from their bones reveal the brutal picture of holocaust. Plath compares her own suffering to being skinned alive. After she is burnt in a crematorium all that left is "Ash, ash" and "Flesh, bone, there is nothing there"(72,74) The remaining of her body will produce, perhaps: "A cake of soap,/ A wedding ring,/ A gold filling" (75-77). These lines bring forth a horrible truth of Nazi atrocity. During the War they used to burn the Jews in the concentration camps and from their gold teeth made valuable ingots. Plath then proceeds identifying herself with the Jews and becomes an "opus" to a "Doktor" in the concentration camp. In a mocking vein she adores the concerns of "Herr Doktor" for her: "Do not think I underestimate your great concern" (72). "Ironically," as Raichura says, "there is no genuine 'concern' for the victim, either in 'Herr Doktors' or 'the peanut crunching crowd': the concern (interest, care or feeling for) of these is with their own concern" (71). A new myth then emerges out of Plath's attachment with Nazi atrocity and hatred relating to that of the mythical bird phoenix. The Nazis who she addresses as "Herr Lucifer" are to be eaten up by the red haired Lady Lazarus:

> Out of the ash
> I rise with my red hair
> And I eat men like air (81-3)

Incorporating the Holocaust imagery in this poem Plath finally envisages the resurrection of an avenging female who has the capacity to put an end to all the atrocities.

One of the most important episodes that compounded Sylvia Plath's neurosis is her love, marriage and consequent separation with Ted Hughes. Sylvia Plath's conjugal life with the famous British poet Ted Hughes proved disastrous; they lived together for eight years and had two children. Though their relationship started happily it resulted in a premature divorce as a consequence of the betrayal of Ted. In the poem "Lesbos" Plath pen pictured the bitter experiences of her conjugal life as well the tremendous psychological shock she got due to the separation. The poem, an amazing lament of broken dreams, combines words and senses, tragedy and aesthetics of suffering and entrapment. The life of the poet has turned hellish. Even the children offer no joy. Referring to Ted, she says that her daughter is "The bastard's girl" (16). She cannot be free; she has two children to attend to: "I should wear tiger pants, I should have an affair./ We should meet in another life, we should meet in air,/ Me and you" (29-32). Plath has tried to keep away her husband away from Assia, the mistress of Ted Hughes for whom he divorced Plath, but the effort went in vein. Plath gives vent to her abomination and anger towards that lady in an untoward sentence: "Every woman's a whore" (70). To Plath, Ted was a vampire who drank her blood for 'seven years' ("Daddy" 74); Like Otto Plath he has seriously unsettled her mental equilibrium and forced a relapse to chronic schizophrenic disorders.

One of the most fatal consequences of neurosis in Plath was her tendency of committing suicide. The obsession for death was so great in her self that it finally won over everything and ended her life only at the age of thirty. During the short

span of her life she attempted suicide three times and succeeded in the last one at the age of thirty. The first time she tried to commit suicide at the age of twenty. She endeavored to link this failed attempt of committing suicide with her desire to get united with her father in the world hereafter: "At twenty I tried to die/ And get back, back, back to you./ I thought even the bones would do" ("Daddy" 58-60).

Finally she succeeds in committing suicide. In "Edge" we see how she preplans her suicide and does it with a "smile of accomplishment":

> The woman is perfected.
> Her dead
> Body wears the smile of accomplishment,
> The illusion of a Greek necessity (1-4)

She completed all her tasks before she reached the edge. The poem also refers to her two children Nicholas and Frieda. The children are imagined as serpents whom she feeds with milk: "Each dead child coiled, a white serpent" (9). This line directly refers to her last day of life. Before committing suicide, she prepared milk and breakfast for her children who were sleeping then. The image then shifts to the empty pitcher of milk implying that the mother is no more to feed the baby. This is the real thing that happened with Sylvia Plath. There was no one to look after her children after her death. "Edge" superbly transforms an anticipated ritual of death into a fine piece of poetry. As her last poem before her suicide, it foreshadows her death with a tragic hangover. She is no longer able to fight with the demons or dilemmas of her life; she has reached a state of total nihilism. Plath, like a beloved, longed for her lover death throughout her whole life and finally meets it at the age of thirty. The wonderful serenity about the envisaged drama, the snapshots of a troubled life and the pathos centering on Frieda and Nicholas-all reach the destination, that is death, she had longed for.

"Lady Lazarus", which is a mosaic of myth and personal experiences of the poet, reveals the most startling of her death wishes. The poem was written just half a year before she committed suicide. The opening of the poem is, indeed, very much shocking. The poet reveals her time and again attempts to commit suicide: I have done it again. / One year in every ten / I manage it---" (1-3). She is implying that suicide attempts have plagued her at age ten, twenty, and thirty. However, in real life, Sylvia Plath did not attempt suicide at the age of ten, but we are able to deduce the fact that her father died when Plath was eight or nine years old. This could possibly relate to suicide, because her soul died, and her father's death haunted and upset her throughout her life. Plath considered herself as "walking miracle," after being brought back to life after those attempts. Admitting herself as a miracle is an extreme form of confession. It is only possible by someone suffering from severe mental disorder. Plath wrote this poem in such a state of mind. The sixth stanza of "Lady Lazarus" speaks of Plath's second suicide attempt, which left Plath almost paralyzed - mentally, emotionally, and physically: "Soon, soon the flesh / The grave

cave ate will be / At home on me" (16-18). In 1953, after returning from McLean psychiatric hospital in Boston, Plath attempted suicide for the second time in her life, by overdosing on an antidepressants and then hiding in the crawl space. The crawl space was "the cave." She goes on uttering that "like the cat" she has "nine times to die" and "This is number three" (21-22). This type of utterance is possible when human brain loses reasoning, coherence, and rationality.

To a patient suffering from schizophrenia death is not real but a sort of fantasy. In Plath's case the same thing happens as she plays with death both in her real life and in her poetry. She takes away death in the height of art; to her, death is instinctive and easy:

> Dying
> Is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well.
> I do it so it feels like hell. ("Lady Lazarus" 43-46)

This is the final surrender to death. On Monday 11th February, 1963 Plath was found in the kitchen, lying with her head on a cloth in the gas oven, all the gas taps on full. She was given artificial respiration but it was too late, she was dead. All her pangs, thus, ended with the death.

> My hours are married to shadow.
> No longer do I listen for the scrape of a keel
> On the blank stones of the landing. ("Colossus" 29-31)

There is no denying the fact that Sylvia Plath was a typical neurotic patient. Still, her poems show the intense breakthrough into a world of extremely personal and emotional experiences that are usually for bidden to express. A close study of her poems, however, reveals that her poetry goes beyond all the categorizations and has a voice uniquely of her own. It will only be a partial truth to say that whatever she has written is, however, a by-product or symbiosis of her depression and poetics. What strikes her readers most is her hypnotic power to attract them towards her poetry. It will be a little exaggeration to say that in the last phase of her life she has been able to turn her poetics in the height of philosophy. Whatever she uttered in a neurotic vein they seem to echo to her reader as philosophy of life.

Being a serious patient of neurosis Sylvia Plath leaves all possible traces of a neurotic in her poetry. She is seen extremely emotional in the delineation of her loss, grief, agony, anguish, suffering, joy, love and all other human feelings of life. Her way of expressing all these emotions is, at the same time, very strange. But what she says, she says with style, elegance and art. She possesses all the innate qualities of a good poet. She does not let go her neurotic outburst unheard or uncared. She time and again compels us to take her poetry with all seriousness and thus her neurotic poetry reaches the height of poetics. As a competent artist she has been able to make a rare symbiosis of the pains of her life and beauty of poetry.

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The Poetry of Kamala Das: A Lash at Patriarchy

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Abstract

Kamala Das, an iconic figure in Indian English Poetry, is famous for her rebelliousness against patriarchy.She reveals through her poems how male-dominated society exploits and interrupts the feminine sensibility through its autocratic imposition of power on women. Das is an unconventional and uncompromising voice who firmly protests against male-chauvinism, and tries to ascertain a dignified position for her community. Her poetry can be called a piece of evidence of her sufferings and humiliations which cause a strong hatred in her mind towards her opposite sex. In her poetry, she shows that her voice-over is the representation of her "I". Suffering, struggle, deprivation, private humiliation, and unhappy physical love make her bold and confident in raising a voice against male prerogatives which destroy women's creativity by limiting their freedom. This paper is an attempt to show that Kamala Das's expression of hatred for and rebellion against patriarchal society is an ultimate outcome of the extreme realities of her life as a woman, and these realities are very common everyday matters for any woman in the Indian subcontinent.

Kamala Das (1934-2009), a distinguished personality in postcolonial Indian English Poetry, lashes at patriarchy through her confessional writings. Das suffered throughout her life due to her back-dated family background, her husband's obsession with sex, social discrimination, and unlimited suppression of feminine instincts. Most of her portrayals are realistic focusing on her sense of frustration and alienation. The marriage in her early age became a curse for her as it denied her the opportunity to cherish her feminine instincts. In both her father's house and her husband's house she found her voice stifled, as, traditionally, a woman is forced to follow the unfeeling restrictions of the family in patriarchal society. A woman is just like a puppet in the hands of patriarchy because man –woman relationship is the relationship of dominance and subservience which ultimately refers to sexual colonization under which men are colonizers and the women are colonized. Because, before marriage she is dominated by her father and after marriage the authority goes to her husband, and thus marriage becomes nothing but just an exchange of masters. Simon de Beauvior in *The Second Sex* says:

> There is unanimous agreement that getting a husband—or in some cases a 'protector'– She will free herself from the paternal home, from her mother's hold, she will open up her future, not by active conquest but by delivering herself up, passive and docile, into the hands of a new master. (352)

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The suppression and violence she faced in her life assembled a terrible image on her mind towards patriarchal society which strengthens the position of a man but weakens a woman to marginal areas. Das devoted her time to writing poetry so that she could overcome the traumas of suffering, violence, frustration, and alienation. She, like many of her contemporaries, raised her voice against social and cultural principles that constrain women's freedom. She believed that women need to explore their collective consciousness and shared experience to transcend the fragmentation and isolation of their lives. In her poems, Kamala Das distinctly voices her wrath and reaction against the patriarchal superiority and dominance, and so she is rightly called an iconoclast.

Kamala Das's first attack against patriarchy comes from her back-dated family background. She started writing poetry when she was just six years old. She wrote poems about her personal feelings and experiences. In fact, her poetry is out and out an exhibition of her "I" and she emphasizes it in her autobiography, *My Story*: "I wanted to empty myself of all the secrets" (Preface). She in her autobiography gives the account of her home as 'a house of cards' and her father as an 'autocrat' and her mother as 'vague and indifferent'. Kamala Das who struggled for establishing a positive world for women felt happy by confessing her secret thoughts through her poetry.

Das's poetry introduces us with her unhappy childhood which did not allow her to lead a life as she wanted. Das desired to lead her life as she pleased. She used to avoid traditional womanly attitude and often played with the boys in the field and wore pants and shirts in stead of wearing sari or salwar-kameez (traditional dress for women in India) but her tradition-bound patriarchal family was reluctant to let her do it. The poet was a free will personality and never conformed to family constraints and adverse practices about which her poem "An Introduction" gives evidence:

> Then …… I wore a shirt and my
> Brother's trousers, cut my hair short and ignored
> My womanliness. (31-33)

The quoted lines show that the poem is a clear declaration of her freedom loving mind that posses a threat to the existing family rules which humiliate a woman in every possible way. Yet, her humiliation which began in her childhood continued throughout her life due to conventional family ideologies. She felt a sense of disgust to her family as she always faced an unwelcoming situation there. In fact, she was completely neglected by her family members during her childhood. In *My Story*, she writes about her father, "He was not of an affectionate nature. So we grew up more or less neglected and because we were aware of ourselves as neglected children in a social circle..."(2). Her poetry also conveys that her superstitious family, like most of the traditional families of her time, believed that a family's honour depends on the marriage of its unmarried girls. Thus she became a victim of conventional belief of her family as she was forcefully married off in her early age. "Of Calcutta" minutely depicts her plight:

I was sent away to protect my family's
Honour, to save a few cowards, to defend some
Abstraction, sent to another city to be
A relative's wife. (76-79)

According to Kamala Das, a woman is a vulnerable figure in a male-dominated society where she is not allowed to speak for her likes and dislikes. Though they feel like a fish out of water in the family, they are incapable of protesting against it. But it is quite different in case of Kamala Das who warned society about the rights of women through her subjective voice.

The poet voiced against patriarchy defying the unexpected behaviour of her husband who was obsessed with sex. Her married life was disgusting since she was tremendously ignored by her husband. It was not only a bitter experience but also a vexatious, for she was always mentally isolated from her husband. Das wanted to share all her emotional feelings with him but he was not a man to understand her spirit, nor did he have any time for her. His allotted time was only for fulfilling his physical desire, 'skin-communicated' love. Whereas the poet craved for an emotional bond with her husband, he craved for 'skin's lazy hunger'. She represents her contempt for her husband's sexual abuse in "The Freaks":

Can this man with
Nimble finger-tips unleash
Nothing more alive than the
Skin's lazy hungers? (9-12)

In effect, the poet had to lead a monotonous life as her husband, who remained busy with his office work—that is a routine-bound corporate life, was quite reluctant to accompany her. Though he did not share anything with the poet except impassive physical intercourse, he never forgot to make her trivialized and marginalized by forcing all the domestic duties of a wife. She was just a 'swallow' of which he was the 'captor'. Indeed, she was the subordinate sex and her husband was the ruling sex, and she could not but act as a slave to his whims and wishes. She in her essay, "I Have Lived Beautifully" says:

My husband was immersed in his office-work, and after work there was the dinner, followed by sex. Where was there any time left for him to want to see the sea or the dark buffaloes of the slopes? (Dwivedi 29)

What is clear, Kamala Das's emotional appeal was overlooked by her husband day after day and for this reason she felt a sense of isolation which formulated her frustration and monotony. Thus she always suffered from a psychological commotion: "The man is presented with scorn and the poet's sexual union with him affords no satisfaction: rather it gives pain" (Rahaman 9). Das experienced constant

frustration in her husband's house where her feminine instinct was dominated by him at every moment. She could not tolerate anyone to dominate over her, nor even her husband. Das writes in "The Old Playhouse":

> Cowering
> Beneath your monstrous ego I ate the magic loaf and
> Became a dwarf. I lost my will and reason, to all your
> Questions I mumbled incoherent replies. (14-17)

The poet becomes a 'dwarf' and she has lost her 'will and reason' as her husband's 'monstrous ego' inflicted upon her. She objects to his domination, which makes her life bored and irritated. It is one of the protest poems which addresses mostly to her husband and the limitations of married life which Das found fairly offensive. As said by Devindra Kohli, Das's poetry describes "the fever of domesticity, the routine of lust, artificial comfort and male domination" (qtd. in Dwivedi 164). Hence, her poetry epitomizes particularly her strong grievance against her husband's infidelity and lust, and generally against male-domination. She demonstrates the entire male-folk of the society through the image of her husband. Her sufferings are the sufferings of every woman and her husband's oppression is the oppression of every man as the poet articulates in "An Introduction":

> He is every man
> Who wants his woman, just as I am every
> Woman who seeks love. In him … the hungry haste
> Of rivers, in me . . . the ocean's tireless
> Waiting. (44-48)

The poem, "An Introduction" expresses every intense feeling of the poet. It minutely voices the poet's quest for identity and fulfillment threatening the patriarchal supremacy over the women, who are in most of the cases voiceless. For Ramachandran Nair, "the poem asserts the speaker's individuality and feminine identity against patriarchal conformity" (qtd. in Kumar 43). The protest weapon for the poet is her poetry in which she expresses her distortion, but sexual colonization where men are superior sex and colonizers, mocks her. According to her critics, what she writes is funny and inappropriate but the poet answers them very boldly and intellectually. She says that the language in which she writes is 'honest' and 'it is as human as' she is 'human'. It is seen that the poet boldly criticizes her critics. The actual purpose of the critics is to stop her so that they can continue their patriarchal control over women but Kamala Das, definitely, realised women's mute lamentation and unveiled it to the society through her poetry feeling that mutiny is destroying their rights and individuality. About the poet Srinivas Iyengar rightly comments when he says, "Kamala Das is a fiercely feminine sensibility that dares without inhibition to articulate the hurts it has received in an intensive, largely man-made world" (qtd. in Satish 263). In this man-made world, it was her husband who

played a vital role in reshaping her thought and attitude to hold a negative image of man. Anisur Rahaman emphasizes this view when he comments that she "views the male body as an agent of corruption" and also "regards it as a symbol of corrosion, the destroyer of female chastity" (38). The poet, thus, frequently complains about man's cruelty and wickedness and woman's sufferings on that account. She says about her husband in "The Stone Age":

> Fond husband, ancient settler in the mind
> Old fat spider, weaving webs of bewilderment,
> Be kind. You turn me into a bird of stone, a granite Dove. (1-4)

The phrase 'ancient settler in the mind' about her husband instructs that her husband was an old-fashioned and orthodox man, who was averse to come out of his cocoon of out-dated, superstitious, and autocratic male-attitude. She urged her husband to be compassionate to her and not to treat her as a mere object of pleasure and lifelessness, but all her appeals were rejected indifferently. The poet at first tried to establish her right through humble request but she failed to change the conventional approach of him. Moreover, she wanted to liberate not only herself but also her class, as most of the women have been suffering from the same kind of anguish. Question may arise why Das generalizes all men. An individual is, of course, different from the other. But her poetry shows that dominant attitude is very common to all men particularly in Indian Subcontinent for its social set up. Though her married life could not bring conjugal happiness, yet she lived with her husband for a long time, since her purpose was to change his outlook. But he never changed his attitude towards her. Consequently, an emotionless relationship she had to lead with him. An excerpt from "The Freaks" will clarify the idea more:

> The heart
> An empty cistern, waiting
> Through long hours, fills itself
> With coiling snakes of silence. (14-17)

Sexual humiliation is the central experience of her poetry and it ostensibly narrates the life story of a suffering woman who was subjected to much humiliation by her own husband and other men as well. Her husband was selfish, beastly, brutal, and cynical who never gave attention to her inner feelings. He never accompanied her, tendered her, nursed her, and loved her, which proves his apathetic attitude towards her. So, she felt totally forlorn and perturbed. The extract from "The Sunshine Cat" :

> Her husband shut her
> In, every morning, locked her in a room of books
> With a streak of sunshine lying near the door like
> A yellow cat to keep her company. (14-17)

emphasizes on her humiliations and tortures. It also depicts men's dominant mentality for which women are considered to be their subordinates, who have to be always submissive to them. Men only value women for the satisfaction of their sexual desire and so the poet persona has no value now because she becomes useless due to extreme cold in winter. This winter symbolizes her 'self' which has become 'cold', 'half-dead', withered, and faded losing all its charms. In fact, it out and out focuses on women's distressed condition in a man-made world.

Confessional poetry is highly personal but Kamala Das, through her personal agony and annoyance, felt that it is the typical condition of every woman of our society. Love became a mechanical act of physical union of human bodies in her life, since her husband was crazy only for physical love which was not major concern for her. What she craved for is:

> I had expected him to take me in his arms and stroke my face, my hair, my hands andwhisper loving words. I had expected him to be all that I wanted my father to be and my mother. I wanted conversation, companionship and warmth. Sex was far from my thoughts. I had hoped that he would remove with one sweep of his benign, the loneliness of my life. *(My Story 87)*

But there was a gulf of difference between her expectation and her attainment. The harsh realities of life smashed her expectations and crushed her dreams. In a nutshell, her married life was an unproductive, sterile, and barren one. Thus through her sufferings, Das felt the vibration of women's heart and their voiceless expression of grief. Her poetry shows that every man including her husband is a betrayer. They get pleasure by deceiving their wives and maintain a relationship based on hollowness and deception. Das asks, why does a woman have to suffer such an endless suffering? Why can't she cherish her willpower? Why does she have to struggle for her identity? What is the solution of all these? The poet wished to flee leaving the magic line of patriarchal control and wanted to have a place where she would have privileges to lead an independent life. She articulates in "I Shall Some Day":

> I shall someday leave, leave the cocoon
> You built around me with morning tea,
> Love-words flung from doorways and of course
> Your tired lust, I shall someday take
> Wings fly around. (1-5)

The repetition of the title emphasizes her urge for freedom. Her desire to go out for freedom indicates that a wife becomes rebellious for recapturing her right from an atrocious husband and from the shackle of society as well.

 Das's next attack against patriarchy was stimulated by conventional norms and customs which submerge the position of women in society and exploit them

unlimitedly. Men look upon women as their possessions. Females become an object of sexual gratification. The sense of love and mutual understanding is a far cry in the relationship between men and women. Normally, they could not voice opposing their husband. In fact, they are helpless in the hands of patriarchal norms and customs. Begum Rokeya Shkhawat Hossain in her *Sultana's Dream* minutely explains the women's helpless condition in India:

> We have no hand or voice in the management of our social affairs. In India man is lord and master. He has taken to himself all powers and privileges and shut up the women in the zenana. (Hossain 16)

The lines given below from the poem, "The Conflagration" likewise emphasize on the sufferings of women owing to social superstitions, besides focusing on the poet's protesting mind against the violation of women's dignity.

> Woman, is this happiness, this lying buried
> Beneath a man? It's time again to come alive
> A world extend a Pot beyond his
> Six foot frame. (qtd. in Iyer 214)

Das's poetry further focuses upon the pain, anguish, and the ugliness of life at the expense of its pleasure and beauty. Being confessional, Das did not follow any tradition nor did she appreciate any convention since both are obstacles against feminine instincts. As she was against the conformist viewpoint, she felt alienated in society. However, her alienation was a mental one, because her poetry represents that she was physically attached to several heinous men who came to her to fulfill their lascivious desire. As the poet got nothing positive for her in that conservative society, she became uncompromising and found her pen the best way to show her noncompliant attitude to the male-tilting society. She could connect "nothing with nothing" (Eliot 2156) in her social intercourse. Death became a reward to her which can never be a reward in the life of a human being. The paradoxical statement demonstrates the vulnerable condition of a woman in a man-made world. Her poem "The Dance of the Eunuchs" shows that a woman's life is like a eunuch. They are equally tortured and suppressed by society. The poet through the image of the eunuchs refers to the situation of women in society, so the eunuchs are nothing but an objective co-relative of the distressed and depressed women. Through depicting the vulnerable condition of the eunuch what the poet wants to highlight is to portray the predicament of contemporary women through her feelings of anxiety, alienation, and meaninglessness, acute sense of isolation, fragmentation, and loss of identity. This is how she objected to the passivity of Indian women and showed them a way how to save themselves from the lust of men. Devendra Kohli's observation about the miserable condition of the eunuch is that "The Dance of the Eunuchs" "objectifies through an external, familiar situation the poet's strangled desire within ... judgment of the sterile, unfulfilled, eunuch-like desires of the woman within the

poet" (qtd. in Boshley). In fact, in Das's poetry, eunuch is a metaphor for infertility and the futility of love. Actually, the dance of the eunuch is not a dance but a continuous outburst as there is an emotional participation in the agony of the eunuch and the poet. The poet is in the vacant ecstasy because of the infertility of her life which reports that there is a similarity between a eunuch and the poet, since both of their life-cycle is composed of forlorn hope, deprivation, and exploitation. The eunuchs symbolize the 'vacant ecstasy' of the poet. She explains in "The Dance of the Eunuchs":

> Their voices
> Were harsh, their songs melancholy; they sang of
> Lovers dying and or children left unborn . . .
> Some beat their drums; others beat their sorry breasts
> And wailed, and writhed in vacant ecstasy. (8-12)

Kamala Das opines that lust without love is disgusting and unwelcome to women because lust is associated with body whereas love is associated with mind. Her society being patriarchal could not ascertain a congenial atmosphere for women, so she thought it was her duty to fight against it.

The academic atmosphere which was inflicted with male-subjugated colonialist society proclaimed Kamala Das to be outspoken against it. She went to an English medium school where most of the students were the white and the Indian students were usually called "Blackie" (James, Introduction). The word 'Blackie' intently undermines the identity of the Indian children. From her upbringing, Das was hardnosed and she never bothered to fight for establishing her right, dignity, and identity. The very unfortunate situation occurred for the Indian students when some dignitaries visited the school because during that time, they were pushed out of sight. It is seen that in colonial society a woman's fight for right began in her early years. Being colonized, Kamala Das had to struggle with the colonizers to grab her right, for the colonizers' intention was to dominate and exploit over the colonized as the former never forgot to impose their imperialistic ideology over the latter. Her active conscience motivated her to break the shackles of colonial women so that they could enjoy a free life and have their own identity.

Moreover, unlimited restraint and suppression imposed on women by men enforced Kamala Das to raise her voice opposing patriarchy. Her poetry shows that her revolt against patriarchy is the consequence of its antagonistic activities to women. Women's constant compromise with men makes them pessimistic and their pessimism creates strong hatred in their mind for male-governed world. Her poems exemplify men's strange manner from which women want to escape because it destroys women's social right and freedom. This is why her poetry is called the absolute medium of purgation of women's emotions. The disappointment and dissatisfaction they face in their personal life have been manifested in her poetry clearly.

Suicidal theme is very common in the poetry of many women poets all over the world. Kamala Das, Sylvia Plath, and Anne Saxton repeatedly speak about suicide in their poetry. Sylvia Plath committed suicide by sticking her head in a gas oven after a long struggle with depression and marital separation with her husband. Because of mental tumult and futile life, Plath lost all her hopes and desires, and finally killed herself. She says in "Lady Lazarus":

> Dying
> Is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well. (43-45)

Kamala Das, like other female poets, realized that her life was valueless and meaningless as she could not establish her right due to her husband's neglecting attitude, insincerity in love, psychological torture, conventional hostile outlook of man and society, and the like. So in one stage of her life, she wanted to commit suicide which is expressed in "The Suicide":

> O sea, I am fed up
> I want to be simple
> I want to be loved
> And
> If love is not to be had,
> I want to be dead, just dead. (50-55)

But Kamala Das is different from Sylvia Plath as the former did not follow the way the latter followed. Das felt, committing suicide is equivalent to passivity. So she fought throughout her life and played a highly subjective role in the field of establishing women's right from the outrageous patriarchal hand which devours the willpower of women. N. Prasantha Kumar echoes the poet's voice when he says:

> Patriarchy is sexual colonization in which gender relationships are in terms of domination and subordination. This ingenious form of internal colonization results in the human and undignified treatment of women. Men develop a utilitarian attitude to women and expect total and unconditional servility from them. (67)

It is highly relevant to say that Robert Browning's duke, who being pitiless imposes all his tyrannical viewpoints on the duchess so that she cannot practise and achieve her innocent childlike desires, is ever present in almost every man's character. Browning's "My Last Duchess" depicts that the duke objects to every single step taken by the duchess and thus her feminine longings remain unfulfilled for ever. Duke's unkindness is clear when he says:

> ... I gave commands;
> Then all smiles stopped together. (45-46)

Kamala Das bluntly expressed all these negative outlooks of man in her poetry. To be frank, Das's candid expression becomes a violent blow to patriarchal shortcomings, superstitions, and fanaticism. Her poetry which, out and out, reflects her life can rightly be called the true representation of her endless sufferings, frustration, agony, and exploitation which generate her to be rebellious.

To sum up, for Kamala Das, male-sex is the image of a beast craving for physical pleasure with an outrageous ego under which a woman loses her own identity. Almost all of her poems focus on the freedom of women by which they can establish their individual, familial, social, religious, financial, and political rights. Hence, through the depiction of her family back-ground, the nature of love and sex, her conjugal unhappiness, social discrimination, unlimited suppression, and man-woman relationship, the poet challenges the phallocentric idea of society. There is, therefore, no doubt that Kamala Das's poetry is a lash at patriarchy and her antagonistic feeling and revolution against it, is the eventual outcome of her frustration, sufferings, deprivation, and exploitation, which are regular companions to every woman in the Indian subcontinent.

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Multi-narrator Technique: Author's Absence in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and the Reader

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Abstract

The most prominent structural aspect of William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha novel As I Lay Dying *is certainly the multi-narrator continuum of the plot through the attribution of narrative turns to characters who tell their parts of the story respectively and independently, and at the same time, delineate themselves and others' personae. Hence, people, particularly to mention the Bundren family members, in the novel are not only simply characters but also narrators. Though the family's focal concern is burial of Addie Bundren in her kindred's town in Jefferson, the characters speak of each other in relation to their memories of incidents centering around that end. This multi-narrator technique, which gives the author a whole session of absence, facilitates free speech for each character, and thus authorizes the reader to understand characters more actively and critically, is the subject of this paper.*

The multi-narrator technique which Faulkner applied in his *As I Lay Dying* consists of 59 monologues by 15 characters – a total of 7 Bundrens, 8 neighbors and outsiders – who appear alternately in course of the story covering ten days. Many of these monologues sometimes designated as soliloquies are interlocked with the stream-of-consciousness narrative that delves deep into the cognitive processes of characters. "Through the use of soliloquy to present stream-of-consciousness", inner aspects like the selfishness of Anse, ingenuity of Darl, promiscuity of Dewey Dell, fierce independence of Jewel etc. are "eloquently established." (Humphrey 21)Because of this two-threaded flow of narration, the reader deals simultaneously with the narrators' spoken words and thought contents that are to be bridged for a holistic approach to the novel's characters, events, and the socio-cultural environment in which they occur.

Sometimes spoken words, as found in the first monologues of Vardaman, seem to be meaningless but they reflect on the concerned narrator's psychological states. In fact, the multi-narrator technique features the "various areas of the humanities in the study of the individual mind, independent thought, genetic endowment, cognitive processes, and the bodily basis of cognition." (Dancygier 11) In view of his forte to embed the stream-of-consciousness method in the multi-narrator technique comprising the monologues of *As I Lay Dying,* Faulkner can be dubbed as the first modern American novelist of such grandeur. And this exceptional

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narrative style has enabled the novel "to create moving epistemological excursions into the human psyche, into human existence in society and in the universe." (Volpe: *Preface X* [*a*])

Titled after the name of each narrator, the consecutively chaptered monologues signify distinctness in voice and style, while the same name (e.g., Darl, Anse, Tull) appears more frequently than others (e.g., Peabody, Armstid, Moseley). In this way, the novel has prioritized some characters implying that there are a number of major narrators. While each monologue is captioned after its speaker's name, it is also distinguished by the speaker's own idiom and thought patterns, which contribute to the variety of narrative style. The many disparate linguistic patterns and modes of narration do not entangle the author into the novel as they are as diverse as the narrators none of whom can be identified as the spokesman of the author. This feature makes *As I Lay Dying* different from Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931), which resembles Faulkner's only in the multi-narrator technique associated with stream-of-consciousness but not in the diversity of linguistic modes and thought processes of narrators. In his book, *Obscurity's Myriad Components: The Theory and Practice of William Faulkner* R. Rio-Jelliffe observes:

> Faulkner explores in *As I Lay Dying* a wide range of linguistic modes, from the transparent utterances of Addie, to the confused involutions of the child Vardaman, to Anse's evident duplicity, and, most significantly, to Darl's explorations in the delusive and revelatory power of the word. (103)

In fact, what the characters presently do, say and are said about through the monologues in the multi-narrator technique constitute the whole story assigning the reader a more active task to understand a coterie of people who are as much distinct in disposition and expression of themselves as we find around in reality, that is, in the society. Beyond its primary focus on the Bundren family, the novel presents the picture of a society featuring a particular mode of customs, religious practices and lifestyles.

A few of the monologues contain more than one linguistic pattern that changes with the shifting thought patterns of a narrator. Edmond Lorris Volpe (2003) observes "three levels of diction" in these monologues: "a realistic dialect records actual speech; a more formal diction records conscious thought, and a poetic imagistic language indicates uncontrolled thought." (Volpe 128 [*b*]) The following excerpt, from one of Dewey Dell's monologues, will serve to illustrate these three levels. Ellipses have been added.

> We'll leave you here, then. Lessen you behave, we will leave you. Go on, now, before that old green-eating tub of guts eats everything up from you.' He goes on, disappearing slowly into the hill. The crest, the trees, the roof of the house stand against the sky. The cow nuzzles

at me, moaning, ...He could fix it all right, if he just would. And he
don't even know it. He could do everything for me if he just knowed
it. . . .The sky lies flat down the slope, upon the secret clumps. Beyond
the hill sheet-lightning stains upward and fades. The dead air shapes
the dead earth in the dead darkness, further away than seeing shapes
the dead earth. . . .I said You dont know what worry is. I don't know
what it is. I don't know whether I am worrying or not . . . (57-58)

The first speech shows Dewey Dell's habitual idiom and refers to Doctor
Peabody. The next two sentences record her sight perceptions without being put into
words. Then following the first ellipsis, idiomatic speech is again used, though this
time it is somehow implied. This speech is followed by lines showing a poetic
quality, reflecting her undirected perceptions, and the last part beginning with "I
said" is the more formal diction of conscious thought. Examination of a monologue
by Darl shows the same levels, although the segment of actual speech is fairly
limited–a factor which, of course, is in keeping with his personality. In this case, the
reader does not have a smooth reading of the text as he is to cope with the protean
way of uttering variedly fashioned sentences in a single file moving off the track of
natural language. For a coherent, profound understanding, the reader is to adapt to
this "kind of language in itself" which actually "transcends the boundaries of natural
languages within which stylistic criticism operates most confidently and
competently." (Lodge 75 [*a*])

With the fifteen characters taking their turns of relating their stories as part of the
whole in their respective manners, the novel becomes an agglomeration of
unfettered revelations and views in the symbolic practice of 'freedom of speech'.
The author has relinquished every sort of manipulation and left the prerogative of
judgment to the reader who has conclaves with each narrator divulging even the
innermost thoughts without hesitation. An instance can be the monologue of
Reverend Whitefield who reaches the reader with his confession of his clandestine
dalliance with Addie, which resulted in the birth of Jewel. He admits being utterly
aware of his transgression and feeling pangs for it:

When they told me she was dying, all that night I wrestled with Satan,
and I emerged victorious. I woke to the enormity of my sin; I saw the
true light at last and I fell on my knees and confessed to God. . . (166).

With an unashamed, contrite voice, he exposes his scheme to confess his
betrayal over dying Addie to Anse in the hope of relief from God's dire judgment
and Addie's protection from Anse in case she, before breathing her last, discloses
her tryst with him. He does not feel any scruple to articulate a statement he makes
up for Addie's husband: "Anse, I have sinned. Do with me as you will." (167) In a
different way, Vardaman rants just after he has been made aware that Addie died. It
is because of the freedom of speech symbolically entrusted by the author that
characters expose their covert and overt facts to the reader-confidant who can know

about their subtlest shortcomings or weaknesses, otherwise impossible. The freedom of speech assigned to the narrators underpins the fact that Faulkner, either generously or strategically, relinquished all the time to the characters as he "believed in the self-sufficiency and independence of the character." (Bockting 12) That Faulkner prioritizes his works over himself as an author is evident from the opening statement of his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in 1950*:* "I feel that this award was not made to me as a man, but to my work…"

This freedom of speech inherent in the multi-narrator technique has accommodated a convenient subjective ground for the narrators as they describe one another the way they see and think, each suggesting that "certainly I am here" or "I was there and this is how it all happened." They confirm the existence of one another in the story from their subjective *'phenomenological consciousnesses'* which are the products of their awareness of experiences they gather interacting with or merely observing one another. The expedient subjectivity of the narrators has also widened a line of cleavage between *who is speaking* (independent narrator) and *who is writing* (author) with the result that the reader gets fully associated with the narrators forgetting the existence of the very author. It recapitulates Faulkner's deliberate choice to keep unnoticed and passive anyhow in the course of the story and confirms "the reader's sense of following a character from action to action and scene to scene." (Altman 15) So the author's tendency in his personal life as inferred by Doreen Fowler (2000) also pertains to the novel's multi-narrator technique engaging the reader to go on with the narrators:

> Faulkner not only engaged in strategies to keep the world from knowing him, he also had a reluctance to reveal the sources and origins of his fiction. He kept no journals or notebooks, and in interviews he seemed to employ a number of devices designed to allow him to avoid 'explaining' the meaning of his work. (Fowler 2)

In a parallel course, the first-person narration has put the characters in a position to speak authoritatively and distinctly as to claim justification of their presentations. It has attached credibility to the reading as the characters show up with their expressions free and personal because "first-person narration is generally more reliable than unreliable; and third-person 'omniscient' narration is generally more partial than omniscient." (Wood 6) This subjective narration by the characters in the novel together with the author's renunciation of any linguistic manipulation in the characters' individual narratives seconds his 'neutrality', echoing contrapuntally 'the death of the author'. So it follows that the author has become a past figure while the characters are alive and talking to the reader who now owns the supreme right to judge characters and decipher meanings out of their monologues. Whether Faulkner remains absent from the reader's mind in the whole progression of the novel or not, his time off has aligned itself with what Roland Barthes says in his essay titled "The Death of the Author":

> The removal of the Author (one could talk here with Brecht of a veritable "distancing," the Author diminishing like a figurine at the far end of the literary stage) is not merely an historical fact or an act of writing; it utterly transforms the modern text (or—which is the same thing—the text is henceforth made and read in such a way that at all its levels the author is absent). The temporality is different. The Author, when believed in, is always conceived of as the past of his own book: book and author stand automatically on a single line divided into a *before* and an *after*. (Barthes 168)

The existence of characters honed to the multi-narrator technique necessarily occupies the foreground as soon as the novel starts in a way Barthes conceives of the author who, according to him, "exists before it [literary work], thinks, suffers, lives for it…" This facet makes *As I Lay Dying* a character-articulated reader-centred novel illustrating Yoknapatawpha through the words and actions of a number of its citizens.

It cannot be assumed that the appearance of the 15 characters as independent narrators in turns poses incoherence in the flow of the story or creates a rift in the reader's mind as for connections between what is said before and what is being said now. Rather, the free speeches put the reader in an authoritative position to catch up with the whole plot as well as judge each narrator as he or she comes with regard to their oral manners of relating episodes that incorporate their roles and interactions with others in the same story. In making up a wholeness out of the narratives, Faulkner was aware of the fact that "[t]he logical or causal connections between one event and another constitute fundamental aspects of every narrative." (Bennett and Royle 54) For all the fractions constituting the plot, *As I Lay Dying* is "structurally innovative, built of interlocking shorter narratives that resonate with one another, harmoniously or in counterpoint, to create a greater whole." (Volpe, *Preface*: X [*a*]) In most cases, a single phenomenon is substantiated or refuted by more than one character. We see the conversation between Cora Tull and Addie Bundren is admitted by both of them as the former opens one of her monologues with the sentence: "One day we were talking." (154) Cora recounts rebuking Addie for her brazen indifference to religion and God, and urging her to join a prayer that is meant for contrition and surrendering to God:

> I begged her to kneel and open her heart and cast from it the devil of vanity and cast herself upon the mercy of the Lord. But she wouldn't. She just sat there, lost in her vanity and her pride, that had closed her heart to God and set that selfish mortal boy in His play. Kneeling there I prayed for her. I prayed for that poor blind woman as I had never prayed for me and mine. (156)

Later in her only monologue, Addie connects her version with Cora's as she admits:

> One day I was talking to Cora. She prayed for me because she believed I was blind to sin, wanting me to kneel and pray too, because the people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words too. (165)

The variation in the monologues stands for variation in personality with a different style of narrating and exposing the inner self to the reader. The reader finds Darl to be the most complicated character as his sections reflect a mind that is contemplating the intricacies of life. Darl's style is more complicated and his presentation is essentially through poetic imagery. As the reader receives views of the other characters, which are often expressed with an acute eye for detail, from Darl, he needs multiple lines of thought at the same time to know about Darl and the characters he is describing. But the case is different in Cash's monologues. Cash can think of only one thing at a time. While he is building the coffin, he cannot pay heed to any other concept. Therefore, his narration is exceptionally simple and is captured in the section where he lists in thirteen steps exactly how he is building the coffin. Thus while Darl is a complicated character and his resulting monologues are complicated, Cash's monologues are, on the contrary, simplified enough because he can handle only one thought at a time. Some of the monologues begin *in medias res*, that is, in the middle of something the narrators are doing. The first monologue of Cora commences: "So I saved out the eggs and baked yesterday" (3), Vardaman emerges saying: "Then I begin to run" (48), and Armstid initiates dramatically: "But time I give him another sup of whisky" (172) The abrupt, in-the-middle-something beginning assumes the reader to be aware of anything that happens in between two consecutively falling monologues, there being a insinuation that the reader has already become part of the story. Moreover, the length of time for characters varies enormously.

The multi-narrator technique has allowed the characters to freely give vent to their views about existence and identity – the views which are exclusively subjective and intricate. Immediately after being informed of his mother's death, Vardaman in his ramblings draws a resemblance between his mother and the fish he caught and cleaned, thus suggesting existence and non-existence of both. He says he "can feel where the fish was in the dust" and knows that now it "is cut up into pieces of not-fish" and "not-blood" on his hands "and overalls". Later in his third monologue consisting of only an overt and terse statement, Vardaman avers, "My mother is a fish" and in his fourth, he tries to establish his idea claiming Vernon Tull to be a witness to it till he finds Darl with his own explanation. Here it becomes clear that they view their 'mother' as they imagine her to be in their existence. When Darl quoted saying, "Jewel's mother is a horse," he bears in mind Jewel's attachment to the horse. Vardaman falls into confusion as to whether his mother too is a horse as Jewel is his brother. Darl reasons against it basing on their linkage to their "pa" who is father to both of them. So Vardaman is at a loss to identify his mother with either a horse or a fish while Darl proceeds to claim that he "had" a mother who "was", not "is" going even further to obliterate his own existence: "I

am not"; since he has no mother, he cannot exist. Vardaman's affirmative for Darl's existence with his suggestion "you are" is accepted by Darl if it means to him that "I am", not with "are" because Darl thinks "[a]*re* is too many for one woman to foal" with the verb "foal" again indicating to his mother's being a horse. To outline the absurdity of human existence in the novel, the most important and effective of Addie's monologue in which she considers existence to be a bitter experience remembering her father's notion: "the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead for a long time" – a statement which lends more value to death.

Character which is "arguably the most important single component of the novel" (Lodge 67[*b*]), functions as the pivotal factor in the novel *As I Lay Dying*, because characters are not described by the author who is virtually absent from the text, rather by each other of them while the reader pays heed to their respective sessions of soliloquy with a focal light on how they describe others every time they appear. The very method is that as a narrator, every character does three things that the reader while poring over the novel is supposed to notice – relating episodes, pointing out his or her involvements by self-quotation and other-quotation, and suggesting features of own as well as others' characters. For instance, Cora Tull in her second monologue depicts Darl and Jewel while she also refers to her traits:

> I always said Darl was different from those others. I always said he was the only one of them that had his mother's nature, had any natural affection. Not that Jewel, the one she laboured so to bear and coddled and petted so and him flinging into tantrums or sulking spells, inventing devilment to devil her till I would have frailed him time and time………I have tried to live in the sight of God and man, for the honour and comfort of my Christian husband and the love and respect of my Christian children. (17-19)

Thus each monologue is convergent with the plot and caters to characterization which is done through what a character does, says and is said about, not just through what he is said about, as it traditionally happens in storytelling where the author or a narrator says everything about character or characters. This method of characterization in *As I Lay Dying* through the multi-narrator technique comes in terms with what Wayne C. Booth says:

> One of the most obviously artificial devices of the storyteller is the trick of going beneath the surface of the action to obtain a reliable view of a character's mind and heart. Whatever our ideas may be about the natural way to tell a story, artifice is unmistakably present whenever the author tells us what no one in so-called real life could possibly know. In real life we never know anyone but ourselves by thoroughly reliable internal signs, and most of us achieve an all too partial view even of ourselves. It is in a way strange, then, that in literature from the very beginning we have been told motives directly

and authoritatively without being forced to rely on those shaky inferences about other men which we cannot avoid in our own lives. (Booth 3)

In fact, characterization through the narrative of the characters themselves has unburdened the author from coming directly to the reader with a story to be told from a single point of view, the author's point of view, which he has disavowed at the very beginning when Darl Bundren starts speaking leaving the next turn to Cora. What is more to consider here is the author's objective ground that he substitutes for the subjective narrative of the characters. So characterization through the multi-narrator technique has become more dynamic and convincing as Faulkner "maintains an amazing objectivity" in the novel (Humphrey 64). Faulkner has made the characters 'autonomous beings', not as mere plot functions, which convinces the reader of the novel's being a world of 'living denizens' but claims his subtle view into it because every narrative "evokes a world, and since it is no more than an evocation, we are left free to enrich it with whatever real or fictive experience we acquire" (Chatman 120) Character and their individual discourses are prioritized over plot because plot "is no more than footprints left in the snow after your characters have run by on their way to incredible destinations. Plot is observed after the fact rather than before. It cannot precede action" (Bradbury 152).

If considered in the light of discussions about character in *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1980) introduced by Gérard Genette, all the narrators of *As I Lay Dying*, each being part of the story, come before the reader on their respective intradiegetic levels, and they are sometimes focalizers and sometimes focalized in the entire narrative situation of the novel, which means a character not only sees others in the novel but is also seen by others. In another respect, the characters being narrators or the narrators being characters, they can be taken as 'character-foculizers' in terms of the narrative situation intrinsically set in the novel.

It can be concluded that the multi-narrator technique is central to all other aspects of Faulkner's novel *As I Lay* Dying. While it has obscured the author's existence, it has also made the reader a 'detached observer' as "the fifty-nine short interior monologues that are used to tell the story permit him to identify with no single character." The reader "is forced to view the individual characters in broad perspective" (Volpe 127 [b]). This detached observer, while or after meeting the many characters speaking from their subjective points of view and exposing different mores that define their lives, tends to make an objective judgment "whose content does not depend, peculiarly, on any of the concerns, interests, or values of whoever makes it, including any that are shared presuppositions of the context" (Moore 4).

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A Postmodern View of Some Women Characters' Shifting Identities in the Fictions of Syed Manzoorul Islam

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Abstract

Postmodern feminism is a slippery term in the sense that it cannot be defined by an exact phrase. It becomes even more sliding as postmodernism as a whole is against all sorts of generalizations. However, there might be an opposite view to this idea that is, post modernism believes in the height of individualism; so any person can be a "feminist" in the traditional way if s/he chooses to be one. It depends on the particular demand of that person's situation. This article takes poststructural feminism's premise of multiplicity of roles and realities to evaluate some women characters in some fictional works of Syed Manzoorul Islam. In these works along with the postmodern self-reflexiveness, disjunction and irrationality of narration the presence of women characters as the controlling force opens the possibility of seeing them as exerting multiple identities. This article analyses two short stories and one novel by Islam where some of the women characters change roles that creates a shift in the existing power position to place them in the controlling seat of the narrative events. Therefore, the final effort of this work is to explore the idea of postmodern feminism in a contemporary Bangladeshi writer to get the flavor of a localized form of the term postmodern feminism.

Postmodernism and feminism have some essential dichotomies that make their relationship problematic. Postmodernism's criticism of Enlightenment ideas of knowledge and value unsettles the political practice of feminism. Feminist ideas of reason, justice and autonomous subjectivity take shape in the light of Enlightenment discourses. Therefore, to do away with all these discourses is not possible without unsettling the very foundation of the feminist movement. However, recent feminist theory embraces some of the concepts of postmodernism which Patricia Waugh precisely summarizes in these words:

> Recently, feminist theory has come to manifest a number of overt postmodern symptoms: an infatuation with each concept as the sublime, with the idea of the radical alterity (otherness) or the possibility of a feminine 'space' outside of rationality and patriarchal hierarchies, and a fondness for images suggestive of fluidity or hybridity such as the cyborg or the nomad. (Waugh 344-345)

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As this extract suggests, there is a possibility of creating multiple identities for women within a postmodern narrative that might lend some strength to them as individual characters. In this paper we focus on the creation of this alternative space referred to by Waugh in postmodern narration that makes use of plurality of narration in order to form a decentralized world where questions of logicality is irrelevant.

This article attempts to study the projection of some women characters in Islam's fiction which resembles the postmodern symptom of creating a space beyond rationality and patriarchal hierarchies, as suggested by Waugh. In some of his (Islam's) texts women exercise a very special kind of power without being conscious about it. It is not that they acquire that power by playing an active role within the superstructure of the prevailing social institution which is undoubtedly patriarchal. They rather get this power as a supernatural endowment, which is equally irrational and utopian.

Before exploring the actual projection of the women characters of the texts some key concepts need to be discussed to clarify the relevance of bringing together feminism and postmodernism in this article. The narration of the texts to be analyzed in this article as well as their depiction of characters reveals the texts' postmodern approach in more than one way. At the same time the queer emancipation of some female characters creates an exclusive space for them outside the rationality of the world. But before claiming that their projection is both postmodern and feminist we must see how these two apparently opposite approaches can be brought together. The postmodern belief in the end of grand narratives of universal truth or ideas associates it with deconstruction and discontinuity. Postmodernism also denies the existence of a reliable subject and chooses to rely on plurality, contingency and fragmentation. At this point feminism coincides with postmodernism in the sense that feminism also disbelieves rational and reliable subject of the Enlightenment discourse which always projects this subject as a male. In its own critique of grand narrative feminism questions the validity of different social institutions' constructed representation of gender and human nature. Recent feminism also problematizes the idea of identity and thereby abandons the idea of a universal woman. Postmodernists too view the self to be constituted by signs that have meaning only in relation to other signs. Echoing this Elizabeth Anderson, in her article "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science" says:

> Our identities are socially imposed, not autonomously created. However, this does not foreclose the possibility of agency, because we occupy multiple social identities (e.g., a woman might be a worker, a mother, lesbian, Mexican, and so forth). The tensions among these conflicting identities open up spaces for disrupting the discursive systems that construct us. (16)

Postmodern feminism does not believe in any compartmentalized idea of an individual. It unsettles the idea of any definite role of a woman. As a matter of fact

it encourages us to think of women in the most unpredictable ways. As opposed to both liberal and radical feminism it believes in the unconfined identity of women. It also negates the liberal feminist idea of legal and political help in attaining women's rights in the society. In a word, postmodern feminism doesn't believe that the process of getting women's rights can be pinned down to a single method. It also has reservations against the idea of male/female binary as this binary suggests dichotomy. True to its nature postmodern feminism believes in the deconstructionist technique of blurring boundaries. Rather than searching for a definite idea of a woman, it looks for multiple ideas leading to multiple truths. This quest can be seen as an effort to reconcile context-specific difference or situatedness with universal political aims. A group of feminists are in favour of postmodernism as a supporting idea of their own cause. They are of this view that gender, like class or race, can no longer be regarded as an essential or even a stable category. Judith Butler supports this idea in *Gender Trouble* (qtd. in Anderson 17) in these words:

> Within feminism, postmodernist ideas have been deployed against theories that purport to justify sexist practices—notably, ideologies that claim that observed differences between men and women are natural and necessary, or that women have an essence that explains and justifies their subordination. The oft-cited claim that gender is socially or discursively constructed—that it is an effect of social practices and systems of meaning that can be disrupted—finds one of its homes in postmodernism, (qtd. in Anderson 17)

As this passage shows, a postmodern approach to feminism opens up a possibility of shifting identities for women, identities free from constructs and confinements. This change of identity and role empowers the female characters of Islam's novel *Ajgubi Raat* (A Queer Night) and two other short stories to enter the utopian, irrational space beyond patriarchy where supernatural forces change power positions to unstable the patriarchal paradigm of the prevailing society. This space is actually created in a world of magic realism which is a common feature of Islam's postmodern narration.

At this point it will not be irrelevant to have a look at the present state of postmodern Bangla literature. If we look at the Bangla literary scenario in both Bangladesh and Poshchim Banga (West Bengal) of India we will see that at both places postmodern writing is more or less seen as literature of resistance. Postmodern Bangla fictional prose writing of both Bangladesh and Poshchim Banga can be seen as resistance literature as it does myriad experiments within the established framework of popular traditional way of writing. The postmodern writings of Poshchim Banga have been termed as "micro-narratives" by Malay Roy Choudhury in one of his articles published in The Daily Star, a Bangladeshi daily newspaper. In the article he discusses how a space has been created by the little magazine named Ishpater Chithi for writers like Udayan Ghosh, Atindriya Pathak, Barin Ghoshal, Subimal Basak, and some others. In this line of thought Chowdhury observes:

> The semiotics of mapping as an actual expression and fulfillment of forms of Kolkata-centric metropolitan domination make the imagined, conceptual and geographical spaces of little magazines very important. The little magazine which could define such a space imagined, conceptual and geographical combined in Ishpater Chithi, published from what is called the Rahr area, covering the mining and industrial belt of Asansol, Durgapur, Kulti, Chittaranjan, etc. (Choudhury Vol.4 Num 81)

Choudhury further analyses the present state of the practice and publication of postmodern writing as "These outlets function as spaces where micro-level counter-discourses get knitted into a pluralist discourse; spaces which are outside the power belt of metropolitan, centrist, homogenizing episteme." (Choudhury Vol.4 Num 81)Here outlets refer to some exclusive bookstalls that sell little magazines.

In Bangladesh experimental narrative techniques are increasingly being attempted at different levels, both print and electronic. Syed Manzoorul Islam in his essay "Uttor Adhunik Uponnas o Bornonakarir Oityhya" (Postmodern Novel and the Tradition of the Narrator), taken from his *Olosh Diner Hawa* (A Collection of Literary Essays), gives an idea of an alternative narration which evolves from stream of consciousness. Postmodern novel gives a new dimension to the traditional mode of narration by using subversion. Subversion denies predominance of any single narrative voice by spreading it among many voices. Islam also says in the same essay that the central position of the narrator is dismantled when this dispersion happens and the narration becomes one of our own stories. (Islam 23) We find this technique in some Bangladeshi writers like Akhtaruzzaman Ilias, Shahidul Zahir and so on. In the novel *Ajgubi Raat* we see a spontaneous application of diffusive narration by Islam.

The novel *Ajgubi Raat* begins with the discovery of a hand separated from the body. It can be recognized as a woman's hand and surprisingly it does not induce awe and repulsion in the people who see it because it is as intact as the living hand of a living woman. The novel begins from and ends at the same point without much progress of time and action. However, within the framework of this structure some fragmented stories are told in an incoherent way that gives the readers an opportunity of discovering the story behind the cut off hand. The flash backs are narrated in such a circular way that they get mixed with the present to unsettle the readers who expect a sequential development of the story. The random arrangement of events challenges the logicality of time. The narration of this novel is complicated from the very beginning as the self declared narrator "I" tells that there is another narrator with him, "Kana Raisu". We understand that he is a boy of about ten years who has been dead for quite a long time but he still sits on a tree in the jungle beside Nur Banu, the protagonist's house. The muddling of past, present and future in the novel is one of its postmodern features. The narrator is often very much unsure of the authenticity of Raisu's vision, in fact Raisu himself is also unsure about his own vision at times. Still the novel goes on in two different streams.

The "I" is concerned with the present time, today, when a tornado is about to strike the town Patharghata any moment. The other stream of the story flows with Raisu's narration, in a distant village, where the story of Nur Banu is being told in a fragmented way. As time has lost its course and usefulness for the narrator, the story itself takes a very circular shape spinning past, present and future into a single lump. This two fold narrations, along with the overlapping of past and present, makes *Ajgubi Raat* all the more fitting to its queer theme. The separated hand, still unidentified, keeps making people nostalgic about the fondest and saddest memories they have. The connotation of the influence of the hand is so positive that it creates a belief in the readers that the owner of this hand can't be evil. Nur Banu, as we have been told by the narrator at the beginning, is the owner of the hand. She has some individualistic character traits that make her a bit different from other people around her. Sociable and stubborn, she defies her husband's restrictions on her activities. However, after the death of her child she becomes completely introvert. This, however, does not save her from scandal, troubles, as she is vulnerable in many ways, as she is poor, and a woman. Nevertheless astonishingly enough the people who could be harmful to her are supernaturally punished either in the form of a fall or the bite of a venomous snake. All these events protect Nur Banu in such a way that she is considered to be holding supernatural power. People of the village believe her to be miraculously empowered. Although we are shown the very ordinary life of this woman who, like many other women of her own class, has no freedom of will or action, the hand severed from her dead body actually acquires miraculous power of changing other people's lives. This hand asserts its power of disentangling the complicated relations among people. It also makes everyone forgetful of his or her own realities, no matter how temporarily. This control emanates from the hand's owner Nur Banu who at one point of the story became the sole controller of her life. Towards the end of the novel, she completely withdraws herself from this world and creates another tolerable one where she directs everything, even her death, which comes as a great emancipation for her. The whole novel revolves around the severed hand's victory over all debasing ideas about it and finally it finds its way back to its proper place-the dead body from where it has been separated. In fact this is the victory of the female subject, over the constructed identity of the society. This shift in power position is both irrational and unexplainable. This is the space created by the postmodern female to exercise her freedom.

Apart from *Ajgubi Raat* many short stories by Islam make a magical realm of female empowerment where the world's rationality is turned upside down. Two short stories by Syed Manzoorul Islam namely, "Meye" [i](The Daughter) and "Kanthal Konya"[ii] (The Jackfruit Girl) also portray a patriarchal society where women have always been denied a stable subjectivity. Women, the victims of patriarchy are treated as 'the Other'. Patriarchy asserts its own superiority by denying and denigrating 'the Other' to create its own identity. In his narratives Islam employs magic realism that gives them a postmodern flavor. Magical elements are closely related to the central theme that is empowerment of women. The magical

and the natural elements are juxtaposed in such a way that the magical elements tend to be as real as the realist level. In an interview with The Times of India, Islam points out that "the surreal is the flip side of reality – it is what gives meaning to our everydayness".

The emphasis on sexual difference and its limitations are explored in Islam's short story "Meye". It unfolds an alternative space that is coded as feminine. In the narrative the status quo is displaced and recreates a new form of female subjectivity. In the short story there is a structure within the overall structure of the story; the father-son relationship is in frames. Living four years with her in-laws, Lipi, the wife of an absentee laborer, working in the Middle-East, loses her own voice. The situation does not improve even after Gafur's return, which was obviously not a much anticipated home coming, as he returns home after the recession, being jobless. His unemployment makes Gafur and his wife a burden to his parents. He sinks to a lesser position from the patriarchal viewpoint. Since separate living is impossible Lipi becomes a victim of the torture of her in-laws. Ever since Lipi's marriage Gafur's father, Dulal Mia has never failed to keep an eye on Lipi; to him she is a woman of lascivious nature, who needs to be constantly monitored. Even at night when Lipi has to go out at the call of nature, Dulal Mia is there on guard with a torch in his hand.

In the story considerable emphasis has been placed on the role of reproduction. The central idea evolves round this theme. It opens with the news of Lipi's long awaited pregnancy. Instead of being overjoyed, the news puts her at unease. If Lipi gives birth to a son she will be saved from the humiliation of being incapable of ensuring the future of her husband's family. Now Gafur wants Lipi to bear a male child to save himself from the lifelong disgrace that follows the birth of a female child. Gafur has stated clearly that the child must be male, otherwise he would not have anything to save Lipi from the onslaught of his parents. Dulal Mia has reiterated that if Lipi bears a female child, he would no longer take her responsibility. As a result of all the pressure of bearing a male child, fear slowly devours Lipi. Bearing a male child seems to be the sole duty of a wife. This very idea echoes in Simone de Beauvoir words, "WOMAN? Very simple, say the fanciers of simple formulas: she is a womb, an ovary; she is a female – this word is sufficient to define her." (de Beauvoir 1) The child in Lipi's womb is active, and kicks around. She finds herself temporarily relieved when Gafur, her husband tells her that none but a male child can kick so forcefully.

Amidst the ordinary rural backdrop of the story, we hear a sharp squeal from Dulal Mia, Lipi's father-in-law who receives a strong kick from the unborn child, when he touches Lipi. Hearing her husband, Lipi's mother-in-law, Lutfa Begum retorts in a sarcastic tone that Lipi is not capable of giving birth to a son. Hearing this, the child kicks Lutfa's hand even harder, and breaks it. The series of events makes Lipi contented after years; she feels that for the first time in four years she has been released from the constant male gaze. Magic realism is interwoven in the plot so subtly that it becomes a reality from the reader's point of view.

Being immensely enraged, Lutfa burdens Lipi with more household chores; she is not even bothered that Lipi might even have a miscarriage owing to her heavy work load. In fact Lutfa would welcome such a mishap. Against all odds Lipi stands as a voiceless woman undergoing physical and psychic oppression. Like Dulal, Lutfa represents the patriarchal ideology; she judges Lipi from the male standpoint, her female mind has internalized the predominant male voice of society. Parody, one of the major components of postmodernism is present in the fictions of Islam. In the narrative parody is directed to all the typical mothers-in-law even among the readers, who represent masculine authority when it comes to exercise power over their daughters-in-law.

One day when Lipi is about to collapse due to overwork, in the moonlight she sees a hand emerging from her womb, gradually it takes the form of a young girl wearing a red sari. The magical being does all the chores for Lipi; from then on every day the girl appears to do all the work for her mother. Lipi's fear that the child in her womb is a girl returns; she reiterates that no matter how pretty and bright her daughter might be, ultimately her life would encompass her husband, in-laws, home, kitchen and unbearable workload – in short, marriage symbolizes a bottomless pit of misery from which there is no relief. At the end of the story Lipi is free from all her fear and anxiety, when Dulal Mia receives the final blow from the child in the womb. At this Lutfa becomes overcome by an unearthly fear, that disrupts the binary logic, hence the power relations; now Lipi and her child are the ones who exert power over masculine authority. The unborn female child is seen to possess the power to liberate her mother from the bondage that patriarchy has imposed on her; moreover she poses a threat to all the patriarchal power – her grand-parents, and thus society. Unsettling all the patriarchal and hierarchical assumptions the child and her mother occupy the central space of the narrative. At the end Lipi is contented with her unborn child, she no longer worries about her gender; on the contrary she is confident that her daughter is going to have a solid ground under her feet for she knows the way of the world.

In Islam's short story "Kanthal Konya" Afsar, the protagonist, is obsessed with the thought that his late wife, Manoshi was a witch, or even worse, a succubus – a female demon who appears in the form of an enchantress to seduce men in their dreams on moonlit nights. Afsar reiterates that she literally consumed him during their married life. The discord between the husband and wife started when Manoshi refused to change her name to please Afsar's father, who was a member of the Al-Badar, responsible for mass raping and plundering in 1971 during the Liberation War of Bangladesh. Manoshi endures all her pain in silence, even the physical assaults; however Afsar compares her tolerance to that of a witch. According to him witches have the patience to endure hardship. Afsar compares his wife to Robert Browning's last Duchess; like the Duchess Manoshi embraces the same fate – a premature death. Like the Duke Afsar claims that his wife was unfaithful. He evades the truth of Manoshi's death from the narrator, it is credible that like the Duke, Afsar

had a hand in his wife's demise. He and his family finally become relieved to get rid of Manoshi. We learn that Afsar remarries after Manoshi's death; his describes his new wife as being pure and selfless.

We hear the story of Manoshi from Afsar's point of view; however we trace his indifference to the mental and physical sufferings he had inflicted on his wife. Moreover, after her abortion she lived in her own world, lonely and withdrawn. She wanted to lead a happy life with Afsar, no matter how trampled she was. Although Afsar tries to appear as a much suffered and victimized husband, what he reveals portrays him as a jealous and manipulative one, like the Duke himself.

Two years after his second marriage Afsar encounters an uncanny experience on a moonlit night – to his astonishment a pale complexioned girl emerges from a large jack-fruit that was kept in his room. Afsar's sexual indulgence with the girl enthralls him. Afsar draws the analogy of the succubus in reference to the girl, who actually resembles his late wife. Returning home he tells the incident to his wife, who leaves him immediately. Manoshi, when alive was treated with much contempt by her husband, but by dying she assumes a place in the centre from the periphery. Afsar's separation from his second wife, whom he used to adore more than Manoshi, does not agitate him; he even quits his prestigious job; and later he helps his brother at his grocery. In short he abandons all that used to be of some value to him. His sole purpose in life now is to find the girl inside the jack-fruit; to find her he goes in search of a jack-fruit expert, moreover he even keeps a jack-fruit in his room every night during the summer in the hope that the girl might reappear. Afsar's life now centers round his late wife; this becomes his retribution for torturing or even killing Manoshi. Manoshi, on the other hand was denied her own subjectivity when alive, now finds self-definition in an alternative space.

Islam's fiction creates alternative order in society. Manoshi, Lipi and Nur Banu, the representatives of thousands of oppressed women, gain a firm pedestal in fiction. Through empowering his female characters Islam opens up doors of counter possibilities for women, who are denied the same in real life to highlight the fact that women ought to be liberated from the shackle, and treated as human beings, not just as 'women'. By assuming the subversive strategy in fiction Islam stresses on the empowerment of woman that can bring about positive changes in society.

The fictional works by Islam discussed so far in this work show that there is a close affinity between postmodernism and feminism; they both displace the traditional discourses. Postmodernism reconstructs alternative spaces for pluralism by subverting meta-narratives; while feminism questions and challenges patriarchal values. The emancipation of the female characters of these works mostly happen in the form of multiplicity of identity leading to various shifts in the existing power position. These shifts mainly take place in an alternative space outside the male paradigm, in a world of magic realism. In these texts feminism has been synchronized into postmodernism to create a fascinating version of postmodern feminism in the form of shifting identities.

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The Impact of Sales Promotion on Consumer Buying Decision- A Study on Mobile Phone Operators in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Sales promotion is one of the elements of communication mix that is used to attract new customers as well as to retain them. It has been using effectively in almost all industries in Bangladesh. The main purpose of the study is to measure the impact of sales promotion on consumers' buying decision. The study was conducted in mobile phone operators in Bangladesh. Since sales promotions is an external persuader in consumers buying decision, their views toward various promotional offers were examined with respect to demographic variables. The impact of sales promotion on customer loyalty, switching tendency and consumption rate were examined. Customer's estimation about service quality, terms and conditions, sales promotion tool preference were also discovered. This study is mainly based on primary data obtained through structured questionnaire. This paper first attempts a brief discussion of the existing literature on impact of sales promotion in consumers' decision making. Based on insights developed through literature search, the objectives for this study are set. Then brief description of the methodology adopted is provided which is followed by important findings and the results of a survey designed to empirically assess the consumer decision-making process. The paper concludes with a discussion of the results and implications.

Key Words: Sales promotion, Communication mix, Consumer buying decision, Demographic variables

Introduction

Consumers' decision making process is influenced by various factors. Some of them are physiological, psychological or socio-cultural and others are due to firms marketing efforts.

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Sales promotion is one of the most important communication mix elements that has powerful impact on consumer decision making. Sales promotion is a short-term incentive to encourage purchase or sales of a product or service (Kotler, 04). It is a widely used by the marketers to increase sales. As sales promotion is a frequently used business phenomenon, this study aims to know the effect of this tool in consumers' buying decision. Tele communication is a development phenomenon that comes about with the development of a country's economy in general and industrialization in particular. A newly subscribe is directly related with the economic growth. The study has undertaken the Grameen Phone, Banglalink, Robi, Airtel, Teletalk, Citycell which are the major mobile phone service providers in Bangladesh. The selected region is situated at Sylhet city.

In current competitive marketing world sales promotion is widely used for various tangible goods as well as by service orientated organizations. This study attempts to identify the influence of sales promotion that is used in telecom industry in Bangladesh.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives are being pursued in this study to assess the impact of sales promotion in the context of mobile telecom industry in Bangladesh:

The objectives of this study include:

- To identify how sales promotion can influence the consumers' buying decision.

- To examine the consumers' view toward various sales promotion offers with respect demographic variables (age, gender etc.).

- To find out the effect of sales promotion on consumption rate.

- To find out the role of sales promotion in building customer loyalty and switching tendency.

Methodology of the study.

The study is an exploratory in nature. The study is based on primary data derived through sample survey using pre-tested and structured instrument (questionnaire). A total 113 respondents of irrespective of age, gender, marital status, income level, occupation were selected on the basis of convenient sampling procedure from different location of Sylhet City. For analyzing the data, cross tabulation, Chi-square test, t-test, and frequency distribution were administered. This study also used some secondary data that are derived from various published materials and internet, Journals, newspapers, different books and various web-sites had been considered to collect relevant data. Statistical analyzing software SPSS was used for entering, coding, and analyzing data.

Limitations of the study:

In carrying out the research procedure, researchers use a multi step database set for the survey responses and publicly available resources, such approach has limitations. They are as follows:

i) The sample size was not large enough due to time and resource constraints.

ii) Response bias may prevail.

iii) The responses were gathered from the Sylhet city only which may not portray the overall situation.

iv) Due to lack of related text books and previous study in Bangladesh literature review could not be extensive.

Literature Review:

A good number of research studies have been conducted for measuring the influence of sales promotion in consumers' decision making. A few important studies are briefly described below:

Blattberg and Neslin (1990) summarized the various definitions offered by several authors (Kotler, 1988; Webster, 1981; Davis, 1981) and develop the definition of sales promotion as "sales promotion is an action-focused marketing event whose purpose is to have a direct impact on the behavior of the firm's consumers". George(1998) Sales promotion has been defined as a direct inducement that offers an extra value or incentives for the product to the sales force, distributions or the ultimate consumer with the primary objective of creating an immediate sales. Sales promotion has been defined as a "direct inducement that offers an extra value or incentive for the product to the sales force, distributors or the ultimate consumer with the primary objective of creating an immediate sale" (Schultz and Robinson, 1982).

Jones(1990) argued that sales promotions devalue the image of the promoted brand in the customer's eyes. On some occasions, sales promotions have had unfavorable influence on consumers' brand perception.

Schneider and Currim (1991) stated that customers' propensity to patronize a product depends on the out-store sales promotion and in-store sales promotion. Out-store sales promotion and in-store sales promotion can produce additional sales by motivating consumers not to be moved by other advertising efforts.

Esfahani and Jafarzadeh(2012) found that there is no significant relationship between impulsive buyer behavior and sales promotion. In spite of studies showing that sales promotion is not effective and that it is a waste of the firms' resources and erodes brand loyalty, others hold contrary views that it increases sales and induces the consumers to do impulse buying

Joncos asserts that sales promotion fuels flames of competitive retaliation far

more than other marketing activities. The long-term effect of such retaliation is sometimes the elimination of all profit from total market categories. The advantage of running an extra promotion or offering higher incentives is usually short lived. Competitors retaliate with more aggressive sales promotion and that often neutralizes whatever incremental sales were generated by the company that initially used sales promotion.

Aradhana (1991) stated that perception of deal frequency may affect consumer price perceptions and deal response much more strongly than the actual deal frequency. The author determined how consumer perceptions of deal frequency for a brand may be influenced by the dealing pattern of that brand and of other brands. It was found that the prose consumers were willing to pay for a brand that was correlated more highly with perceived deal frequency than with actual deal frequency.

Gupta, S. (1993) proposed a model with three components and provided a method for assessing the effectiveness of a sales promotion by decomposing the sales bump during the promotion into sales increase due to brand switching, parching time acceleration and stockpiling. Results for regular ground coffee suggested that more than 84% of the sales increase due to promotion came from brand switching. Purchase acceleration in time accounted for less than 14% of the sales increase, whereas stockpiling due to promotion accounted for less than 2% of the sales increase for coffee brands.

Quester, Pascale (1998) designed a conjoint analysis study to understand consumer's choice of a popular product based on consumption situation and sales promotion offers of the marketers. How both these variables influence the importance allocated by consumers to a number of key attributes which were determined by a sample of experts and product users. A large sample drawn from diverse drinks retail outlets was asked to rank ten hypothetical drinks products, the purchase of which related to three different consumption situations. While price remained the most important factor overall, all three other attributes were ranked differently depending upon the intended usage situation and the level of product involvement exhibited by respondents.

Analysis and findings:

In order to find out the impact of sales promotions in consumer decision making, a survey was conducted through distribution of questionnaire to a randomly selected group of customers. The sample size was 113 respondents. The data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using statistical tool that are appropriate for the study. The analysis of the study is given below:

Table-1: Demographic information of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age of the respondent	15-30	64	56.6	56.6	56.6
	31-45	25	22.1	22.1	78.8
	above 45	24	21.2	21.2	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	
Gender	male	57	50.4	50.4	50.4
	female	56	49.6	49.6	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	
Monthly family income	less than 10,000	10	8.8	9.1	9.1
	Above 10,000-30,000	33	29.2	30.0	39.1
	Above 30,000-50,000	41	36.3	37.3	76.4
	Above 50,000	26	23.0	23.6	100.0
	Total	110	97.3	100.0	
	Missing	3	2.7		
	Total	113	100.0		
Marital status	single	64	56.6	56.6	56.6
	married	49	43.4	43.4	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	
Occupation	Business	21	18.6	18.6	18.6
	Service	26	23.0	23.0	41.6
	Student	52	46.0	46.0	87.6
	house wife	11	9.7	9.7	97.3
	others	3	2.7	2.7	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Perception toward sales promotion

What is your perception about sales promotion?					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
113	1.72	.647	.061	28.191	.000

Source: Field Survey, 2012

The respondents were asked what is their perception toward sales promotion. The had three options; very attractive, somewhat attractive and not attractive. The t-value was found 28.191 which are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The mean value was found 1.72, which indicates that respondents have moderate perception toward sales promotion (value 1 assigned for very attractive, 2 for somewhat attractive and 3 for not attractive).

Table 3: Consumers' switching tendency

If you get an attractive promotional offer other than of your currently subscribes operator will you switch over?					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
113	1.63	.485	.046	35.659	.000

The respondent were asked whether they will switch over if they get any attractive sales promotion offer other than their currently subscribes operator. The mean value of the responses was found 1.63(value 1 assigned for 'yes' and value 2 for 'no'). Therefore, it can be concluded that respondents shows a nearly negative switching tendency regarding sales promotion. The t-value was found 35.659 which are statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table -4: Sales promotion-Advertising irrelevancy

Sales promotion offered by many operators is frequently confused with advertising.					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
113	1.82	.837	.079	23.153	.000

In many cases it was found that sales promotion terms and conditions and advertising message does not match each other. To know the perception of consumers regarding sales promotion advertising they were asked whether it seems confusing sometimes or not. The mean value of the response was found 1.82 which indicates that respondents are agreed with this statement (since value 2 assigned for 'agree'). The t-value 23.153 also indicates that it is statistically significant.

Table-5: Sales promotion and Customer loyalty

Does sales promotion influence you to stay in your currently subscribed operator?					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
113	2.38	1.088	.102	23.254	.000

The study also interested to identify whether sales promotion is a factor for maintaining customer loyalty. The mean value of the responses was found 2.38. So,

it can be concluded that respondents had almost agreed with this statement. The t-value 23.153 also indicates that it is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table-6: Sales promotion and consumption.

Will you use more if you get any sale promotion offer?					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
111	1.33	.474	.045	29.665	.000

This study also attempts to discover the impact of sale promotion in consumption. The respondents were asked whether they will use more if they get any sales promotion offer or not. The mean value was found 1.33 which indicates respondents has nearly affirmative approach regarding this aspect. The t-value 29.665 also indicates that it is statistically significant at 5% level of significance

Table-7: Companies should not charge extra value to activate any sales promotion offer.

Companies should not charge extra value to activate any sales promotion offer.					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
112	2.01	1.352	.128	15.722	.000

Sometimes mobile operator charges extra value to avail the sales promotion offer. The study tried to know the position of respondents in this issue. The mean value of the responses was found 2.01 which indicate they are agreed with the asked questions. Consumers believe that companies should not charge any extra value to avail the promotion offer.

Table-8: Offer boundary within same operator

Companies should not limit the subscription of the offer within the own operator.					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
111	2.80	1.645	.156	17.945	.000

Mobile companies provide various promotional offers but they restrict the subscription of that offer within their own network. This study attempts to know the subscriber's view regarding this concern. The mean value 2.80 points out that respondent had an approximately unbiased reply (since, value 3 was assigned for neutral response). . The t-value 17.945 also indicates that it is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table-9: Sales promotion and service quality.

Sales promotion may reduce service quality.					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
112	2.74	1.221	.115	23.758	.000

It is a common topic in marketing world that the use of sales promotion offers reduces product/service service quality. The respondents of this study were asked to display their views regarding this topic. The mean value 2.74 indicates responses were nearly neutral. The t-value 23.758 also indicates that it is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

It is a common topic in marketing world that the use of sales promotion offers reduces product/service service quality. The respondents of this study were asked to display their views regarding this topic. The mean value 2.74 indicates responses were nearly neutral. The t-value 23.758 also indicates that it is statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

Table-10: Age of the respondent * what is your perception about sales promotion? (Cross tabulation)

			What is your perception about sales promotion?			Total
			very attractive	some what attractive	not attractive	
age of the respondent	15-30	Count	28	31	5	64
		% of Total	24.8%	27.4%	4.4%	56.6%
	31-45	Count	10	13	2	25
		% of Total	8.8%	11.5%	1.8%	22.1%
	above 45	Count	6	13	5	24
		% of Total	5.3%	11.5%	4.4%	21.2%
Total		Count	44	57	12	113
		% of Total	38.9%	50.4%	10.6%	100.0%

Table-11: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.708(a)	4	.319
Likelihood Ratio	4.410	4	.353
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.681	1	.055
N of Valid Cases	113		

In table 10, the impact of respondents' age in their perception toward sales promotion was identified. 38.9% of the total respondents stated that sales promotion is very attractive to them and 24.8% were from young age group. The null hypothesis(H0) of the study is, there is no influence of age in consumers' perception toward sales promotion. From table 11 it was found that calculated value of χ^2 is 4.708 which is less than the table value at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence we conclude that there is no influence of age in consumers' perception toward sales promotion.

Table-12: gender * what is your perception about sales promotion? (Cross tabulation)

			What is your perception about sales promotion?			Total
			very attractive	some what attractive	not attractive	
gender	male	Count	26	24	7	57
		% of Total	23.0%	21.2%	6.2%	50.4%
	female	Count	18	33	5	56
		% of Total	15.9%	29.2%	4.4%	49.6%
Total		Count	44	57	12	113
		% of Total	38.9%	50.4%	10.6%	100.0%

Table-13: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.200	2	.202
Likelihood Ratio	3.216	2	.200
Linear-by-Linear Association	.690	1	.406
N of Valid Cases	113		

Table 12 shows how the consumers' perception toward sales promotion vary with the gender. 38.9% of the total respondents stated that sales promotion is very attractive to them. Among them 59.09% were male. Therefore, it can be concluded that male respondents holds a relatively positive attitude toward sales promotion. The null hypothesis(H0) of the study was, there is no influence of gender in consumers' perception toward sales promotion. From table 13 it was found that the calculated value of $\chi 2$ is 3.20 which are less the table value 5.99 at 5% level of significance for 2 d.f. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be concluded that there is no influence of gender in consumer's attitude forming toward sales promotion.

Table-14: Age of the respondent and consumers' switching tendency (Cross tabulation)

			If you get an attractive promotional offer other than of your currently subscribes operator will you switch over?		Total
			yes	no	
age of the respondent	15-30	Count	28	36	64
		% of Total	24.8%	31.9%	56.6%
	31-45	Count	5	20	25
		% of Total	4.4%	17.7%	22.1%
	above 45	Count	9	15	24
		% of Total	8.0%	13.3%	21.2%
Total		Count	42	71	113
		% of Total	37.2%	62.8%	100.0%

Table-15: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.344	2	.114
Likelihood Ratio	4.629	2	.099
Linear-by-Linear Association	.982	1	.322
N of Valid Cases	113		

In table 14 cross tabulation was conducted between age of the respondents and their switching tendency followed by the sales promotion. 62.8% of the total respondents stated that they will not switchover, even if they get an attractive sales promotion offer from other than of their currently subscribes operator. Switching

tendency is observed in young age group (15-30 years of age) where 24.8% of the total respondents affirmed that they will switch over influenced by any sales promotion offer. The null hypothesis of the study was, there is no relation between age and consumers' switching tendency. From table 15 it was found that the calculated value of χ^2 is 4.344 which is less the table value 5.99 at 5% level of significance for 2 d.f. Therefore, it can be concluded that age of the respondents and their switching are not associated.

Table-16: Gender of the respondent and consumers' switching tendency (Cross tabulation)

			If you get an attractive promotional offer other than of your currently subscribes operator will you switch over?		Total
			yes	no	yes
gender	male	Count	23	34	57
		% of Total	20.4%	30.1%	50.4%
	female	Count	19	37	56
		% of Total	16.8%	32.7%	49.6%
Total		Count	42	71	113
		% of Total	37.2%	62.8%	100.0%

Table-17: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.499	1	.480		
Continuity Correction	.262	1	.609		
Likelihood Ratio	.499	1	.480		
Fisher's Exact Test				.561	.305
Linear-by-Linear Association	.494	1	.482		
N of Valid Cases	113				

From table 16, it was found that 20.4% of the respondents who are male declared that they will switch over if they get any attractive sales promotion offer. The proportion of female respondents is 16.8%. So, it can be concluded that switching tendency is observed more in male respondents. The null hypothesis(H0) of the study was, there is no relation between gender and consumers' switching tendency. From table 17 it was found that the calculated value of $\chi 2$ is 0.499 that is less the table value (3.84) at 5% level of significance for 1 degree of freedom.

Table-17: discernment regarding excessive sales promotion

Too much of sales promotion may be disturbing.					
N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T test	Sig. (2-tailed)
112	2.40	1.339	.126	18.987	.000

Many companies focus on excessive use of sales promotion to attract customers. But it might be sometimes bothersome to the customers. The mean value 2.40 indicates that the respondents feel disturbed when companies provide excessive sales promotion.

Sales promotion tool that customers prefer the most
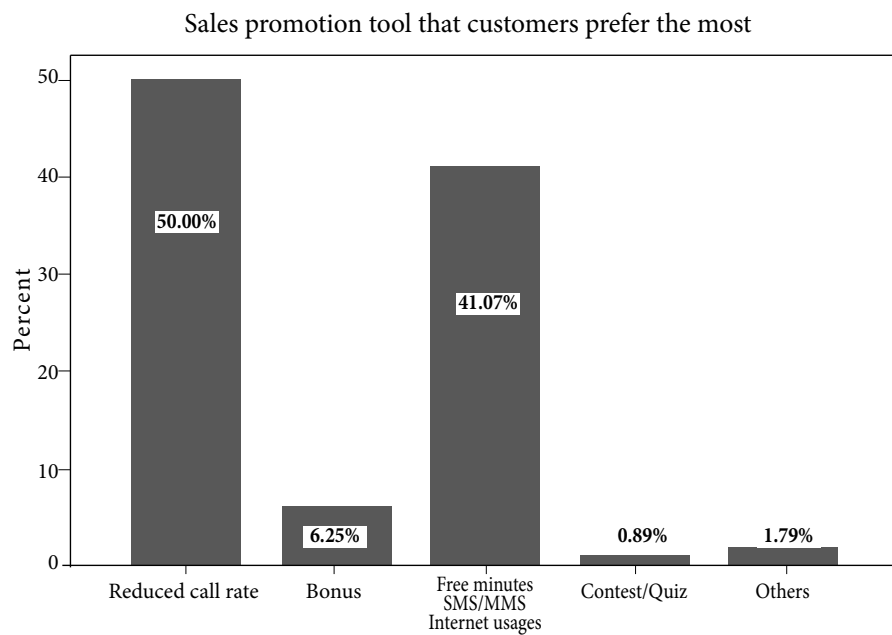
Figure-1: Sales promotion offer that customers prefer the most

Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to discover how does consumers' buying decision is influenced by the sales promotion activities. Now a days sales promotion is a popular tool of marketing that is widely used in whole over the world for almost all types of products and services. Sales promotion is an external marketing influence that provides input in the 'Evaluation of Alternative Stage' in consumer's decision-making process. When customers compare among various alternatives, sales promotion provides the firm a competitive advantage. This study focused only on the telecom industry of Bangladesh. It was found in the study that mobile subscribers of Bangladesh hold a positive attitude toward sales promotion and it increases the consumption rate. It was also found in the study that in most of the cases sales promotions do not have any influence on customer loyalty. Many subscribers also believe that sales promotion offer reduce service quality and excessive use of this tool is disturbing.

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**Profitability Analysis of Indiscriminate Shopping Mall
Buildings: A Study on Sylhet City**

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Abstract

Shopping malls contribute to the business sector more significantly than traditional markets which were viewed as simple convergence of supply and demand. These malls attract buyers and sellers, and induce customers providing enough time to make choices as well as a recreational means of shopping. However, at present competition among malls, congestion of markets and traditional retail business has led mall investors and tenant to consider alternative investment portfolio to avoid the future risk. Shopping mall business in cities plays a vital role on the economic part of a country. In the background of this phenomenon there is the increase of haphazard shopping malls, where shoppers choose to complete their shopping within it. However, there are not much more researches which are applied to these sectors to identify the viability of business in Bangladesh. In Sylhet city through our research we have found out some critical problems of shopping mall business that are aligned within the city premises. The purpose of this paper is to reveal the profitability of existing business of shopping mall units and find out some optimal number of shopping malls which are necessary for branding this small city. If the investors of shopping mall tend to invest indiscriminately then the future potential of this business would face risk of their investment. Hence through this research we attempted to suggest some guidelines where mall owners as well as shopkeepers would realize their implications in these sectors.

[**Key words:** Shopping Mall, Investor, Viability, Indiscriminately, Brand.]

Introduction:

Shopping malls have become an important part of the economic and social fabric especially in some of the big cities. Currently, the number of shopping malls is expected to increase due to the interest of consumers and investors in this sector.

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Among the investment fields shopping malls have become popular and has increased competition. For this reason, choice of shopping destination is a topic receiving increasing attention. Regardless of their sizes, all shopping malls are attraction centers for people to come together to socialize, see new developments, and do the shopping. Overall malls are on the critical retail venues that contribute something to the consumer experience (Haytko & Baker, 2004) and they are among the most frequently visited retailers (Dholakia, 1999). A location itself may be a source of pleasurable experience for its visitors (Bloch et al., 1994). Shopping center, a concentration of retail, service, and entertainment enterprises are designed to serve the surrounding region. The modern shopping center differs from its antecedents–bazaars and marketplaces–in that the shops are usually amalgamated into one encompassing structure. The term "shopping center" has been evolving since its first presence in 1920s. As the shopping center industry has grown and changed, more types of centers have evolved and the content of the term has been enriched. There are various definitions for shopping center, whereas, the internationally accepted term of shopping center is given by Urban Land Institute (ULI), Washington D.C., USA. "A group of retail and other commercial establishments that are planned developed and managed as a single property. On-site parking is provided. The center's size and orientation are generally determined by the market characteristics of the trade area served by the centre".[1]

In Bangladesh, if any research was done in this sector that was in a piece-meal way. It has been observed that most of the shopping mall buildings which are established in different urban places didn't consider any concrete guideline or prior market survey. So it is a concerned issue for the owners as well as the economy as a whole. Market positioning of the shopping mall buildings is the key factor for its profitability. It is a technique used to classify the image or identity of a store in the target consumers' mind, by which retailers can focus on store attributes or characteristics that are consistent with their customers' shopping needs and priorities. Depending on their perception of store attributes, consumers may patronize or switch retail formats (Paulins & Geistfeld, 2003; Wilde, Kelly, & Scott, 2004). Understanding the retail attributes that shoppers desire from their shopping trips enables retailers to attract more shoppers while retaining their existing shoppers. Reynolds et al. (2002) identified five clusters of traditional mall shoppers based on their preferred retail attributes: (a) basic shoppers, who were preferred mall essentials and convenience; (b) serious shoppers, who valued mall essentials, brand-name merchandise and convenience; (c) enthusiast shoppers, who were most interested in entertainment; (d) destination shoppers, who placed importance on mall essentials and brand name merchandise; and (e) apathetic shoppers, who were the smallest segment rated all attributes as not important. Retail attributes can be identified as utilitarian or hedonic. Utilitarian attributes offer practical functionality (e.g., convenience, price, and assortment), whereas hedonic attributes satisfy emotional wants (e.g., atmosphere, social experiences). Anecdotal evidence suggests that big-box retailers mainly provide utilitarian benefits such as low prices, a wide assortment of merchandise, and convenience (Gallo, 2002; Urban & Hoffer, 1997), while regional malls provide hedonic attributes that appeal to the consumers'

five senses (Kim, 2002). To date, no empirical study has compared these retailers in terms of how their specific retail attributes are evaluated by their customers (Lee. M-Y.et. al, 2006).

Scope of the study

The essence of shopping mall buildings is tremendously important in today's world. Shoppers can easily get their right merchandise at a particular place without wasting huge time and effort. But when it is situated in an unplanned position then the total investment of the project doesn't bear any economic significance. Besides when it is indiscriminately built up without any proper market survey, it could bear a long term risk of profitability of the investors. So to assess the profitability of shopping mall buildings there is a scope of research. It would also help the researcher to find out any relevant information when further research would be conducted.

Research Questions:

- Why are shopping malls indiscriminately established in Sylhet city?
- Is the profit rate of investing shopping mall higher than other types of business?

Objectives of the study

1. To explore the reasons behind indiscriminately established shopping malls in Sylhet city.
2. To explore the profitability of shopping malls indiscriminately located at different areas in Sylhet city.
3. To identify the existing problems of indiscriminate shopping mall buildings.
4. To provide some guidelines for developing Sylhet as a brand city with optimum investment in the shopping mall business.

Methodology of the study

This research mainly focused on mixed research methods. Researchers used qualitative as well as quantitative research method to conduct the study.

Sample Design

As the study about profitability assessment of the indiscriminate shopping malls building located in Sylhet city, so population included mainly all shopping mall buildings in Sylhet city. Sample size estimated 20 shopping malls owners and 100 retail owners from Sylhet city purposively.

Collection of Data

The sample was selected using non-random opportunity sampling technique

(purposive) as most of the owners fear to disclose data about profitability of the malls and retail outlets. In-depth interview as a qualitative research technique and survey study as a quantitative research techniques used in data collection. Guideline questionnaire used in in-depth interview session while semi structured questionnaire used in survey study to collect primary data from the respondents while secondary data like books, thesis papers, articles, reports etc. are also used.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics were mainly used to analyze data efficiently.

Scenario of shopping malls in Bangladesh:

Shopping mall is an essential part of our economy. There are a number of renowned shopping malls in our country. Big shopping malls need huge investment and time to complete. Shopping malls are not designed to give profit immediately. But big shopping malls present different image of a country. For example, Basundhara City is so long, the biggest shopping mall in South Asia as well as twelfth in the world. The 19-storey Basundhara City, also boasts of an array of modern facilities located in the heart of the city. Basundhara contains 1,500 shops, 100 food courts, parking for 1,000 cars, two gyms, a swimming pool, three movie theatres and an amusement park. Now another shopping mall, Jamuna Future Park has already started their functions. Jamuna Future Park, an ambitious venture of Jamuna Group, is the world's third largest mall, claims the group. The company says it designed Jamuna Park as a landmark dreamwork of Bangladesh. The 4.02 million square feet floor space park contains a food court of international standard to serve 3000 people, parking for 5000 cars, banquet hall for 500 people, health club and gymnasium for 2000 people, seven cinema halls in its Cineplex and a 45 MW captive plant to supply power. Shopping malls of Bangladesh are not confined to only in Dhaka. There are also luxurious shopping malls in Sylhet, Chittagong and many other parts of the country.

Essential elements of shopping mall:

To be fulfilled everything has to meet up some distinct features. Shopping mall is not an exception. Rather than it has also some distinctive attributes. People go to shopping mall not only for shopping but also for other purposes. Management has to take some sort of innovative plans and steps which will make their shopping mall different from others. To meet up the demand of all sorts of customers, management may arrange floor in such a way that different types of facilities are available in a shopping mall as people are less likely to visit different shopping malls for their needs. Management may provide some recreational facilities towards retailers and customers as recreation is an essential part of our life and it remove boredom in shopping. Some common elements that should be ensured in every shopping mall are Car parking, Lift, Accelerators, Security (fire service, emergency service, metal dictator), Food court, Play zone, Theme park, Gymnasium, Cineplex, Modern facilities (ATM, Online shopping), First aid service.

Considerable factors for establishing a shopping mall:

If anyone wants to establish a shopping mall, then she/he has to consider some factors which are directly or indirectly related to the profitability of the shopping malls. The factors may be internal or external. The factors are located surrounded by a good number of residential area, availability of potential customer, institutional placement, social class of customers, communication and transportation facilities etc.

Economic impact of shopping malls:

The world economy is closely related with the market. Every shopping mall has the possibility to create new market whatever the strategy, wherever the location is. This is only one side impact of shopping malls but its scope is very vast as many stakeholders are related with shopping malls and they all are benefited from it. Shopping malls enable entrepreneurs to invest their funds in this secured sector which expedite business opportunity of a country.

Newly established shopping malls create employment opportunity as we have seen in Basundhara city. People of the society who have a lot of idle money and who are reluctant to invest their money in risky sectors, they may invest their idle money in shopping malls because it is comparatively less risky than others. This increases the flow of money in the economy that accelerates the economic growth of a country. Attractive and impressive shopping mall in architectural view like Basundhara City, Bangalore Centre, Chennai City Centre, Cross road Mall can attract tourists. A report says that about five thousand people visit Basundhara City every day.

Shopping mall is a centre that consists of a large number of retail stores and outlet which provide diversified business facilities. It saves customers' time and money from moving here and there to get their desired facilities. A well structured and designed shopping mall attracts foreign investors. Foreign brands and chain shops want to operate their business in suitable and well established location. Business organizations would like to operate their business in safe and secured place like shopping mall buildings.

Reasons behind rapid growth of shopping malls in Sylhet city:

Al-Hamra was the first modern shopping mall in Sylhet established in 1999. Since then about twelve large shopping malls have been established. Many new shopping malls are now under construction. There are some reasons behind this rapid growth of shopping malls in Sylhet. Non-Residential Bangladeshis (NRBs) are the great source of forcing remittance in this city. According to Bangladesh Statistics Bureau the remittances being sent by NRBs are increasing every year and the amount reached at $4 billion which is very encouraging. This foreign remittance is used to upgrade standards of living of the people in this region. The foreign remittance builds available fund for investment. This fund is used in establishing shopping

malls by regional entrepreneurs as well as national. In Sylhet, most families have one or more persons in United Kingdom and other parts of the world. They send huge amount of foreign currency for their relatives. After meeting the necessary need this foreign currency is treated as idle money. So entrepreneurs of this region like to utilize this idle money through investing in shopping malls. Sylhet is not advanced in different investment sectors like agriculture, industry or any other productive sectors. It is also suffering from lower education rate. Lack of knowledge about other business sectors may be another reason for the rapid growth of shopping mall in Sylhet.

Analysis and Discussion
Profitability of the shopping mall:

Table: 1 - Factors driving profitability in shopping malls

Types	No. of respondents	%
Proximity to centre	12	60
Promotional effort	3	15
Newly designed and conglomeration of business	5	25
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

In shopping mall business high profitability depends on number of factors. There are 60% respondents think that shopping centre profitability depends on proximity to the centre of the city. Besides 25% answered new design structure and conglomeration of mall business boost the profit rate of the shopping mall business.

Table: 2 - Profitability of existing shopping mall

Types	No. of respondents	%
Good	6	30
Moderate	2	10
Low	9	45
Very low	3	15
Total respondents	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

To assess the profitability of existing shopping malls it is seen 45% of the respondents answered that the condition of profitability of malls business is low rather than other business. Among them 30% respondents answer that their business enjoying good profit and 15% of the respondents responded about very low profit of their investment in shopping mall business.

Table: 3 -Average monthly sales of retail owners

Types	1-3 lakh	3-5 lakh	5-7 lakh	7-10 lakh	Above 10 lakh	Total
Clothing	5	13	5	2	2	27
Jewellery	0	7	5	5	3	20
Cosmetics	5	5	0	0	2	12
Shoes	3	3	5	0	2	13
Gift shops	5	3	1	0	3	12
Electronics	0	4	5	3	4	16
Total (%)	**18**	**35**	**21**	**10**	**16**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

In our survey we have selected 100 retail owners to know about their average sales on monthly basis. Out of 100 retailers in different business outlets 35% of retailers sell 3-5 lakh, 18% retailers sell 1-3 lakhs, 21% sells between 5-7 lakhs. Only 16% retailers' monthly sales more than 10 lakhs.

Table: 04- Profit margin on sales (yearly)

Types	Less than 10%	10-20%	Above 20%	Loss	Total
Clothing	11	6	6	4	27
Jewelry	4	8	7	1	20
Cosmetics	4	5	2	1	12
Shoes	6	4	1	2	13
Gift shops	8	4	0	0	12
Electronics	7	5	4	0	16
Total	**40**	**32**	**20**	**8**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

Out of 100 respondents 40% retail owners answered that their profit margin is less than 10%. Secondly 32% of them enjoying 10-20% of profit margin in a year. Among the respondents 8% of retailers are in loss position.

Table: 05 - Rate of sales growth (Yearly)

Types	0-5%	5-10%	10-15%	Total
Clothing	15	5	7	27
Jewellery	15	5	0	20
Cosmetics	7	5	0	12
Shoes	8	5	0	13
Gift shoes	7	5	0	12
Electronics	10	6	0	16
Total	**62**	**31**	**7**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

From the above data analysis, it is observed that 62% of respondents sales growth between 0%-5%. Besides 31% of retailers sales growth between 5%-10% per annum. There are only 7% of retailers whose yearly sales growth is 10%-15%.

Problems and prospects regarding investment in shopping mall:

Table: 6 - Problems of existing business

Types	No. of respondents	%
High competitive pressure	8	40
Many other business places for buyers	4	20
Urban expansion	2	10
High customer switching	6	30
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

In shopping mall business 40% of the respondents think that to invest in shopping malls is highly competitive. Besides 30% of respondents answered high customer switching of their clients retail store is intensified the problems of the business. Because customers of retail outlets of shopping malls like to roaming new shopping malls that also the concern for existing units of business. Among the respondents 20% think that customers used to find many other new multiple business outlets for buying their necessities that decrease the profitability of existing business.

Table: 7 -Unplanned establishment

Types	No. of respondents	%
Very high	14	70
Very low	6	30
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

Among the 20 respondents 70% think that most of the shopping malls newly built are the unplanned business venture of the investors. In Sylhet city, the number of shopping malls is comparatively high in the market demand.

Table: 8 - Proximity of competitors

	<1 sq. mile	1-2 sq. mile	>5 sq. mile	Closest	Total
Number of shopping malls	5	5	0	10	20
Percentage	25%	25%	0%	50%	

Source: Field Survey

From the survey analysis it is clear that 50% of the malls are located in a very close proximity. There are 25% of shopping malls located less than 1 sqaure mile. Besides remaining 25% malls are located between 1-2 square miles. This close proximity of malls intensifies the competitive pressure of the investors that declines the investors' profit.

New Investors (promoters) pointed to slack sales of space; much of retail spaces at shopping malls are unused. Mushrooming malls in Sylhet city fail to attract a sizeable turnout of real shoppers, resulting in a glum turnover in business. These malls in this city cast a pall of gloom on those who have already put investment at stake by buying or renting showrooms. The dream of high return is far off. Reality points to slack sales at many shopping malls around the city. Stakeholders said the majority of the shops suffer from low rates of return. Many of them are awash in red ink. Several established shopping malls in the city are experiencing dropping sales while new shopping malls are not able to attract customers. The number of real shoppers is low compared to a growing number of shopping malls. Mall visitors are now dispersed across a wide range of options.

Table: 09 - Motives of Investment

Types	No. of Respondents	%
High Profit	9	45
Social Recognition	6	30
Safe Investment	4	20
Others	1	5
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

In our survey we have interviewed 20 respondents on their investment motives in shopping mall business. Among them 45% invested in this business for gaining high profit and 30% of respondents invested for social recognition and remaining 25% are investing for safer investment and others purposes.

Table: 10 - Types of investors

Types	No. of Respondents	%
Local	5	25
NRB and local	15	75
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

In shopping mall investment 75% came from NRB (Non-Resident Bangladeshi People) and local promoters. Only 25% investors are local businessmen.

Table: 11 - Investment climate of shopping mall

Types	No. of respondents	%
Safer investment	11	55
Not safer	9	45
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field Survey

There are about 89 established shopping mall premises (big, medium and small) in Sylhet city. Among these malls few are old and majority of shopping malls developed after 2000. In that situation 55% investors of malls convinced that it is safer investment than any other business. There are 45% of respondents are in dilemma in their investment in future as the intensity of competition.

Shoppers are overwhelmed by the rising number of shopping malls and choose to shop near their residence. Sales are dull in most shopping malls because of their poor management and unavailability of facilities, like proper restrooms, parking, and minimum working lifts etc. The growing number of shoppers is not keeping pace with the growing number of shopping malls. The blow is the most painful to small investors who bet all their fortunes on a single shopping complex. But the situation is relatively better for shop owners who run shops at more than one shopping complex. Many new shopping malls in Sylhet city have not been developed in a planned manner.

Conclusion:

The growth of shopping mall business has been a catalyst for job creation, infrastructural improvements, improved standards of living, competitive advantages and economic growth. However, these benefits can only be realized if it's the right development in the right location and at the right time. In Sylhet, haphazard establishment of shopping malls as already indicated is in the wrong location like Zindabazar - the heart of the city. Development that is in the wrong location should be carefully evaluated before investment. Both the retailers and promoters of shopping malls suffer from profitability when they fail to bear the market significantly. Here in Sylhet city, investors of shopping mall business should justify the market value of their investment. As an investment, its current success ensures that all the businesses within the mall are viable concerns. This is an essential criterion for adding value. Its valuation may have added millions to the initial development value. For example, if the initial investment costs BDT 1 million to develop, its current market value could be between BDT 4-5 million. The additional BDT 3-4 million is added value for the owners. Besides the role of investors (promoters) and retail shop owners' government must play a proactive and supportive role in its urbanization plan in Sylhet city. If it is immediately rethought by the authority of Sylhet city then the city of Sylhet can be branded as a unique city in our country. They should consider the economic interest of the city dwellers, efficiency of business, and collective value and dreams of the Sylhet as a whole.

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Admission Behavior of Students into Private University
A study of Sylhet City

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Abstract

Students are the primary concern of any educational institution. Higher Education institutions are now increasingly in competition with each other for students, especially quality students. A Private university runs with its own earnings only, hence it pays more attention toward student admission. Like any other business concern a private university needs to understand its customer (student) needs and wants in order to remain competitive and survive among the flock of higher education providers. Students who get admitted to a university come from various socio-economic backgrounds reflecting different criteria for choosing a university. The main purpose of this study is to explore the factors considered by the students while choosing a university to get admission. In addition, it is also the intention of the research to provide some directions to the university authorities on what areas to focus. This study is carried out by using a structured questionnaire taking sample size of 100 for collecting primary data from first year undergraduate students of different universities located in sylhet city. A number of statistical measures (e.g. descriptive analysis, ANOVA test) have been used to draw a conclusion and offer recommendations. The results show that the influence of parents or guardians, friends in college or existing university, university educated relatives, university admission representatives, academic and university reputation, campus safety, and qualified faculties are the major influencing factors on the admission decision of a student to a specific university.

Key Words: Behavior, Higher Education, Private University, Information Source, and Student Needs

Introduction

The development of a country largely depends on the nature and standard of education especially mass education and higher education. Tertiary level education is one of the important parts of the education system of any country. Education at university levels seek to generate new insight or knowledge through research; offer

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new concepts and ideas on different social and developmental issues anticipate the needs of the economy and prepare highly skilled Human Resources. In these senses, education at tertiary level should be research based, standard and sustainable development oriented. In this context, government had tried from the very beginning after liberation. At the time of liberation (16 December 1971), the country inheritably possessed six public universities four in general sector and two in technical Sector (Mahmudul Alam et al., 2003). Thereafter, Bangladesh government had established only two Public Universities till 1990s. The political situations in the country during the period 1980s -1990s were not favourable to the growth and expansion of higher education. The rapid incensement of population raised the demand for higher education after 1990s which was beyond the capacity of public university accommodation. Public universities also could not procure all the necessary educational materials as early as needed. With a view to solving these problems in the higher education, government has accorded permission for the establishment of private university in the private sector by promulgating the Private University Act-1992. The enactment of this Act in 1992 has marked another major breakthrough in the higher education sector in Bangladesh (Farooqui, 2007).

The demand for higher educational opportunities after 1990 seemed to have increased significantly. Consequently, the number of students in the private universities along with public universities has been rising. Private universities in Bangladesh recorded a phenomenal growth after the enactment of the Private University Act in 1992. 21st century makes the private sector as a challenging and fastest growing segment, and higher education is not an exception. Education at private level in Bangladesh within a short period of time (5 to 10 years), has generated a number of private higher education institutions besides less growing public universities in transition of socio-economic and political situations and made the private education sector as an important partner in the arena of higher education (Mahmudul Alam et al., 2003). But the rapid expansion of private universities stimulates competition on quality education and educational expense. As a result, the combined effect is made up of a vibrant education sector with a healthy rivalry among the competing institutions (Ashraf et al., 2009) where student community is the main beneficiary and ultimate gainer is the nation. The major attraction of the private universities is the job-oriented courses they offered and session jam free education. Based on the students' opinions on universities selected for study is found that private university graduates get jobs faster than public university graduates and there are fewer unemployed private university graduates; and also that their average salary levels are significantly above the salary levels of their counterparts from the public universities(Mahmudul Alam et al., 2003). Alternatively rental campus, guest faculty, limited course offer and high fees charged by the private universities may be the reasons for not attracting merit students. University Grants Commission (UGC) as the apex body of the government for higher education is responsible for funding of public universities. Though Private universities do not get any government assistance in terms of funding but they need to receive approval from the UGC to operate and award degrees. The private sector of higher education, which emerged in the 1990s, is self- financing and at times produces a profit for its

continuation (Mahmudul Alam et al., 2003). Its main source of income is student fees. Some private universities tried to make them different by increasingly devoting considerable time and resources to meet the needs and expectations of students. Some institutions set up branches to reach education at door, while other arrange make up classes in holiday if the schedule classes were not held. The challenge for the management of these institutions is now not only to better meet the students' needs but also to monitor the changes in students needs over time.

Thus the study is an attempt to survey students' behaviour for selecting a university to get admission. Therefore, this research makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in this area of research and helps university authority to reform their strategy to meet the changing needs of students' overtime.

Research Objective:

The core objective of the study is to identify the attributes that students consider before choosing a university.

The specific objectives are:

   I. Describe and compare the extent to which characteristics of the university influenced the students to university choice.

 II. Describe and compare the sources of information most frequently used by the students to choose a university.

III. Compare the level of influence of selected known individuals on students' predispositions in the university choice process.

IV. Provide some suggestions and policies to the authority of the university.

Literature Review

Attitude is an important concept in research on marketing and behavioral science in the context of making decision. Fishbein (1967) defined attitude as "a learned predisposition of human beings". Based on this predisposition, "an individual would respond to an object (or an idea) or a number of things (or opinions) either in favourable or unfavourable ways." Kotler(2000) stated that "an attitude is a person's enduring favourable or unfavourable evaluations, emotional feelings, action tendencies toward some object or idea". Since researchers have been studying on the students' attitude towards the criteria for choosing a university for a very long time, a large body of literature exists on this issue.

Several theoretical models have been developed and suggested to describe the factors that influence student's attitude to choose their study at a specific university. Each of these theoretical models describes the various processes by which a student selects a college or University for their higher education. The conceptual approaches describe the university choice process and factors that lead students to their

university choice can be found in three models as suggested by Hossler *et al*, (1989), a) Economic models, b) Sociological models and c) Combined models.

Jackson, (1982) proposed an economic model which emphasized the rational decision-making process of students and their families, and the variety of ways in which different student's rated and used the college (university) attributes to make their final Higher Education Institute (HEI) choice decision (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999). Jackson in 1982 also developed Sociological Models from educational and status attainment research emphasizing on the desire of individuals to pursue a higher education institution. The sociological model specifies a variety of social and individual factors leading to a student's occupational and educational aspirations. In the sociological derivative model developed by Blau and Duncan (1967) states that family background, socioeconomic background, and student's academic ability are predicted to have a joint positive effect on the aspirations to choose a university. Combined models utilized the most powerful indicators from the economic and social models to analyze the decision-making process, providing a conceptual framework that predicts the effects of policy-making interventions (Hossler *et al*, 1985). Under combined models, Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) state that student choice criteria for higher education institute follow three stage model emphasizing aspiration, search, and choice.

Chapman's (1981) model examined students' aptitude or achievement as an external factor to college (university) enrolment. Chapman also stated that students' aptitude toward choosing a university is associated with their performance on university admission tests. According to Manski and Wise (1983), a student's Grade Point Average (GPA) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores are very strong indicators of their intention for enrolment into higher education. Similarly, Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) stated that student's academic ability is an important indicator of university attainment, but they concluded that the ability of the student seems to moderate by the amount and quality of parental encouragement" (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2000). According to Hossler *et al*, (1985), students ability and/or students achievement have a significant and direct impact upon the predisposition of students toward a higher education (Chapman's, 1981). Even though parental income does not influence on a student's predisposition to attend a HEI, parents' educational level does (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999). Zemsky and Oedel (1983) found that institution's location is also important in addition to student's academic ability to choose HEI.

In other relevant researches , Mamun and Das(1999); Zahid and Sogra (2000); Mujib, Mamun, and Siddique (2000); and Ahmed, Ahmed & Anwar (2000) have identified some factors such as library facilities, laboratory facilities, internship assistance for students, course system, quality of teaching, medium of instructions, campus size, location, accommodation for students, campus facilities, teaching quality, teaching methodology, teaching aids and support facilities; and skill-based curriculum are the major factors of student satisfaction and that are the considerable matters of student toward choosing a university to get admission.

From the above literature review it is obvious that there is a major discrepancy

among different researchers on factor affecting student's attitude toward university enrolment. Some researchers argued that student's attitude is influenced by external factors like students' socio-economic background, parent background, student ability, student achievement which are not directly related to a university or higher education institution while others argue that university background and offered facilities are the most important. So the authors believe that there is potential for further research in this area.

Methodology of the Study

The study is exploratory in nature, which required data collected form actual field. The data for this study obtained from students of different backgrounds. A survey was conducted with a structured questionnaire containing 44 questions divided in to four sections: individual information, university related attributes influencing students, known individuals and information source affecting students' choice criteria of HEI. The study also used secondary data and information to construct literature review and other theoretical bases.

The survey was conducted with a sample of 100 students chosen from three private universities located in Sylhet. All the students were randomly selected (though there were 71 boys and 29 girls) through chunk sampling method. 66 (33+33) students were selected from two universities and 34 students were selected from another one university.

To verify the collected data the researchers have conducted several statistical analyses like descriptive analysis, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance).

Hypothesis of the study

In this research known individual influence and the influence of information source on students' attitude were taken as independent variables and student choice decision was taken as dependent variable. The study is an applied (human behavioural) and empirical type of research, which needs to develop and test hypothesis. Depending on the nature of variables, the researchers were constructed two hypotheses to signify students' opinion.

Hypothesis 1: known individuals' influence has no impact on the students' admission choice.

Hypothesis 2: Sources of information has no influence on the students' admission choice.

Preliminary Findings and Discussion

Hypothesis -1:

Table 1: ANOVA analysis

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	198.089	9	22.00989	11.90393	5.96E-18	1.889321
Within Groups	1830.47	990	1.84896			
Total	2028.559	999				

From the above table the calculated value of F (1.88) is greater than the table value (1) at 5% level of significance and the p value (4.88E-43) is far less than .05 level of significance. So we can reject our null hypothesis and can say that known individuals have influence on student's decision to choose a university.

Table 2: Known individuals appear to influence students to choose a university

Analysis	Parents or guardians	Friends in college	Existing known students of respective university	Relatives who graduated from the University	Friend who already attended in the university	Teachers of respective university	Friends in high school	College guide / counselor / teacher	Coaching centre / private teacher	High school guide / counselor / teacher
Mean	3.83	3.13	3.34	3.26	3.15	3.05	2.68	2.62	2.46	2.27
Standard Deviation	1.21	1.30	1.44	1.50	1.53	1.42	1.34	1.29	1.32	1.20
Coefficient of Variation	31.72	41.53	43.02	46.06	48.68	46.46	50.00	49.06	53.71	53.08
Sample Variance	1.48	1.69	2.07	2.25	2.35	2.01	1.80	1.65	1.75	1.45
Percentage of response %	76.60	62.60	66.80	65.20	63.00	61.00	53.60	52.40	49.20	45.40
Standard Error	0.12	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.12
Median	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
Mode	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00
Kurtosis	-0.21	-1.03	-1.12	-1.32	-1.40	-1.27	-1.19	-0.91	-1.04	-0.69
Skewness	-0.87	-0.22	-0.43	-0.33	-0.22	-0.18	0.17	0.28	0.44	0.52
Range	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum	383.00	313.00	334.00	326.00	315.00	305.00	268.00	262.00	246.00	227.00
Count	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

From the descriptive statistical table, (Table No. 2) based on statistical mean and coefficient of variance, we found that parents or guardians, friends in college, existing known students of respective university and relatives who graduated from the university have great influence on students choice of university and high school guide /counsellor / teacher and coaching centre / private teacher have little or no influence over their decisions.

Hypothesis-2:

Table 3: ANOVA analysis

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	244.764	9	27.196	15.338	1.37906E-23	1.8893
Within Groups	1755.36	990	1.773			
Total	2000.124	999				

From the above table, the calculated value of F (1.88) is also greater than the table value (1) at 5% level of significance and the p value (1.37906E-23) is far less than .05. So we can reject our 2nd null hypothesis and can say that sources of information have influence on student's decision to choose a university for getting admission.

Table 4: Sources of information that likely to influence student to choose a university

Analysis	Personal conversation with a university admissions representative	Visit to the university campus	Information from friends or relative or near relatives	Personal conversation with former teacher	University information on a website	Number of Offered Programs or (major) information on the university website	Teacher(s) whom you know	Printed University publications (brochures, etc.)	College authority guidance	Visits by University representative to your college
Mean	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.4	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.4
Standard Deviation	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.4
Coefficient of Variation %	30.9	31.4	33.2	39.5	42.8	44.4	51.1	46.3	61.3	59.2
Sample Variance	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.8	2.2	1.7	2.3	1.9
Percentage of response %	72.8	75.2	77.4	67.4	61.0	60.4	57.4	56.8	49.6	47.2
Standard Error	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Median	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0
Mode	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.0	1.0
Kurtosis	0.3	0.0	-0.2	-0.9	-0.9	-1.1	-1.5	-1.1	-1.5	-1.2
Skewness	-0.8	-0.8	-0.9	-0.5	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	0.4	0.5
Range	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Minimum	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Maximum	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Sum	364.0	376.0	387.0	337.0	305.0	302.0	287.0	284.0	248.0	236.0
Count	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

From the descriptive statistical table, (Table No. 4) based on statistical mean and coefficient of variance, it is observed that personal conversation with a university admissions representative; visit to the university campus; and information from friends or relative or near relatives have great influence on students choice of university alternatively visits by University representative to college and college authority guidance have little or no influence over their admission decisions.

Table 5: Leading University related factors that appears to influence student to choose a university

Analysis	Academic Reputation of the University	Prestige and reputation of the university	Quality and reputation of the students	Campus safety and security	Quality and reputation of the faculty	Cost (tuition and other relevant costs)	Quality and reputation of degrees offered by university	Distance from home (availability of trans-portation)	Location of campus (within city limits)	Student support services (Co-curriculum activities)
Mean	4.26	4.10	4.04	3.87	3.82	3.71	3.66	3.56	3.53	3.44
Standard Deviation	0.75	0.80	0.84	1.17	1.06	1.17	1.07	1.23	1.25	1.25
Coefficient of Variation	17.53	19.46	20.79	30.21	27.69	31.66	29.12	34.42	35.44	36.33
Sample Variance	0.56	0.64	0.71	1.37	1.12	1.38	1.14	1.50	1.56	1.56
Percentage of response %	85.20	82.00	80.80	77.40	76.40	74.20	73.20	71.20	70.60	68.80
Standard Error	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.13	0.12
Median	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	3
Kurtosis	-0.44	1.52	1.97	-0.10	0.64	-0.70	-0.40	-0.45	-0.64	-0.59
Skewness	-0.61	-0.91	-1.02	-0.86	-0.94	-0.52	-0.51	-0.61	-0.59	-0.48
Range	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	426	410	404	387	382	371	366	356	353	344
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Students were asked about 20 important factors relating to university admission, whether they were influenced by those factors and to what extent. Based on their answers, it is observed that students are highly influenced by academic reputation of the university, prestige and reputation of the university and quality and reputation of the students (table-5). Majority of students consider Campus safety and security, Nature (Permanent status & Size) of campus, Location of campus, Distance from home, Quality and reputation of the faculty, Variety of majors offered, tuition and other relevant costs, Availability of scholarships and other financial aids, Academic

facilities , Career opportunities available for graduates , International Link , Quality and reputation of degrees offered by university, Credit transfer facility, Co-curriculum activities, Availability of sports, gymnasium, play ground etc. have moderate influence on their admission decisions but there are higher degree of variability in the opinions among students. Further more, on campus housing or hostels facility and part time expert guest faculty have little or no influence on students' choice decisions (table-6).

Table 6: Less important University related factors that appears to influence student to choose a university

Analysis	Academic facilities (library, laboratory, Computer lab, etc.)	Variety of majors offered	Career opportunities available for graduates	Credit transfer facility	Availability of sports, gymnasium, play ground etc.	Nature (Permanent status & Size) of campus	Availability of scholarships and other financial aids	International Link (e.g. study and job opportunities)	On campus housing or hostels	Conducted courses by part time expert guest faculty
Mean	3.44	3.41	3.37	3.33	3.23	3.12	3.08	3.05	2.63	2.65
Standard Deviation	1.27	0.96	1.13	1.30	1.31	1.09	1.34	1.22	1.47	1.31
Coefficient of Variation	36.80	28.30	33.38	38.90	40.54	34.78	43.46	39.92	56.07	49.56
Sample Variance	1.60	0.93	1.27	1.68	1.71	1.18	1.79	1.48	2.17	1.72
Percentage of response %	68.80	68.20	67.40	66.60	64.60	62.40	61.60	61.00	52.60	53.00
Standard Error	0.13	0.10	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.11	0.13	0.12	0.15	0.13
Median	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Mode	5	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	3
Kurtosis	-1.12	-0.14	-0.29	-0.95	-1.21	-0.59	-1.11	-0.76	-1.22	-1.11
Skewness	-0.21	-0.15	-0.30	-0.27	-0.05	-0.19	-0.02	0.11	0.43	0.16
Range	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sum	344	341	337	333	323	312	308	305	263	265
Count	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Based on the Statistical Mean, Standard Deviation and coefficient of variance (CV) we can conclude that academic reputation, university reputation, and quality of students are the factors that are the most important to the students while choosing a university.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

This exploratory research study provides very useful information and directions for private universities in Bangladesh especially the universities located in Sylhet. Students of private universities come from different socio-economic backgrounds and hence their attitude towards choosing university for admission seems to vary to a large extent but majority of students are young and residents of the same city/ division, so there is a consistency on some particulars in their opinions. Accordingly, from the result of hypothesis tests, we can conclude that there are strong relationships between students' admission choice attitude with known individuals and sources of information. Students are mostly influenced by parents or guardians, friends in college or existing university, university educated relatives, university admissionrepresentative, campus visit and information from nearest persons. Students also highlight the academic goodwill: university reputation, quality and reputation of existing students, campus security and qualified regular faculty are other major factors that they consider before making a decision of admission into a university. The guidance from school, college and coaching centre authorities has little or no influence over their decisions.

Our research has shown that, private university authorities and policy makers should give their attention on raising academic and university reputation, making the campus safe and secured, retaining qualified faculties and charging a compatible tuition fee. At the same time, Universities need to build up a strong admission representative team to contact students with accurate and timely information and propagate the universities' core capabilities to influence and attract students' guardians.

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Assessing the Factors of Customers' Satisfaction on Credit Card Users in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Credit card service in Bangladesh is gaining momentum with high current customer growth rate and future prospect. As the prospect of this service is rising, financial instutions should come up to cath this still untapped market. This study is thus undertaken to examine the issues behind the customer satisfaction and to provide a concrete suggestions to financial organizations in developing their marketing strategy. Survey was undertaken by randomly selecting 350 samples form the users of various credit card companies by using stratified sampling technoque. Regressipn analysis was used to analyze the collected data and to give concrete recommendations. The analysis revealed significant information about customer satisfaction. The findings generalized that customer satisfaction depends on factors like credit card charge, error free monthly bill, and efficient customer service. The study recommened that credit card service providers would have to be very much careful in ensuring competitive credit card charge, error free monthly bill, and state of art customer service in order to make their customers satisfied.

Keywords: Credit Card Market, Credit Card Users, Customer Satisfaction, Financial Organization, Marketing Strategy.

Introduction

Credit card is one of the most important products in today's livelihood where credit card users in globe and also in Bangladesh are increasing day by day. According to Rose and Hudgins (2008), "Credit cards offer their holders access to either instalment or non instalment credit because the customer can charge a purchase on the account represented by the card and pay off the charge in one billing period, escaping any finance charge, or choose to pay off the purchase price gradually incurring a monthly finance charge based on an annual interest rate usually ranging from about 10 percent to 24 percent and sometimes more". (Rose and Hudgins, 2008)

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The Bangladeshi credit card industry is gradually evolving, with most banks in the nation offering credit card services to eligible customers. The local private commercial bank named City Bank has recently formed an alliance with the global financial giant American Express Company to introduce the internationally acclaimed American Express credit cards in Bangladesh. According to the City Bank officials, Bangladesh at present has around 600,000 credit card users. However, the potential market that could be tapped is much bigger as the total number of people with 'cardability' is estimated to be more than 5.5 million, they added (http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/).

According to BRAC Bank, payments and transactions through credit cards by private banks rose to Tk 4.31 billion at the end of 2007. However, the use of the credit card service for overseas transaction is still quite uncommon among the local customers. Likewise, most of the local banks and financial institutions do not offer the dual currency features in their credit card services. Recently, BRAC Bank launched Universal Card- which can be used both at home and abroad interchangeably, offers the flexibility of making repayment either in Bangladeshi Taka or in US Dollar depending on the holder's location.

Standard Chartered Grindlays Bank, formerly known as ANZ Grindlays Bank, is a pioneer in Bangladesh credit card industry. The bank started offering cards in the mid 1990s. In 1997, the bank launched full-scale credit card operations. This was characterized by an increase in both credit card circulation and the number of credit card processing terminals. Later, other banks also joined the band wagon. Today more than 18 companies are providing credit card service in Bangladesh. The market share of Standard Chartered Bank is 40.94%, Brac Bank 21%, Prime Bank 6%, other private commercial bank 29% and other foreign commercial bank 3.06% (http://www.economywatch.com/credit-card/international/bangladesh-credit-card.html).

According to an estimate of ABC (Association of Bangladesh Credit Card), the potential customer of credit card in Bangladesh who has earnings of more than 10000 Taka is 37.30 lac. According to this organization, 11% has been tapped and 89% has been untapped. In 2008, total market size was 722 crore Taka where foreign banks' share was 320 crore or 44% and local banks' share was 402 crore or 56%. (Source: Bangladesh Credit Card Association).

The credit card market of Bangladesh is becoming more and more competitive and the reason is the entrance of new players in the market. Organizations are needed to be market oriented to be competitive in the market.

Although Bangladeshi credit card market is growing at an astonishing speed in terms of number of credit card holders and their credit card expenditure but this growth may be stuck if some basic problems of customers are not solved. One of the major problems that credit card holders are facing is excessive charge. Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr. Atiur Rahman recently asked the banks to rationalize their rate of debit or credit card fee in a bid to popularize the state-of-the-art payment system among a wider populace. According to Atiur Rahman, "There have been allegations from various corners that some banks are charging

hefty or extra fees from their subscribers on the use of electronic card". Another major problem that credit card holders are facing is credit card fraud. According to some banks "credit card fraud is one of the major reasons that bar customers from taking credit card". Credit card holders' problem can also be attributed to a fear of excessive charges and interest rates. It is one of the costliest forms of borrowing, where any credit card outstanding balance could carry an interest as high as 40-45 percent annually. This makes it imperative for a user to clear the outstanding amount within the allocated credit period. The average interest rate for credit cards in the country is nearly 30 percent.

In Bangladesh, customer satisfaction survey on Bangladeshi credit card service providing companies are done by some individuals and organizations but these were lacked from some well structured research designs. In previous research works, researchers have surfaced some important variables which make customers satisfied. In this study, the main focus has been to analyze those factors that have been identified by previous credit card related studies. The factors that have been screened out from previous studies are customer service, merchant availability, fees, and features.

Through this study, some important data have been generalized from the credit card users by developing an effective and well designed questionnaire. The data then have been analyzed by using multiple regression analysis to transform the data into an important finings. The findings will help credit card companies in developing marketing strategy to make their customers satisfied.

This study will give a snapshot about the factors that are important to customers and will also help this credit card service providers an idea of the comparative values of these factors.

Literature Review

Credit cards play an important role in consumer finances, so they are a good place to look for the effects of liquidity constraints and interest rates. About 20 percent of aggregate personal consumption is already being purchased using credit cards [Chimerine 1997] and with the growth of e-commerce this fraction is likely to grow.

Moreover, for most households credit cards, inparticular bankcards (*i.e*., Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and Optima cards), represent the leading source of unsecured credit. About 2/3 of households have at least one bankcard, and of these households *at least* 56 percent – a remarkably large fraction – are borrowing on their bankcards, that is, paying interest, not just transacting [1995 Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF)].

Credit card users are homogenously concerned *only* about interest rates and not about any other term of the credit card contract, whether benefits, grace periods, or annual fees. It could be argued that the credit card market is competitive and that consumers use credit cards rationally (Zywicki J. Todd).

The high rate of convenience use of credit cards relative to revolving use reflects the attractiveness of credit cards as a transactional medium. This attractiveness stems from two basic sources. First, credit cards enable individuals to minimize their cash balances, thereby allowing them to shift their assets into higher-return investments. Second, there has been an explosion in consumer demand for credit card use, largely as the result of the convenience of using credit cards as a mechanism for conducting transactions (Zywicki J. Todd).

In recent years, credit cards have increasingly become an effective cash substitute. This is primarily the result of technological advancements that have increased credit card processing speed. As a result, credit cards are now accepted in such places as fast food restaurants, coffee shops, parking garages, supermarkets, movie theaters, and taxi cabs (Evans & Schmalensee).

Credit cards offer two transactional advantages over cash and checks. First, unlike cash and checks, credit cards make it unnecessary to maintain cash reserves sufficient at all times to cover current expenditures. Second, credit cards offer several ancillary benefits unavailable to cash and credit cards (Brito & Hartley).

Most major credit card issuers offer 24-hour customer service, a popular option for time-strapped families who often cannot accommodate their schedules to traditional "bankers' hours." Customers can also use credit card services to challenge sums due on defective merchandise (Zywicki J. Todd).

Ausubel offers five reasons for his belief that both search and switch costs are likely to be high in the credit card market: (a) the information cost of discovering which banks are offering lower interest rates; (b) the cost of time, effort, and emotional energy in filling out an application for a new card (and possibly getting rejected; (c) the fact that the card fee is usually billed on an annual basis, so that if one switches banks at the wrong time, one forgoes some money; (d) the perception that one acquires a better credit rating or a higher credit limit by holding the same bank's card for a long time; and (e) the time lag between applying for a card and receiving one.

Credit cards are highly complex financial instruments. Their usage reflects a large number of different characteristics and motivations (transactions, debt, consumer benefits etc), involve a large number of prices (interest rates, teaser rates, grace periods, penalty fees, annual fees etc) and quantity constraints (credit limits, minimum payments). These characteristics and their associated services are supplied by a large variety of different card providers (banks, non-banks etc). Furthermore, because credit card markets involve decisions by consumers (rather than corporations or markets) issues of consumer behavior and consumer rationality play a far more significant role in this market relative to other financial markets (Rodríguez-Fernández,Schoinick, Massoud,and Carbo-Valuerde,2006).

Credit cards offer the convenience of cashless transactions and also allow for purchases over the telephone and, increasingly, via the internet. Credit cards also

offer consumers the flexibility of deferring payment to a future date, and thus can allow consumers to smooth spending over temporary liquidity shortfalls (Carol C. Bertaut and Michael Haliassos, 2005).

Credit card transactions have several cost components, the manipulation of which affects demand for the product from both types of consumers—merchants and cardholders. (Adam J. Levitin, 2007)

Credit cards, unlike other payment systems, enable consumers to spend beyond both their cash on hand and the funds in their bank accounts. Thus, merchants who accept credit cards often see their average purchase amount increase. Rewards cards are driving the increase in credit card usage (Levitin).

Miravete (2003) and Agarwal, Chomsisengphet, Liu and Souleles (2006) respectively show that consumers switch telephone calling plans and credit card contracts to minimize monthly bill payments.

In Bangladesh, some credit card related studies have been done by university academicians. In these studies they have tried to focus on the operational activities and services of Bangladeshi credit card providers. According to Alam M. Jahedul (2009), "although it is a new concept in Bangladesh, some Banks devoted some resources to develop the credit card services. They try to install the ATM booth and merchant locations in many divisional cities of the country". He also mentioned that "at the moment, the total size of the credit card market (approximately) in Bangladesh is 7 Lac. The revenues to be earned from credit cards is not whopping because the customer base in Bangladesh is still too thin with only higher middle class and rich people having the ability to use foreign currency credit cards and even they may not be able to spend too much foreign currency because of regulations. The target market is the rich people who travel from one place to another frequently and need money any time".

Huq and Tania (2005) pointed out how the credit card users are satisfied. Islam et al. (2005) find out the satisfaction level of ATM users of HSBC bank. Their study indicates that location, personnel response, quality of currency notes, promptness of card delivery and performance of ATM are positively related to the satisfaction of the customer.

These above discussed literatures revealed some important findings about the operation of credit card, benefits of credit card, characteristics of credit card and some tried to explain credit card customer satisfaction in some extent. No one literature has an in depth analysis about the things or variables or factors that are important to customers and the level of significance of these factors. In my study, I will focus on this particular research gap and will analyze these two important issues with proper explanation.

In summary, it can be said that there are two important research problems that will be addressed in my study and these are:

1. What is the factor or factors that make customers satisfied of their credit card service provider?
2. What is the level of significance of these factors?

3. Rational of the study

The most important reason behind conducting this study is to give credit card companies an idea about the satisfaction generating variables which will help these companies to properly understand their customers and these customers' expectations on them. Another important reason is to encourage credit card companies to focus more on customer satisfaction by giving them an idea of customer demand on some important aspects of credit card.

4. Scope of the study

This research study will cover the area like the issue of customer satisfaction in credit card market. The focus of the analysis will be to explore the variables that lead to customer satisfaction and the comparative importance of these variables. Another focus will be to find out the relationship between customer satisfaction and the selected variables that are revealed through literature review.

5. Objectives of the Research

The core objective of this study is to find out the factors that are important to ensure customer satisfaction in credit card business.

The specific objectives are to**:**

    i.   Find out the relationship between credit card customer satisfaction and customer Service, flawless monthly bill, payment procedure, security, features, fees, merchant availability.

    ii.   Find out the strength of relationship between credit card customers satisfaction and the above selected factors.

    iii. Find out the level of significance of each selected factor in creating credit card customer satisfaction.

    iv   Find out the factors that does not create any credit card customer satisfaction.

6. Methodology

    i. Selection of sample: The study has been undertaken to analyze credit card customer satisfaction factors. Therefore, the credit card holders of Bangladesh have been considered as the population of this study. Sampling frame has been developed on the basis of credit card holders' database maintained by credit card service providers. In order to conduct the study,

stratified probability sampling technique has been used where 10 credit card service providing organizations have been selected as strata and then 35 samples have been selected from each stratum. Based on the sampling technique that has been used in this study, the total of 350 samples has been selected for the analysis.

ii.   **Data collection method:** The data collected through face to face interview with targeted samples. Skilled interviewers those who are experienced in doing consumer survey were sent to different financial institutions to conduct interview with the credit card holders. The samples were interviewed after they came out from their credit card providers' office.

iii. **Analysis method:** Descriptive research design has been utilized for the reason of the existence of quantitative data. Multiple regressions have been used to analyze the quantitative data and to fulfil the core and specific objectives. Survey method especially "personal interview" has been used to collect data from respondents. Structured questionnaire has been used to collect quantitative data that has been appropriate for conducting multiple regression analysis.. Structured questionnaire and 5 point Likert scaling technique have been used to measure the credit card customer satisfaction factors. In this Likert scale, 5 is the highest value & labelled as highly agree & 1 is the lowest value & labelled as strongly disagree. Pre testing is also done with few respondents to identify the errors, ambiguity in the questionnaire and also to find out the problems from the part of the interviewer in conducting the survey. No major problem was surfaced through the pre testing. The data has been interpreted through a predetermined structured procedure where statistical outcomes have been analyzed through hypothesis, significance, and strength of association testing. Interpretation has been generalized based on statistical findings.

7. Data analysis and findings

The objective of this study is to find out the relationship between credit card customer satisfactions with some selected variables. Two types of variables have been analyzed in this study to make policy suggestions.

Dependent variable: Dependent variable here is the customer satisfaction. In this study, the objective is to find out what make customers satisfied. Customer satisfaction has been considered as dependent variable because through secondary data analysis it has been found that customer satisfaction depends on some factors.

Independent variable: In this study, independent variables have been screened through the study of related literature reviews. The variables that found important to credit card users are customer service, flawless monthly bill, merchant availability, security, features, fees, and payment procedure. These variables have been labelled as independent variables because they are important to make dependent variable either positive or negative.

Customer service: customer service means that how effectively and efficiently credit card providers handle its customers and it consists of friendly employees with sound knowledge about all the aspects of credit card, quick solution of customer problem and overall environment of the office that are exposed to customers when they come to take the service.

Flawless monthly bill: Credit card bill where there will be no error in terms of interest charge and purchasing description.

Merchant availability: The locations and outlets where the credit card holders can use their credit cards

Security: The technical aspect of credit card which will ensure that others will not be able use customers' credit card without the consent of customers on both online and offline transaction.

Features: The different types of benefits and packages of credit card that customers will be able to enjoy during their credit card usage.

Fees: The money that customers will have to pay for using the credit card.

Payment procedure: It means the ways that customers can use to pay their bills.

Descriptive Statistics					
Particulars	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Customer Service	350	1	5	3.60	1.400
Flawless Monthly Bill	350	1	5	3.78	1.200
Merchant Availability	350	1	5	2.54	.952
Security	350	1	5	3.52	1.266
Features	350	1	5	2.96	1.106
Fees	350	1	5	2.80	1.294
Payment Procedure	350	1	5	2.60	1.245
Valid N (list wise)	350				

From this descriptive statistics, it can be summarized that three variables namely customer service, flawless monthly bill, and security have mean value of more than 3 and that's why these three variables are the most important variables that will make credit card holders satisfied.

Model estimation

The regression model of this analysis consists of both dependent and independent variables and the model is given there:

CSS= D+β1CS+β2FM+β3MA+β4S+β5F+β6FT+β7PP+ei

Here,

CSS= Customer Satisfaction
D= Multiple Regression Consent
CS= Customer Service
FM= Flawless Monthly Bill
MA= Merchant Availability
S= Security
F= Fees
FT= Features
PP= Payment Procedure
ei= Error

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.971[a]	.943	.934	.322
a. Predictors: (Constant), Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, Flawless Monthly Bill				

Here, the R value is 0.971, which represents the simple correlation and, therefore, indicates a high degree of correlation between credit card customer satisfaction with Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless Monthly Bill.

The R^2 value indicates how much of the dependent variable, customer satisfaction, can be explained by the independent variable which are Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless Monthly Bill. In this case, 94.3% can be explained, which is very large.

The adjusted R^2 value indicates the impact of the addition of other independent variables on dependent variable. If the adjusted R^2 value is close to the value of R^2 then it does mean that addition of other independent variables increase customer satisfaction. Here the value of adjusted R^2 is .934 which is close to the value of R^2 and it does mean that the addition of other independent variables increase overall credit card customer satisfaction.

Significance testing:

H_0: $R^2_{pop}=0$ (There is no relationship between customer satisfaction with Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless Monthly Bill)

H_1: $R^2_{pop}\neq0$ (There is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction with Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless Monthly Bill)

ANOVA[b]					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Regression	72.617	7	10.374	99.863	.000[a]
Residual	4.363	342	.104		
Total	76.980	349			

From the above ANOVA table, it is been possible to test the hypotheses. Statistically if the ANOVA table shows that the significant value is .0000, it means that the H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected.

On the other hand, it means that H_0 (null hypothesis) is accepted. So the final finding is that there is a significant relationship between customer satisfaction with Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless Monthly Bill.

Measurement of the importance of each independent variable:

Coefficients					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	-.932	.216		-4.312	.000
Customer Service	.369	.071	.339	5.216	.000
Flawless Monthly Bill	.275	.077	.240	3.567	.001
Merchant Availability	.034	.051	.241	1.673	.320
Security	.225	.056	.230	4.032	.000
Fees	.056	.065	.050	.862	.394
Features	.095	.045	.087	2.130	.039
Payment procedure	-.049	.082	-.025	-.596	.554

Regression model:

When properly applied, regression model is an excellent tool for use in customer satisfaction measurement (CSM) research (McLauchlan W., 1999)

Customer satisfaction = -.932+.369(customer service)+.275(flawless monthly bill)+.034(merchant availability)+.225(security)+ .056(fees)+ .095(features)+ -.049 (Payment procedure)

This model shows that customer service, flawless monthly bill, and security have obtained significant scores and these three will be the most significant variables to get positive total score of individual customer.

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction
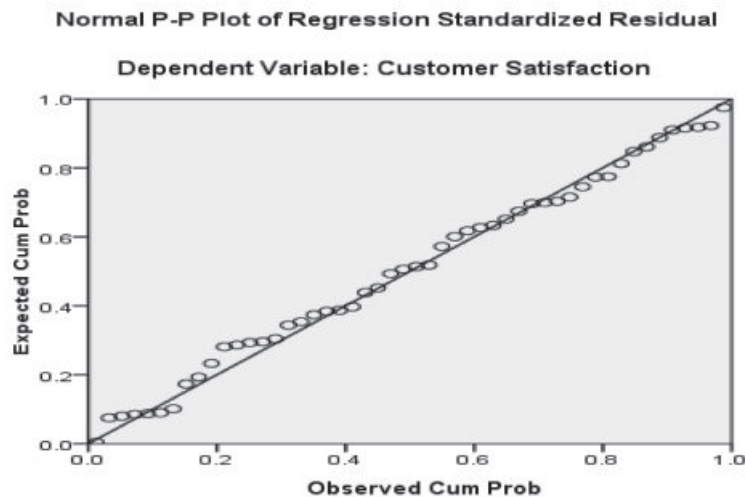
A scatter diagram is useful for determining the form of relationship between customer satisfaction with Payment procedure, Merchant Availability, Features, Security, Fees, Customer Service, and flawless monthly Bill. The scatter diagram indicates that there are no unusual variations among the variables. the diagram also indicates that if all the independent variables increase then the dependent variable (customer satisfaction) will also be increased and the above scatter diagram points are been moved on an upward direction.

8. Recommendation and suggestions:

From the analysis on credit card customer satisfaction, it can be generalized that credit card service providers should put emphasize on some important factors to make themselves much more competitive in the market and to ensure an appropriate level of customer satisfaction.

From the descriptive statistics, it is found that three variables have mean value

of more than three and these three variables are customer service, flawless monthly bill, and security. So the credit card provider should be careful about efficient performance on these three variables.

From the analysis, R^2 is found .943. It means that 94.3% of the customer satisfaction level can be explained by the selected independent variables. From the ANOVA model it is found that there is a significant relationship between customer satisfactions with the selected independent variables.

From the regression analysis model, it is found that customer service, flawless monthly bill, and security are the most important variables that make customers satisfied, so action must be undertaken by credit card companies to improve all the aspects of customer service. Organizations should also improve its performance in developing error free monthly credit card bill which is also another important factor that makes customers satisfied.

Customers are not too much concerned about fees, features, and payment procedure because they find these things are very much closer among all the companies and slight variations that exists in these factors do not lead to a significant level of customer satisfaction. So organizations should ensure competitive level of fees and features and should not expect higher level of customer satisfaction from these factors.

9. Conclusion

Financial institutions are moving toward the concept "Financial Inclusion" and in order to achieve this concept, they should be much more proactive in providing good service to all of their offerings. Credit card is an important component of financial organizations' produt portfolio as credit card has a high growth potential. In order to capture this market, organizations should develop proper strategy regarding customer satisfaction and this study gives a comprehensive idea about the factors behind customer satisfaction. Organizations should devise proper mechanism to implement all the factors that lead to customer satisfaction and make the organization a customer centered one.

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Local Government in Bangladesh:
Constitutional Provisions and Reality

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Abstract

Local government is now recognized as an undeniable part of development. It has got much more importance when most of the Constitutions in the world pronounce various provisions of having local government. Moreover, development of all sectors in a country can not be achieved without overall participation of its people. Local institutions encourage and ensure participation of grassroot people. It also gives the opportunity to people related to making policies and implementing decision better for them which is ultimately a step forwarding sustainable development. Bangladesh has also local government system as the Constitution of Bangladesh from the time of its commencement reflects a strong mandate of establishing it. Besides, we often observe various amendments regarding local government in Bangladesh when the government changes. So the Constitutional provisions till to date have been a far dream to the reality. Local government established maintaining the constitutional provisions can extend the practice of democracy in root level. So, it is ripe time for the concerned authority to be more conscious to establish local government following constitutional scheme and to enhance good governance at all levels of the society.

Keywords: Decentralization; Local Government; Constitution; Effective participation; Bangladesh.

1. Introduction:

In modern world people do not want the power to be vested in one hand. They want to participate effectively, enjoy certain rights, and also demand their wishes to be fulfilled easily. So they elect representatives for central government who are supposed to represent their desires. But due to some reasons, it is hardly possible for central government to provide all facilities to grassroot people efficiently. To overcome the situation, theory of decentralization has already attracted most of the policy makers in the world. Literally, decentralization refers to transfer of powers and functions from central institution to local one. So elected body in a specific region which performs its duties on behalf of central government in accordance with

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state laws can be defined as local government. Most of the country's constitutions also reflect provisions to the necessity of having a second tier of government i.e. local government which can truly ensure a close relation between central government and local citizen. Establishing local government through participation of local people is a step of forwarding equal development and upholding fundamental rights of citizens. This concept enables local people to think themselves as the important part of government. The Constitution of Bangladesh has also the mandate of establishing local government, but application of such provision accordingly is till to date a far dream to the reality.

2. Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to make out the real scenario of local government as well as to find out its importance in the context of Bangladesh. It also shows some inconsistencies with the scheme of the Constitution of Bangladesh in establishing local government. Other objectives are to analyze the problems regarding the same and to make possible suggestions for strong local government.

3. Methodology and Data Sources:

To complete the research study considering its nature, analytical method of research has been resorted to. Primary and secondary sources of information have been taken into consideration for the purpose. The references have been adopted from several books, articles published in journals, research reports, the Constitution of Bangladesh, Acts, newspapers and internet.

4. Definition of Local Government:

Local government, in simple words, can be defined as an integral part of central government which is established through locally elected representatives to facilitate welfare activities delegated lawfully. Being a bridge, it connects local people with central government providing services and grants. "It is meant for management of local affairs by locally elected persons. If Government's officers or their henchmen are brought to run the local government bodies, there is no sense in relating them as local government bodies" (Kudrat E Elahi Panir vs Bangladesh,1992). It emphasizes on effective participation of local people which can firstly be possible by the arrangement of election in constituting local government. Furthermore, Duane Lockard defines local government as a public organization authorized to decide and administer a limited range of public policies within a relatively small territory that is a sub-division of a regional or national government (Siddiqui, 2005:4). So it is clear that some vested powers of central government are applied by local government in a region only for the benefit of grassroot people.

5. Importance of Local Government:

Local government established democratically can extend democracy to the lowest level of society. Generally it is set up to implement the policies of central government. Moreover, it creates an opportunity for grassroot people to make their own policies. Thus, democratic local institutions can ensure sustainable development in the society and improve the quality of life. Resources can easily be allocated by local institutions to citizens. Effective participation of people is possible here in implementing policies or giving opinion or raising voice against the policies and activities of central and local government. In this way accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and security can be observed in different governmental system. Due to several dimensions, decentralization reflects various stages of progress in achieving good governance as outcomes of decentralization.
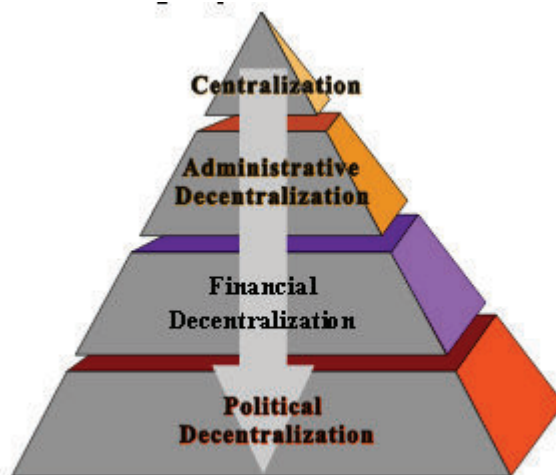
Figure: 1 (Research Triangle Institute, 2007)

The above figure shows the actual formula to decentralize the powers and functions from the highest authority to the lowest one. Local government is basically a process of political decentralization, and it should be done in a democratic way; otherwise, the benefit of decentralization will always be inaccessible. Political decentralization can fully be effective if the rest two components of the above figure are added at a time. These can together enhance and fulfill the objectives of establishing local government. But functions and performance of local government can be different according to laws of the countries. But there are some factors which are widely considered as the functions of local government, such as, ensuring potable water, sanitation, solid waste collection, roads, public markets, public transport, primary and secondary schools, housing, health care, and other major economic activities

etc. To verify the functions and accountability of local government, some indicators may be considered. These include availability of budgets and financial reports of local government jurisdiction to councilors, the public and media existence of internal and external auditing in accordance with required schedules, existence of a citizen complaint mechanism and use of input, response time for citizen complaints, increased level of monitoring of corruption, human rights violations, minimum wage, health rights for workers, existence of transparent financial systems and full reporting to citizens, documented performance standards and systems of measurement, actual performance reported to public and local government measurement of citizen satisfaction (Henry, Barnett, VanSant, 1997: 19). The objectives, ways , areas and characteristics of decentralization can be shown by a strategic framework of United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
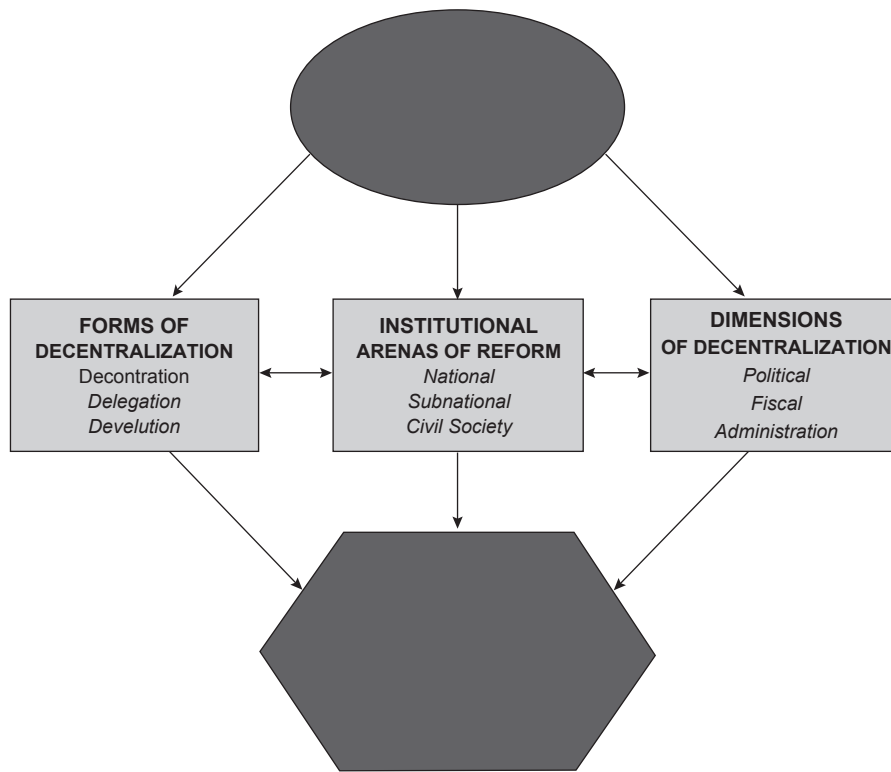
Figure: 2 (Strategic Frame Work of Decentralization) (USAID, 2009)

Among different forms of decentralization stated in the figure, devolution stands out as the best and it refers to the transfer of functions or decision making authority to legally incorporated and elected local government bodies (Siddiqui, 2005: 23-24). Though de-concentration also denotes the transfer of power to local institution, it is done within the government office. In this process central government can exercise

full control over that office. On the other hand, delegation is involved for the same with less control of central government. So what we want actually and the obligation incorporated in our Constitution regarding local government may only be the result of devolution [Constitution, 2013: Article 59(1)].

6. Evolution of Local Government in Bangladesh:

Local government is thought as old as villages. It came into being structurally with headman and panchayet in Hindu ruling period. But the system was not based on any legal framework, rather it was exercised based on custom and practices. The post of headman was generally on the basis of hereditary privileges, and panchayet was constituted of some villagers (Hasan, 2000: 123-145). The most important task of those Panchayets in the whole of India was to maintain public order; they had both police and judicial duties (Siddiqui, 2005: 32). After performing their main duties, they concentrated also to various welfare works. We had to wait until 1870 to get a law for establishing and conducting local institution for the benefit of grassroot people. The first legal instrument regarding local government was the Village Chaukidari Act, 1870 which was promulgated by the British government. The district magistrate under that act was authorized to nominate five members for panchayet. He was given the power to maintain law and order, collect revenue and to appoint village police (Talukdar, 2009: 34). Subsequently, the Bengal Local Self Government Act, 1885, a consequence of Lord Ripon's Resolution, 1882, and after a long time the Bengal Village Self government Act, 1919 were promulgated as the two major initiatives for establishing and developing local government. So it can be said that local government in Bangladesh is not a new concept. We trace a long history of local government of over one hundred and half century. Bangladesh got its independence in 1971 and the Constitution of a new born country included a strong mandate of establishing local government from the very first of its commencement. But the Basic Democracy Order, 1959 played an important to make the constitutional mandate into reality. Immediately after the liberation of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the first president of the new state took steps to introduce local government. But the initiative was only limited to changing the name of the different tiers of local government established under Basic Democracy Order, 1959. By a new order (7 of 1972) of the president, local government was established in District, Thana, and Union level. Local government in District, Thana and Union level were named as Zilla Board, Thana Development Committee, and Union Panchayet respectively (Khan: 2011, 10). Those three tires were controlled correspondingly by Deputy Commissioner, Sub-divisional Officer, and Circle Officer. It denotes the control of bureaucracy in lieu of public representation. Almost all of the provisions regarding the functions and sources of income were same as those of Basic Democracy Order, 1959. Within a very short time, the President converted Union Panchayet into Union Parishad by an order. Besides, Union Parishad got a new shape when it was divided into three wards. The first election was held in 1973 to constitute a new parishad consisting of a chairman, a Vice-chairman and three members from each ward. It was the first initiative to implement the constitutional provisions and ensure the public

participation. But the arrangement was only for Union Parishad and other stages of local government were administered by government officials. That was unto the 4th amendment of the Constitution because by that amendment article 11, 59, 60 of the Constitution were abolished. It took a long time to restore the abolished articles until the 12th amendment of the Constitution was passed. Since 1975 to 1991 provisions of local government in the Constitution were absent, different government endeavored to establish it. Several governments during the time took plans and made various laws in this regard. The then president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman proposed to build village cooperatives in 1975, abolishing the lowest tier of local government, union Parishad, which would be the basic economic unit in Bangladesh and all grants of the government would be provided through village cooperatives. The power to control over Zilla Board was given to the zilla governor (Siddiqui, 2005: 64). These programmes were failed because of the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. After that, the next president Ziaur Rahman promulgated a single instrument for local government i.e. Local Government Ordinance, 1976 and introduced three phases of Local Government as Union Parishad at Union level, Thana parishad at Thana level and Zilla parishad at District level. A Thana Development Committee was also created by a notification in 1978 which was a corresponding body of Thana Parishad (Siddiqui, 2005). By an amendment of the Ordinance in 1978 'Swanirvar Gram Sarkar' was established at village level. But this tier, the most root level of local government, was abolished by a martial law order in 1982. On March, 1982 Lieutenant General H.M. Ershad, by proclaiming martial law order in the country, took the power of the Government. His main contribution to the local government was the Local Government (Thana Parishad and Thana Administration) Reorganization Ordinance, 1982. He introduced new Upazila Parishad at upazila previously known as thana comprising of elected and nominated persons. Some other laws of local government as The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, 1983 and The Local Government (Zilla Parishad) Act, 1988 were enacted in his tenure. Since 1975 to 1990 people of Bangladesh observed two undemocratic martial law governments. It is clear that those governments were unconstitutionally formed, the chief martial law administrators of both governments stepped a lot to establish local government. But all steps regarding the same were not taken for the fulfillment of constitutional mandates; rather, it was basically to make a close relation with people to validate their position as the head of the government. No steps were also taken to restore the provisions of local government in the Constitution during the time. However, we found again democratic government through election in Bangladesh in 1991. Begum Khaleda Zia taking over the power of the government as the prime mister firstly abolished the Upazila Parishad and made a 'Local Government Structure Review Commission' in 1991 (Siddiqui: 2005: 66-95). Union Parishad Act was amended in her regime as Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Act, 1993. Under that amendment Union Parishad was divided into nine Wards. Union Parishad was composed of an elected chairman and nine members by the voters of concerned Union and Wards respectively, and two women members elected by parishad's chairman and members. Other stages of Local Government were remained the same as Ershad's tenure. During the period of Sheikh Hasina (1996-2001), different laws relating to

local government were enacted such as Gram Parishad Act, 1997 which was for establishing local government at village level, but it was subsequently repealed by the Supreme Court (Blast case, 1997). Other arrangement was Zilla Parishad Act, 2000 by repealing the previous act for the district level. She reintroduced Upazila Parishad by enacting Local Government (Upazila Parishad) Act, 1998 but failed to arrange any election in her tenure. Begum Khaleda Zia again took over the charge of the government in 2001, and in her tenure the parliament passed Gram Sarkar Ain, 2003. It was also repealed by the Supreme Court because of the inconsistent provisions with the Constitution (Kudrat E Elahi Panir vs Bangladesh, 1992).

7. Existing Scenario of Local Government Structure in Bangladesh:

Local government system in Bangladesh can be categorized distinctly for rural areas and urban areas. There are now three tiers of Local Government in rural areas as Zilla Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad and two tires in urban areas as City Corporation and Paurashava. Local government is presently operated by various laws in Bangladesh. These include Zilla Parishad Act, 2000, Upazila Parishad Act, 1998, Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009, Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 and Local Government (Paurashava) Act, 2009 for conducting Zilla Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Union Parishad, City Corporation, and Paurashava respectively.

Table: 1 Present Structure of Local Government in rural Areas (Talukdar, 2009: 45)

Level	Unit	Quantity	Name	Headed by	Method of Election
Upper most tier (Rural area)	District	61	Zilla Parishad	Elected Chairman	Indirect Election
Central point (Rural)	Upazila	482	Upazila Parishad	Elected Chairman	Direct Election
Lowest tier (Rural)	Union	5500	Union Parishad	Elected Chairman	Direct Election

Table: 2 Present Structure of Local Government in Urban Areas (Talukdar, 2009: 45)

Level	Unit	Quantity	Name	Headed by	Method of Election
Mega City	City Corporation	08*	City Corporation	Elected Mayor	Direct Election
Small Town/City	Paurashava (Municipality)	309	Paurashava (Municipality)	Elected Chairman	Direct Election

*(The number of the City Corporations is now Eleven).

According to section 4 read with the section 17 of Zilla Parishad Act, 2000, Zilla Parishad is to be composed of a chairman, 15 members, and 5 women members from the reserved seats. Chairman and members of Zilla Parishad shall be elected by vote of representatives of other local government institutions i.e. Mayor and Councilors of City Corporation (if any city corporation exists in the district), Chairman of Upazila Parishad, Mayor and Councilors of Paurashava, Chairman and Members of Union parishad. But election of Zilla Parishad is not yet held. Moreover, sixty one administrators were appointed by the Government in 2011 to conduct the Zilla Parishad. Other three districts i.e. hill districts are conducted by three separate laws promulgated in 1989. The next tier of Zilla Parishad is Upazila Parishad. It constitutes of a Chairman, two vice-chairmen including a woman, chairmen of all union parishads under the concerned Upazila, Mayor of Pourashava (Municipality), if any and reserved seats for woman. Reserved seats depend upon the quantity of Union or Paurashava under the upazila and it will be one third of total union. The lowest tier of local government in the rural area is Union which is divided into 9 Wards. According to section 10 of Union Parishad Act, 2009, Union Parishad is consisted of a chairman and 12 members in whom nine members are from nine wards and 3 female members from reserved seat. It can be stated that this tire is entirely an elected body. A City Corporation in a mega city area consists of a mayor and councilors under section 5 of City Corporation Act, 2009. The number of councilors will be determined by the government with gazette notification and one third seats will be reserved for women. Lastly, according to section 6 of Paurashava Act, 2009, Paurashava of small city or town consists of a mayor, a councilor from each Ward; one third seat of total councilor will be reserved for woman.

8. Constitutional Obligation and Practice:

The Constitution of Bangladesh holds various provisions relating to local government from the time of its commencement. These have made our Constitution unique, because no other Constitution holds such provision in the world as like as our constitution (Kudrat E Elahi Panir vs Bangladesh, 1992). As Constitution is the supreme law of our country, any other laws inconsistent with the Constitution shall be void. According to article 7, "The Constitution is as the solemn expression of the will of the people, the supreme law of the Republic, and if any other law is inconsistent with this Constitution that other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void". This provision secures the movement of local government. Effective participation of people through elected representative is one of the fundamental principles of state policy of our Constitution. Under article 11, "The republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed, and in which effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at all levels shall be ensured". This provision requires local government to exist in Bangladesh. So it can be stated that democracy, fundamental human rights, and local government are interconnected. But it is needed to be noted that article 11 is a part of fundamental principles of state policy of our constitution

which is judicially unenforceable. This provision has been found in the Constitution as the guideline for legislators in making laws. Under article 8(2), it will also be used in interpreting Constitution and other laws. In these contexts, article 11 plays a vital role to ensure effective participation through local government. On the other hand, articles 59 and 60 of the Constitution directly impose the obligation to establish local government. We observe under article 59 that local government shall be established in every administrative unit through election. So it is clear that declaration of an area as administrative unit is an important requirement to establish any tier of local government. Though government is free regarding the matter, it will have to make a declaration before constituting any tire of local government. Under article 152(1) of the Constitution, "Administrative unit means a district or other area designated by law for the purposes of article 59". The functions of local government are elaborately discussed in article 59(2) of the Constitution. These functions, determined by the act of parliament, include the administration and the work of public officers; the maintenance of public order; the preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development. Local government bodies under article 60 are given some powers, such as, imposing tax for local purposes, preparing their budgets and maintaining funds. Parliament has been given the absolute power to make any law relating to local government. But the powers are needed to be exercised maintaining the constitutional mandate. Gram Sarkar Ain, 2003 was declared as unconstitutional and void by the Supreme Court because of containing unconstitutional provisions (Blast Case: 2008). Upazila Parishad, a tier of local government, made under the Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Ordinance, 1982, was abolished in 1991. It was challenged in Supreme Court of Bangladesh, but the court gave a historical judgment considering the matter that it was not entirely local government institution. Many provisions were inconsistent with the main goal of local government. Actually, all of these refer to the supremacy of the Constitution. After promulgating Zilla Parishad Act, 2000, election has not been yet arranged. Moreover, sixty one administrators were appointed in 2011 to conduct the Zilla Parishad under 82(1) of Zilla Parishad Act, 2009. No provision is found in the Constitution to act as an administrator in any tier of local government. Zilla Parishad should have been constituted in accordance with article 17(1) of Zilla Parishad Act. We can consider the tenor of article 59 read along with article 11 it may be contented that a non-representative person or body cannot be appointed as an administrator; only a person or body having representative character like a member of the Parliament or another local government body of the area concerned may be appointed as an administrator to function (Islam, 2003:334). The appointment of administrator is the sign of bureaucracy. It does not encourage the effective participation of people through elected representatives. The gazette published by the government to appoint the administrators did not bear any provision relating to the tenure of administrator and about the election. The government appointed administrators who would be in charge of the District Councils until the election of the District Council Chairman (The Independent, 2011). It also strikes in practicing of the best democracy. For establishing Upazila parishad, an Act was passed in 1998. But it took over 11 years to hold an election. Upazila polls were finally held

in January, 2009. But the elected representatives have not yet been able to do much due to opposition from local administration and the interference of the lawmakers who are advisers to the parishads. Mandatory provision of taking advice from the Member of Parliament creates a lot of problems to implement different policies. Holding position as the chief executive by Upazila Nirbahi Officer is also a sign of keeping control over the upazila parishad by central government. These are the obstacles to free functionality and fulfillment of the objectives of local government. As for Union Parishad, though election is regularly held in this tier but no initiatives have been taken to strengthen it. In the recent past it faced a lack of legitimacy due to not holding any election for a long time since the expiry of the tenure in 2008. The necessity of peoples' participation in the union parishad has been overlooked by all the successive governments since independence. People were kept aloof from what's going on inside the union parishad. It is not enough financially independent to deliver the services. It has to depend on the central government or to the local administration for implementation of its projects. An arrangement of proper check and balance may reduce its dependency and bureaucracy. Finally, it is to be noted that government is not bound to establish a tier local government. If parliament makes any law for this purpose, it must be according to the Constitutional mandate otherwise it'll be treated as colorable legislation. A direction was given by the Supreme Court to arrange election in all stage of local government within six months from the date of judgment in 1992 (Kudrat E Elahi Panir vs Bangladesh:1992). The direction was not followed completely by the government. It can be considered an ultimate denial to ensure democracy in grassroot level.

9. Suggestions for a strong Local Government:

- Provision provided in the fundamental principles of state policy of the Constitution of Bangladesh should be the guidelines for legislators to make any laws relating to local government.

- The provisions which are connected directly related to local government such as Article 59 and 60 of the Constitution of Bangladesh should be kept in the mind while making laws to establish local government.

- All provisions of control over local government institution by bureaucrat should be eliminated.

- Effective laws should be made to strengthen local government institutions to get the real effort from it.

- Not only administrative decentralization but also financial devolution is needed to make strong local government.

- Local government institutions should be given opportunities to act independently.

- The effect of Central government should be kept far away in case of local election. Performance of local representatives should be given preference than their political identities.

- Coordination and cooperation from central government and local government are needed to implement the policy.
- All personnel of local government institutions should be aware of their functions according to laws. The power and authority should be enough clear to be exercised it effectively.
- Provision relating to increase the income of local government should be more deigned. All facilities for collecting tax from local sources are needed to be provided.
- Election of different tires of local government should be arranged on time according to the concerned laws.
- Political pressure to local government institutions should be eliminated.
- People's participation in case of implementing policy by local government should be more emphasized.
- Effective participation in decision making as a member of local government and in general, women should be given priority.
- Initiatives should be taken in making local government autonomous body meaningfully.
- Accountability and audit proceedings of local government institutions should be kept free from corruption, and technology should also be introduced all over the country to encourage local government in Bangladesh.

10. Conclusion:

Administrative decentralization is a must to flourish democracy in Bangladesh. Besides, local government can ensure good governance in root level. Various policies, activities and functions are here taken and performed by local government on the basis of necessity of grassroot people, not depending upon the wish of policy makers of central government. So it can easily ensure sustainable development in all aspects. Local government through decentralization process can also play a vital role to connect the central government with local people. So, it is our great expectation that the government shall take initiatives to fulfill the constitutional mandate to establish local government in all administrative stages of government.

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A Critical Approach to Constitutionalism: Bangladesh Perspective

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Abstract

Constitutionalism is a very significant politico-legal theory related with continuous political and legal processes, Though Bangladesh has passed 42 years of its independence, it's politico-legal authorities have failed to institutionalize constitutionalism in the context of Bangladesh. First of all I have discussed the conceptual basis of constitutionalism. I have tried to identify the barriers to institutionalization of constitutionalism in Bangladesh. Then I have suggested some policy measures for overcoming these problems. The main aim of this paper is to find out the real scenario of constitutionalism in Bangladesh and improvement of the situation by various effective means. This paper is based on secondary sources of information like books, e-books, journals-both printed and online, research reports, newspapers etc. Relevant literature has also been collected through internet browsing.

Key Words: Constitution, Constitutionalism, Rule of Law and Bangladesh.

Introduction

Bangladesh is an independent country where Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Fourty-two years have been passed since our independence but our achievements in the aspects of implementation of constitutionalism are not noteworthy. Constitutionalism has a close relation with democracy. In Bangladesh, we can see that democracy and constitutionalism are the most uttered words though the nation has failed to put these into practice. The common agenda of election manifesto of all political parties is the establishment of democracy and upholding of Constitution but they have failed to implement their commitment in fact. The country today is burdened with numerous problems. These problems are threatening the very development of institutionalization of democracy and as such establishment of constitutionalism is becoming a matter of illusion which is totally unacceptable. An under-developed political culture of Bangladesh, her poverty-ridden illiterate and incompetent mass people and lacking of democratic political organizations, institutions and practices are the main barriers to establish constitutionalism in the context of Bangladesh. Hossain, 2005)

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Conceptual Analysis

Constitutionalism: Meaning and Concept

The term 'Constitutionalism' has various meanings. It is based on the principle that the authority of government derives from and is limited by a body of fundamental law (Fehrenbacher, 1989).

> "Political scientist and constitutional scholar David Fellman has described 'Constitutionalism' nicely in the following way: 'Constitutionalism is descriptive of a complicated concept, deeply imbedded in historical experience, which subjects the officials who exercise governmental powers to the limitations of a higher law. Constitutionalism proclaims the desirability of the rule of law as opposed to rule by the arbitrary judgment or mere fiat of public officials."(Philip, 1973-74)

Therefore it is easily understood that the core point of the concept of constitutionalism is that government officials are not at liberty to do anything as they are bound to observe substantive and procedural limitations set out in the constitution or supreme law of the country. So the cornerstone of constitutionalism is the concept of limited government under the supreme law. Therefore it was stated by Li (2000) that"constitutionalism means a system of political arrangements in which there is a supreme law by which all are governed, which can be superseded and changed only by the people's will and in which there are separation of power, checks and balances and an independent judiciary to safeguard the supremacy of the constitution meaning constitutionalism."

From the above discussion of constitutionalism we can understand several things. First, constitutionalism is an institutional realization of people's rights, liberty and sovereignty by limiting the government's power within a boundary prescribed by the supreme constitution so that the government cannot transform its powers into arbitrary powers. Second, constitutionalism clearlyrecognizes the sovereignty of people when it is required to be changed. Thus the theory of constitutionalism necessarily implies the notion of Dicey's Rule of Law theory.

"One of the most salient features of constitutionalism is that it describes and prescribes both the source and the limits of government power. William H. Hamilton has captured this dual aspect by noting that constitutionalism is the name given to the trust which men repose in the power of words engrossed on parchment to keep a government in order." (Walton, 1931) According to Lord Acton, 'Every power tends to corrupt and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely' (Takwani, 2006). Constitutionalism keeps a government under control so that it cannot be an arbitrary government at whose hand the rights of the people will be at stake.

So finally we can say that 'Constitutionalism' is a concept in political theory that explains that a government does not derive its power from itself, but gains its power as the result of there being a set of written laws that give certain powers to governing

body. Constitutionalism therefore naturally prescribes a system of government in which the government's powers are limited. Government officials, whether elected or not cannot act against their own constitutions. Constitutional law is the highest body of law in the land, which must be abide by all citizens including the government.

Relation between Constitution and Constitutionalism

Constitution is the supreme law of a country which authorises, empowers and limits a government by laying down structure of government and by distribution of the powers with checks and balances among three organs of the government, e.g., legislature, executive and judiciary.

On the other hand, constitutionalism means limited government under the constitution and the establishment of rule of law, protection of human rights, conforming democratic procedures in elections, popular participation of people in public policy making and achievement of general and shared goals of the community. As popularly stated by US President Abraham Lincoln, 'Democracy means government of the people, by the people and for the people', therefore, constitutionalism in a democracy both limits and empowers government of, by, and for the people. By the constitution, people give power to the government to act on behalf of the people effectively for the welfare of the people. When the government misuses this power or fails to exercise this power properly, in both the cases the rights of individuals to life, liberty, and property fall at risk.

An effective democratic constitutional government is sufficiently empowered by people to secure their rights against foreign aggressors or internal enemies. Similarly this power is also sufficiently limited by people so that possibility of government officialsbeing oppressive can be decreased to the least. "A continuing challenge of democratic constitutionalism is determining how to simultaneously empower and limit the government in order to secure the rights of all persons." (Patrick, 1997)

Only having a written constitution and proclaiming rights does not imply the guarantee of the rights. Many countries have included merely the system of democratic government in their constitutions but in reality they implemented very few or nothing."For example, Soviet-style constitutions of the recent past grandly proclaimed all kinds of rights though did not guarantee them." (Patrick, 1997)

Therefore it is clear that constitutionalism does not necessarily mean having a written constitution and proclaiming rights. Even where there is no written constitution, constitutionalism will mean a limited government under the supreme law. For example, in United Kingdom, there is no written constitution and parliamentary supremacy prevails there. Whatever present parliament will enact and pass, will be automatically part of their unwritten constitution and so constitutionalism in the context ofUnited Kingdom will have dynamic meaning under each omnipotent United Kingdom parliament.

Basic Principles of Constitutionalism

There are some basic principles of constitutionalism which are as follows:

1. **Popular sovereignty**: When ultimate power and final authority rest with people by inserting the words "we the people" or "all the citizens" in the constitution, it means popular sovereignty is guaranteed by the constitution.

2. **Limited government:** Government's power is limited by the rule of law which includes the supreme law-Constitution and the subsidiary laws which are passed in pursuance of that Constitution.

3. **Separation of Power:** A government has three organs-Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. Government's power should not be centralized in one organ and must be distributed among the three organs according to constitution.

4. **Checks and balances:** As we know that 'the theory of Separation of Powers' is impossible to implement, so each of the three organs must have certain checks and balances over the other two organs to cure the defects of the pure theory.

5. **Decentralization of power:** To ensure proper functioning, power must be divided between the government and the local government institutions. Some powers are concurrent and thus held by both levels of government.

6. **Republicanism:** As the total population cannot act jointly, republican government system is a solution to this problem. People will exercise their power by delegating it to representatives chosen by them through the democratic election process.

7. **Individual Rights:** The guarantee of personal freedoms, personal protections, and equality under the law in the Constitution is another basic principle of constitutionalism.

Relation between Constitutionalism and Democracy

Constitutionalism is a dynamic and complex concept that is continuouslydeveloping. Constitutionalism is about structuring a political framework for a country in an organized legal context. Constitutional government is closely inter-linked with establishment of democracy and rule of law. Constitutionalism without establishment of democracy is difficult to conceive. "The legitimacy of government is derived from the will of the people as people are the sovereign power of a democratic country and the expression of democracy can be legitimately expressed and thus the popular will can be establishedonly in a democratic system. The legitimacy of the government is periodically examined by free and fair elections based on universal adult franchise which are the essential features of democracy". (Rizvi, 2005)

Democracy means protection of individual as well as group rights. Theory of 'Constitutionalism' also requires enjoyment of individual and group rights subject to reasonable restrictions. To ensure constitutionalism, justifiable fundamental civil liberties must be ensured and complete freedom for citizens to oppose justifiably to

the government's actions and programmesshould be allowed. The aforementioned fundamental civil liberties are the recognized pillars of 'Democracy' also."In democracy, constitutionalism is also about recognition of the popular will, a respect for the constitution and constitutional institutions, and an abiding faith in the culture of the rule of law." (Rizvi, 2005)

Therefore there is a strong connection among constitutionalism, democracy and rule of law and without maintaining this connection, constitutionalism does not exist independently and remains as only the matter of theory.

Theoretical Ambiguity in Constitutionalism

1. **Democratic trappings and pretensions**: We know that constitutionalism has a strong linkage with democracy and without democracy constitutionalism does not exist in the proper sense. As democracy is a universal aspiration, it is continuously being misused. Even the military dictators and authoritarian communist regimes seek to authorize their rulings in name of democracy, to pursue their goal they adopt various democratic trappings and pretensions.

   From the history, we can discover that these dictators sought to legitimize their rule through varying degrees of popular 'mandates' and 'endorsements'. If these dictators are examined by the more rigorous tests of constitutionalism, very few of them would actually be considered democratic. Popular elections and renewal of popular mandates are essential, but not sufficient conditions for democracy, if it is not a free and fair popular election. A politically conscious free and fair popular election is the representative of popular will and important base of a constitutional democratic government.

2. **Mixture of constitutionalism with the existence of a written constitution**: Constitutionalism is not the same thing as having a constitution. Most countries in the world are endowed with a constitution. But this does not mean that all these countries are bestowed with a constitutional government or all these countries practice constitutionalism. Constitutionalism is more than the letters of a constitution. It is the spirit, the substance, the procedure, and the mechanisms whichensure that everyone is under the rule of law.

Constitutionalism in Bangladesh: An Overview

Historical Background

The history of constitutionalism in Bangladesh, first as a province of Pakistan and subsequently as an independent country was not very satisfactory.During these times,the constitutions were misused and became helping instruments in the hands of dominant power to manipulate state power for their own benefit and for providing a shade of legitimacy to the unelected political forces whohave seized political power without popular will. To gain their political profits, they distorted the entire

process of constitutionalism again and again. "The constitution, instead of providing a framework of governance that reflects popular will, has become an instrument for denying popular sovereignty; to subordinate the judiciary to the will of the executive; to negate the rule of law and to authorize their unconstitutional political actions." (Rizvi, 2005)

Inspite of having a great passion for democratic government, the Bengalis have been subjected to authoritarian rule for the last 42 years in name of ensuring democracy by the misusers. The zeal for a democratic government is brought into day light several times by popular movement against authoritarian rule and finally demonstrated by the war of liberation in 1971. It is a matter of irony that in spite of so much zeal for establishment of democracy in Bangladesh, constitutionalism appears to have been derailed from the very outset of the history of Bangladesh. Therefore it is assumed that constitutionalism has failed to be implemented in Bangladesh.

In this paper I focused on the history of constitutionalism after independence war of 1971 and I categorised the history in three parts- 1. 1972-1975, 2.1975-1991, 3.Since 1991 to present.

1. Constitutionalism in Bangladesh (1972-75)

a. **Post-war complexity:**After nine months of blood-shed war of 1971, the new country 'Bangladesh' was facing various difficult complexities. Establishing an effective administration and restoring law and order became challenges in a newly independent country like Bangladesh. Not only these problems, but also generating the wheels of agriculture and industry for the sake of raising revenue for development of the country was also a tough task. Moreover, the rehabilitation of the millions of Bangladeshi refugees from India and others taking shelter in rural areas of Bangladesh needed to be properly managed which also made the post-war complexities more acute.

b. **Adopting Constitution**: Despite the post-war complexities, the founder of the new country BangabandhuSheikh MujiburRahman, remained firm in his commitment to restoring constitutional government. With a view to achieve the goal, proper initiatives regarding adoption of the constitution were taken and as a result, within a year, the new constitution of Bangladesh was drafted and unanimously approved by the constituent assembly on 4th November, 1972.

The new constitution was quite self-sufficient in itself. The glaring aspects of the new constitution are as follows:

i.   The new constitution contained the principles of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism as fundamental principles of state policy.

ii. The constitution guaranteed political rights and freedoms.

iii. The constitution included the provision of basic necessities as a fundamental responsibility of the state.

iv. The constitution laid down directives aimed at ameliorating the economic and material condition of the people.

v. The constitution was intended to safeguard political rights and to serve for the transformation of social and economic life of the people through democratic institutions.

vi. The constitution provided for popular sovereignty where a parliament will be elected by popular voting to act on behalf of the people.

vii. The powers of the government were carefully limited by law.

viii. The executive was made responsible to the parliament to ensure accountability to the people.

ix. Democracy was enshrined in the constitution and as such, a government could only hold office so long as it enjoyed the confidence of the parliament.

x. Fundamental rights were guaranteed and enforceable under Article.44 of the constitution through an independent judiciary separated from the executive which is guaranteed by Article. 22 of the constitution.

xi. Laws inconsistent with fundamental rights were considered void.

xii. Many outstanding human rights, i.e. equality before law, right to life, personal liberty, safe-guards against arbitrary detention were protected; and the freedom of movement, assembly, association, thought, speech, religion and occupation was also ensured.

Overall, we can say that the makers of the new constitution of Bangladesh attempted their best to make it flawless and effective for governing the country successfully.

c. 1973 Election and its effects: After approval of the constitution, the new government called for a fresh election which took place in March 1973 and the Awami League won 292 seats out of 300 seats. This great victory cast a negative influence on the political history of the country. The leaguers became too confident by this landslide victory to serve the nation.Many of the awami leaguers started to feel secured in their seats for the next five years, felt less constrained by public opinion and did not care for party discipline; and consequently various stories and rumours regarding irresponsible behaviour, misuse of power and alleged corruptions of the awami leaguers were widespread.The government also became indifferent to the needs of the people.This victory also gave room for charges of vote rigging against the awami league government.

As there was not any meaningful opposition party in parliament to put effective check on the government,the government was not maintaining accountability to the people and doing whatever they wish to fulfil their self-interest undermining the interest of the people.Before 1971, the leaders of different political ideologieswere

united under the umbrella of the Awami League by their desire to end Punjabi domination and to achieve an independent country. But in the changed circumstances of an independent nationhood, those leaders of different political ideologies started to act on their own and expressed disobedience to AwamiLeague which weakened the earlier pre-war party-strength and affected overall party discipline and dedication.

Not only that,many of leaders occupied prominent position in national politics throughlobbying with the high chain of command of the Awami league who had no popular base.Thus Awami league government was losing its obedience from the mass-oriented leaders for derailing from its earlier pro-people political agenda.By allowing the unrepresentative characters of these so-called party leaders, Awami leaguewas lacking its earlier promise of establishing democracy and made the biggest political mistake which had adversely affected the process of constitutionalism in Bangladesh in its very inception.

Again by restoration of democratic governance in Bangladesh, some pre-war politicians without popular base had started to lose their earlier career, influence and status in national politics.The trauma of political abandonmentdrove them into considering other alternatives. "Once again this led to the banding together of diverse groups – a ragbag coalition of politicians without popular following, those who had opposed the liberation of Bangladesh, the remnants of the Pakistani trained armed forces, and those uncomfortable with Bangla culture and secularism and united by their opposition and abhorrence for the Awami League."(Rizvi, 2005) These politicians sought to regain their political influence by allying themselves with the military asit was demonstrated in the past several times that the route to political power passed through the cantonments.The banding of these diverse groups at that time was the unholy signal for the development of constitutionalism in Bangladesh which got chance to be developed because of awami league's failure to govern the country by its numerous wrong political steps.

d. Failure of Mujib'sgovernment to establish constitutionalism

i. Maintaining cohesion inside party: As I discussed earlier in this paper, afterlandslide winning in the election of 1973, many of the Awami Leaguers became over-confident to honour public opinion or to be concerned for Party discipline and Sheikh Mujib could not control these party-members. More importantly, the followers of Sheikh Mujib him violated the sanctity of the constitution, which opened the door for its manipulation and mutilation. Again proposed constitutional reforms of Sheikh Mujib named 'BAKSAL' created discontentment among various sections of society including his own party-men who afterwards collaborated in assassination of Mujib and his family. Sheikh Mujib was surrounded by fake people who guided him wrongly. Lacking of political far-sightedness and blindness of Mujib to the surrounding people drove him at distance from people; eventually he lost his earlier popularity. The unholy power took the opportunity of this situation, assassinated Mujib along with his family and seized the state power in name of establishing democracy.

ii. Economic crisis: Economic crisis gave chance to political opportunists and eroded the Awami League's grassroots support. New government had inherited huge economic problems from the earlier Pakistan regime as the former west Pakistan implemented the policy of economic discrimination on the then East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) to break down her political spirit. Along with the existing problems, the inefficiency of the new government of Mujib and the looting attitude of government officials, awami league leaders and other party men increased the magnitude of this economic crisis.Moreover there was lack of resources and expertise. With the best of intentions, the government could bring positive result, but there problem lies. Government officials were lacking good intentions. Most of all, the government needed time which in reality the government did not have. The people were also impatient for quick result which the government was failing to achieve. In 1974, the country suffered the famine where thousands died out of hunger because of acute economic crisis. Amidst the national economic crisis, Mujib's two sons got married through expensive wedding which the hunger-striken mass people could not accept easily. These incidents contributed to the withdrawal of support by the people for the awami regime. These were not the result of constitutional shortcomings but these were the result of failure of constitutionalism by the Mujib'sgovernment.

iii. Bureaucratic inefficiency: The government's record in establishing bureaucratic efficiency was quite poor. Bureaucratic dependence made the local government institutions powerless and the predatory elite presenting parliament prevented the rapid empowerment of the masses through adoption of elite-centred schemes and even if any scheme was devised for the poor and the destitute, that scheme was manoeuvred to ensure the advantage of the politically and socially dominant elite. So 'Decentralization of Powers', the very element of constitutionalism was not ensured and obviously the way of constitutionalization got stuck in despair.

iv. Police inefficiency: The police were bestowed with extra-ordinary powers of arrest and detention which the police used arbitrarily and indiscriminately to extort bribes and to harass opponents of the government. The powers of police had no real impact in curbing crime, violence or other anti-social activities. A special force named 'RokkhiBahini' was formed by the government to harass opponents and to stop voicing against the government. So the right of freedom of expression was critically suffered.

v. Proposed constitutional reforms of Sheikh Mujib: "However it was the shock of the famine that stalked Bangladesh in 1974 and the extreme hardship and starvation in the countryside that brought home to him the need for a radical reorientation of his policies. He shifted his attention from the urban to the rural areas and sought greater participation of the disempowered rural population in the implementation of his policies. Mujib also came to the conclusion that his radical reforms would require significant constitutional changes." (Rizvi, 2005)

The constitutional changes proposed by Sheikh Mujib directly contradicted many of his earlier beliefs and principles but he proceeded ahead for constitutional

changes and the parliament passed 4th amendment containing Mujib's proposal in January 1975. The amended constitution changed the parliamentary government system into presidential government system where an executive president would be directly elected by the people and he would be the most powerful authority of the government. The president was no longer accountable to the parliament. The powers of parliament were not significantly altered. The proposal contained many 'special' and 'emergency' powers for the government to deal with terrorism.

"Mujib banned all political parties including his own Awami League and replaced them with a broad-based one party system under his own leadership". (Rizvi, 2005)Mujib tried to bring a major re-organization of the administration and the bureaucracy to involve popular participation in the administration and to make it more accountable to the public.

> "For administrative purposes, the country was to be divided into 61 districts (instead of the former 19 districts) and the Deputy Commissioners or the District Magistrates (members of the civil service) would be replaced by governors drawn from Members of Parliament and local politicians. To make the district administration more sensitive to the local needs, a district administrative council would be created and would include the governor as the chairman, the deputy commissioner as secretary and others including all Members of Parliament from the district, the district secretary of BKSAL, a party representative from each of the thanas (police stations) and the district officers of the various ministries, and a representative of the armed forces and the police. To give teeth to the administrative council, it would be given extensive power and funds. The governor and the council would control, supervise and coordinate all administrative and developmental work of the various ministries at the district level. The council would also be in charge of maintaining law and order, collecting revenue and allocating funds." (Rizvi, 2005)

The proposed constitutional reforms of Sheikh Mujib had great negative impact on his supportersboth mass people and some of his own party members. Though these changes had far-reaching positive outcome, they failed to win any support from his opponents in a short time as all are in a hurry to see positive outcome. Rather most of the people were doubtful about his motives and they reached to the conclusion that Mujib was more enthusiastic in abrogating the parliamentary system of government with a view to achieve the fruits of an executive presidency and one-party rule. Asthe 1972 constitution contained parliamentary system of government and multi-party system, it expressed aspiration of the people for democracy. Using parliamentary majority to effect such a major change without seeking referendum or a popular mandate was a naive and myopic political decision.

The constitutional changes of Mujib merely shifted the executive power from the cabinet to the president, but it did not alter the constitutional limitations of the

power of the government. Parliament's control over the economic affairs, legislation and to check the power of the government remained unchangeable. Also theoretically the power and independence of the judiciary was unimpaired. The spirit of constitutionalism was not impaired in the theoretical sense. But if we examine these changes by the scale of practical world, we will see that these changes would be devastating in the hands of autocrats when there is the absence of representative parliament, no opposition to criticize government's myopic decisions and when the judiciary is crippled by the invisible interferences of the autocrat government. The history of presidential system in the south-Asia indicates the very misuse of extensive powers of the president to perpetuate his regime undermining the interest of mass people which is also very challenging in establishing democracy and rule of law. Anyway, after assassinating Mujib along with almost his entire family and close relations on 15th August, a fortnight before the new administrative scheme was due to come into operation, the hope of trial of the reforms was diminished. After then the nation witnessed the military rule for the next fifteen years under several army personnel. This military rule abrogated the constitution for its own interest and thus cast the most evil impact on strengthening constitutional governance during the most important part for a nation to grow-up i.e., nation's 5th year to 20th year.

vi. Discontentment among Army: Mujib's proposal contained some changes for army. Mujib was aware of the tendency of the armed forces to be conspirators. He did not want the repetition of what happened in Pakistan by the army personnel. Moreover, he was worried about the wasteful extravagance of maintaining the military which affects in the development sectors of third-world countries.Not only was that, but also practically army as a force against external threat was useless and white-elephant. Mujib believed that foreign aggression could only be checked by popular resistance as what happened during liberation war of 1971..Again the recurring incidents of intervention of army in politics of many Afro-Asian states made him worried and he was convinced of the necessity of reducing the army so that they find the intervention difficult. But in spite of so many convincing facts, Mujib was powerless to disband the army. Therefore he proposed that in peace time armymust be engaged in the more productive sector of the economy. "Sheikh Mujib announced that the armed forces would be decentralized, and units of soldiers would be placed at the disposal of the district governors for deployment in the rural development programs, their resentment reached a bursting point." (Rizvi, 2005)

The most of the officers of Bangladesh army who was from Pakistan army carried with them the tendency of plotting conspiracy against democracy and their resentment to the proposed scheme took them to the final point that either they must act or it would perish.The new arrangements for the Bangladesh armed forces were scheduled to come into effect from 1 September 1975. So they conspired to assassinate Mujib and his family before that, i.e.,15th August, 1975.

vii. Other problems: As the economic crisis was going high, the various tensions in the society and within the Awami League now began to surface. The

unity formed with the socialist political leaders during the war began to crack after independence, "as their vision of a socialist Bangladesh and the road to achieving it did not always conform to that of the Awami League. Even a large faction amongst the AwamiLeaguers opposed the parliamentary approach and advocated a rapid transition to socialism through revolutionary means." (Rizvi, 2005)So when instead of socialism, Mujib attempted to bring presidential system, the believers of socialism became doubtful of establishing autocracy rather than democracy and socialism.

1. Authoritarian rule and the erosion of constitutionalism(1975-1991)

Coming to power as the representative of an unrepresentative military-bureaucratic alliance, the Bengali military needed popular backing for both domestic and international purposes. Once the military had usurped power, its main concern was to institutionalize its control of the government rather than institutionalizing limited government under constitution. The challenge was to devise a political mechanism that, while having the trappings of a democracy, would in fact limit popular participation to the extent that pliant officials could regulate it. Both Generals ZiaurRahman and Hossain Mohammed Ershad followed similar policies. Zia and Ershad sought to exclude those political parties and leaders with a broad political base, who were capable of mobilizing popular support. Both of them sought to legitimize their positions through contrived popular endorsement, launched their own political parties and manipulated and rigged the electoral process to get their representatives elected to the assembly. The martial death of ColonelTaher was an example of Zia's political trick to secure his political standing in name of discipline.

Zia and Ershad adopted new political trick. They did not tamper with the constitution and left it largely untouched. They took the opportunities of the extraordinary powers conferred on the President and the powers under 'special' and 'emergency' provisions which were free of interference by parliamentary or judicial scrutiny. They refused to convene parliament until such a time when he was confident to secure the election of the legislature.They did not snatch freedom of judiciary rather he shielded himself against the courts through martial law regulations authorising his actions and afterwards they secured appointment of partisan judges. Once a pliant assembly was formed, both Zia andErshad passed indemnity bills through legislature which indemnifying them for their unconstitutional activities.

In the hands of Zia and Ershad the constitutional powers were exploited again and again. The spirit of the constitution was destroyed and in military hands the constitution became the cover to shield their tyrannical rule as Zia and Ershad brought 5th and 7th amendment. We know that amendments are allowed to secure people's right but it was misused to secure military rules.

The Fifth Amendment Act was passed by the JatiyaSangsad on 6 April 1979. This Act amended the Fourth Schedule to the Constitution by inserting a new

paragraph 18. The effect of the amendment was that all amendments or repeals made in the Constitution from 15 August 1975 to 9 April 1979 (inclusive) by any proclamation or Proclamation Order of the Martial Law Authorities were deemed to have been validly made, and could not be called into question before any court or tribunal or other authority.

Again the Seventh Amendment Act was passed on 11 November 1986. It amended Article 96 of the Constitution; it also amended the Fourth Schedule to the Constitution by inserting a new paragraph 19, which amongst other things provided that all proclamations, proclamation orders, Chief Martial Law Administrator's Orders, Martial Law Regulations, Martial Law Orders, Martial Law Instructions, ordinances and other laws made from 24 March 1982 to 11 November 1986 (inclusive) had been validly made, and could not be called into question before any court or tribunal or other authority.

The last parts of both amendments excluded judicial review which is one of the features of our Constitution and guaranteed by article.102 of the Constitution. It cannot be taken away anyway but it was taken away by Zia and Ershad and proved that they need only constitutional trappings to defend their unconstitutional actions and for that, they argued showing 'Doctrine of Necessity'.

The most notorious effects of the Zia-Ershad intervention were their weakening of all democratic and constitutional institutions. During their regimes, the armed forces and military intelligence agencies were given much extra-constitutional roles and powers which they have continued to exercise even after the restoration of democracy undermining the independence of the judiciary and judicial review. The election commission was transformed into a puppet commission of the executive. Appointments of civil servants were highly politicized without due regard to interest of the people. The freedom of the print media were snatched, eventually the print media transformed itself as the corrupted and co-opted body which, instead of becoming watchdog for the benefit of people was serving as agent of the government. Radio and television adopted the policy of subservience to the government to maintain its existence, which was not changed even after the fall of authoritarian rule. Corruption reached its magnitude in every walk of life. "Most damaging of all, the ethics, values, standards and a vision of society that sustains constitutionalism were seriously eroded." (Rizvi, 2005)Law became a weapon in the hands of elite to win against the marginalized in the aspects of influence, power and wealth.

In conclusion, it may be said that while the authoritarian rulers cynically preserved the letter of the constitution, they destroyed the institutions and processes upholding constitutionalism and constitutional governance. The military regimes bequeathed the task of rebuilding constitutional democracy, institutions and processes to its civilian successors which was the most difficult task."In spite of so many constitutional misuses attempted for legalizing and usurping powers, Major General ZiaurRahman and Lieutenant General Hossain Mohammed Ershad were collapsed overnight in the face of either intra-military factionalism or of a decline

in patronage funds which is itself an inevitable result of the rapacious demands of the military." (Rizvi, 2005)

3. Constitutionalism in Bangladesh (Since 1991 to present)

3.1 The restoration of constitutional governance in 1991

The main political parties during the army regimes were not united and those parties lacked mutual trust and political understanding of which the military rulers made proper use. Despite their lacking of political legitimacy, they were able to continue in power. In the election of 1986, the main political parties could not take a single decision whether they should boycott election or not and in the last moment, awami league participated in the election which weakened the voice against military regime.Subsequently, for the pressure inside party and of supporters, Awami League returned to the street with Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and by the mass-movement led by the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party in 1990, the military rule collapsed. In such a movement, many like 'NurHossain' and Dr. Milon shed their blood to free democracy from the unholy grasp of autocrats which again proved the zeal of Bangladeshis to establish democracy. After the fall of the military rule, a neutral caretaker government was appointed to conduct the elections for restoration of a constitutional government. "For the first time since 1975, a largely free and fair general election was held and a popularly elected government was returned to office. The new government led by the BNP was forced to restore parliamentary democracy as the price for the Awami League's participation in parliament. The Awami League had finally made amends for its historic mistake in 1975. The story of the constitution had turned a full circle, authoritarian rule was buried and parliamentary sovereignty was restored." (Rizvi, 2005)

3.2 Present Features of Constitutionalism after 1991

By the restoration of democracy in 1991, the situation of constitutionalism grew better, but still things are not institutionalised fully. The restoration of democracy and the successful execution of four general elections are significant achievements in the aspect of constitutionalism but not a sufficient condition for the restoration of constitutional democracy. Rebuilding of the institutions of constitutionalism undermined by the military is still a challenge after so many attempts. In anyway, the elected governments have failed to bring the military fully under parliamentary control. The military sector still enjoys super priority in policy making and national budget. The budget of the armed forces is not debated in parliament and the defence issues are not even subject to parliamentary oversight. The defence expenditure continues to be white-elephant still. The amount of expenditure is undoubtedly disproportionate both in relation to the country's security concerns and to the development needs. Besides, the constitutional governments have failed to conform to constitutional guarantees by manipulating powers to achieve its own party-interest.

To what extent constitutionalism and democracy have been restored in Bangladesh since the ostensible restoration of democracy is still a burning question. In order to identify the extent of restoration of constitutionalism, some tests are developed throughout the world.

Stanley de Smith, the eminent liberal constitutionalist has laid down a number of tests as to whether a country can be said to practice constitutionalism. The tests are as follows:

A. There must be free and fair political competition which will be held at periodic intervals.

B. The government must be accountable and amenable to popular opinion and a constitutionally created institution distinct from itself and

C. Finally, there must be effective guarantees of fundamental civil and political liberties enforced by an independent judiciary. These include the freedom of expression and of the press and the right to form organizations.

And where these are lacking, Stanley Smith argues, there is no constitutionalism. (Rizvi, 2005)

Now these tests will be applied to determine whether constitutionalism exists in Bangladesh or not.

A. The test of 'free, fair and periodic' political competition

Since 1991 Bangladesh has held five general elections (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th). Comparatively 5th, 7th and 9th general elections were considered by most standards 'free and fair' by independent election monitors. 6th election was held without participation of strong opposition party 'Awami League', so there was not a fair competition in the true sense. The Asian Network for Free Elections reported in its 2001 mission report regarding 8th Bangladesh Parliamentary Election that "the 8th parliamentary election was rated more disturbing than earlier elections with reports of intensified violence." (Asian Network for Free Elections, 2001)

Before the adoption of caretaker government by 13th amendment, the incumbent governments used to appoint the 'Election Commissioners' to conduct elections and it was claimed that these appointments were not impartial and quite politically influenced. To respond to this criticism, the country amended the constitution by 13th amendment and introduced the system of neutral caretaker government. According to the caretaker system, the incumbent government including the prime minister are bound to vacate office three months prior to the election in order to ensure a free, fair and impartial election. The amendment also provides that the most recently retired chief justice of the Supreme Court would be the head of the caretaker government and he will appoint the Election Commissioner. Thus this amendment attempted to enhance the legitimacy of the electoral process and reduced official interference from the incumbent government. Not only theoretically,

but also practically the elections held under neutral caretaker government got huge praise from national and international election monitors. But there are the negative pictures also. It was claimed that the governments have manipulated the appointments of Chief Justices to place favourable retired justice in time of election who will appoint election commissioners on political basis. But now under 15th amendment, caretaker government system was abolished and the old debate of impartiality of election commission under incumbent government was revived. The traditional supporters of democracy are not recognising caretaker government as the institution of democracy while the liberal interpreters of democracy are interpreting caretaker government as the impartial conductor of free and fair elections which is one criterion to test constitutionalism according to Stanley De Smith, the liberal constitutionalist.

However in spite ofreports of national and international election monitors declaring that elections were free and fair, we cannot reach to the conclusion that Bangladesh possesses institutionalized mechanisms for free competition. The fact that the elections were conducted 'freely and fairly' on the day of the polls does not actually imply that the electoral process itself was 'free and fair'.

There are various factors to determine to what extent the electoral process was free and fair. After every defeat, defeated party complained about vote rigging. The free and fair election imply only that vote was not rigged on the day of polls.But other probabilities may be there. Voter list was claimed to be manipulated to favour the winner party. It was claimed that government officials influenced the local leaders controlling vote banks. Moreover, "unauthorised use of extra money on electoral outcomes had harmful impact on the subsequent behaviour of the governments. This has led not only to straightforward corruption in the form of 'buying votes,' but has also enhanced the influence of smugglers, drug traffickers and black-marketers who use their money either to sponsor their candidates or to sometimes seek party tickets to get themselves elected. Once they are elected, their first concern is to recoup their expenses by various unauthorised methods rather than fulfilling their election manifesto." (Rizvi, 2005)

So it can be said that now-a-days people do not trust the governments as they are tired to trust; and how the government is elected whether by incumbent government or by caretaker government, people are frustrated to see the manipulation of constitutionalism in the hands of the government whatever that party is. As a consequence, the gap between the rulers and ruled has widened. One interesting pattern of voters in Bangladesh is revealed that in every election they vote for opposition party to come into power deserting the incumbent government which expresses the deep frustration of the voters and at the same time, the remaining zeal to see the establishment of constitutionalism and democracy by the new government.

B. Government Accountability & Popular Participation

Popular participation of the people in the formulation of policy is an essential feature of constitutionalism and democracy. In this respect the record of Bangladesh

is not satisfactory. In Bangladesh, the governments adopt public policies without participation of the concerned interest groups. The voters are either considered too ignorant to have a say in their own affairs or are deliberately kept away from the process in order to make them ignorant of the weaknesses of the policies favouring government's interest only. There are no structured discussions between the government and the groups most likely to be affected by the legislation. Policies are enacted by parliament after debate and voting.The debate and voting are also meaningless because of Article 70 of the Bangladesh Constitution which was adopted to stop floor-crossing but much used to enact legislations favourable to the enacting political party. Again in case of treaties, there was a provision under article.145A, which requirespresentingthe treaties before parliament to ensure government's accountability but we did not see government ever conform to such provision of the Constitution.

The governments have rather developed a wide range of tactics for diverting public demands. Constitutional interpreters influenced by own party policies are interpreting constitution in such a way that we can tell it as a misuse of the supreme notion of constitution. Whenever any issue arises, governments often appoint various committees and commissions to inquire about and report on those specific disputed issues to divert the wrath of public, but these reports are not published to the public and their recommendations are rarely implemented.

Governments influence the appointment of government officials in various important government offices including government offices under Public Service Commission and Judicial Service Commission. The news of appointing ineligible government officials because of political favour is being published in the newspapers often. "Ministers, ambassadors, heads of public enterprise corporations and even vice chancellors of the universities, owe their appointments to the president or the prime minister without much regard to their qualifications or appropriateness for the position." (Rizvi, 2005)

Again it has to be kept in mind that the winning party in the election not only forms the government but also assumes all the rights and powers of governing the country. This raises the question of representing the interests and views of those who did not vote for the winning party as the parties in the opposition are excluded from participation in the government and legislation in any meaningful way. We saw that the ruling party has never got more than 40 percent of the votes, therefore a vast majority of the population feels excluded from the governance of the country. They have little or no stake in the government. The legitimacy of the government becomes questionable in their mind and the theory of 'Representative Government' fails to be implemented. The constitution itself is silent on the question of representing them .The burning question is how to provide constitutional safeguards which allow the majority to rule but at the same time find a mechanism for those in the opposition to have their say in a meaningful manner so that government can be representative government in the true sense and democracy becomes more institutionalized.

The research of the World Justice Project among 66 countries on Rule of Law which was contained in the Rule of Law Index, 2011 reflects multiple challenges of Bangladesh in this regard. Government Accountability of Bangladesh remains low as her ranking is 48th globally and 3rd among low-income countries.

C. Effective Guarantees of Civil and Political Liberties

Competition and participation are essential elements of democracy; and while both of these elements are present in Bangladesh formally, we have seen that in practice they are not existent properly. Without the guarantee of civil and political liberties, competition and participation cannot be made a reality. To ensure the effectiveness of free and fair competition and popular participation, the freedom of expression, the freedom of press and the right to form organizations are very much important. Not only these rights, but also "the right to seek public office, the ability to freely canvas and mobilize support for one's platform and program and the assurance that those institutions responsible for making government policies are responsible to the people are necessary." (Rizvi, 2005)

Therefore the civil and political liberties are enshrined in the Bangladesh constitution and the citizens can seek redress in case of infringement of their fundamental rights through the courts under article. 44 of the constitution.Many of the restrictions curbing individual liberty under previous authoritarian rule have been removed from the statutes. Detention of political prisoners without trialis virtually impossible as courts frequently throw out government detention orders. We saw "in *BLAST v. Bangladesh*, 55 DLR 363, it has been held that remand for the purpose of interrogation is not necessary except for extorting information from an accused by physical torture or other means, but such extortion of information is contrary to the mandate of article.35(4), interrogation of the accused, if necessary, may be done in the jail custody; as is the present practice, prayer for police remand and grant of it is unconstitutional being violative of the fundamental rights ensured by the constitution."(Islam, 2002)

The record of civil and political liberties in Bangladesh has improved over the years through litigation, it is not easy to say that there are no areas of concern. In all the countries of South Asia there are many instances of violations by thegovernments of individual and group rights in name of curbing terrorism and controlling emergency situations. In most cases, the victims of state violence cannot seek legal redress. Not only these, enforced disappearances are occurring in Bangladesh which is violation of various fundamental rights and State is unsuccessful in resolving this problem as it is apprehended that the government and various political personnel are responsible for the situation either for political reasons or for huge monetary issues linked with it.

Again, the treatment of Bangladesh meted out to the minority groups like the Hindus and the tribal population residing particularly in Chittagong Hill Tracts area is quite unsatisfactory. Although there is no official policy of discrimination, but in

reality one cannot ignore that the human rights of these communities are often violated with impunity.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)was established in 2010 to promote and protect human rights throughout the world especially in Bangladesh. But the bargaining power of NHRC to protect marginal sections from the oppression of the government is still unsatisfactory. The recent Limon case and the request of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Prof. Dr MizanurRahman to withdraw a case filed by Limon's mother against Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) men raised questions regarding the role of NHRC. Hossain (2013) reported that the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has urged the commission not to take any step that goes against human rights and TIB executive director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said: "The Commission is playing a mediator's role and suggested Limon to withdraw the case against RAB as a precondition for withdrawal of RAB'S cases against Limon, which is against human rights and also against citizens' rights to justice."

Therefore we can say that though civil and political liberties are guaranteed in the Bangladesh constitution, but these are often violated through government mechanism which indicates the negation of the guarantee and impediment to institutionalization of constitutionalism in Bangladesh.

Other Major Problems and Impediments of Constitutionalism in Bangladesh

We will explain some other areas along with problems and impediments to understand the implementation of constitutionalism in Bangladesh:

Interference in Freedom of movement: Though freedom of movement is enshrined in Bangladesh Constitution, often in name of law and order, it is taken away or suspended by the ruling authority. In *HM Ershad v. Bangladesh*, 7 BLC (AD) 67, freedom of leaving the country and returning from a foreign country has been reiterated. In another case, *DewanbagiDarbar Sharif v. Bangladesh,* 54 DLR 413, it was held that impounding of passport for the purpose of inquiry against the holder of the passport is not a lawful ground for impounding of passport. (Islam, 2002)

Interference in Freedom of Press and Media: Though freedom of expressions is guaranteed by Bangladesh Constitution, in fact this freedom is not enjoyed properly. Fear of government's wrath and discrimination is affecting the free expression in press, media and everywhere. Several actions were taken against editors of various newspapers in name of political stability and law and order. Governments took the opportunities of the ambiguities of the terms 'Law and order', 'Public interest', 'Security of the country' etc, to achieve their own political goals or to hide truths from public.

Discretionary powers and its abuse: As now State transformed itself as a welfare State and state functions are increased, so discretionary powers are given to

the executive authorities to meet urgency, necessity and speediness of the actions and to overcome the lengthy and complicated processes of legislature and judiciary. But often these discretionary powers are being misused and it became a practice now. In two decisions of the Appellate division, *Ekushey Television Ltd. V. Dr.ChowdhuryMahmoodHasan*, 54 DLR (AD) 130 and *Hyundai Corporation v. Sumikin Bussan,*54 DLR (AD) 88, lack of transparency in the activities of the executive authority or other public functionaries was held to be a ground for interference in writ jurisdiction. The court reasoned that no public functionary acting in purported exercise of authority under any provision of law or Constitution has an unfettered discretion and therefore cannot act arbitrarily. Arbitrariness is the anti-thesis of rule of law and equality clause of article.27 of the Constitution.

Weak Implementation of Separation of powers: The Bangladesh Constitution provided for separation of powers between the three organs of the State-executive, legislature and judiciary. No one organ could transgress the limits set by the constitution. Though delegated legislation is permitted, but necessary guidelines on behalf of the legislature must be provided. Abuse of power or excessive delegation and lack of checks and balances on the delegated legislations are prominent in Bangladesh which indicates that separation of powers is not implemented in practice properly.

Failure in Decentralization of Powers and Local self-government: For the success of constitutionalization, decentralization of powers is essential. The concentration of power makes the government autocratic. With the division of power between the center and the provinces, the burden of the Center is reduced and the provinces get autonomy, which ultimately brings efficiency in the administration. With the introduction of local self-government, people take interest in the administrations and they give full support to the government. "The French writer De Tocqueville has rightly said that, 'Local institutions constitute the strength of free nations. A nation may establish a system of free governments but without municipal institutions cannot have the spirit of liberty." (Hossain, 2005) In article 59 and 60, Bangladesh Constitution stipulated that the State shall encourage local government institutions composed of the representatives of the area concerned and that the republic shall be a democracy in which effective participation by the people through their elected representatives in administration at all levels shalll be ensured. If we see the scenario of the local elections, we will understand the reality. Vote rigging or forcibly restricting supporters of opposing political parties are a regular picture of these elections. So effective participation by the people are not ensured in Bangladesh scenario and the purpose of decentralization of powers become frustrated.

Absence of Proper Independence of Judiciary: Though in article.22 of the Constitution the independence of judiciary was incorporated from the beginning, but it was not realised. In 2007, through official gazette notification it came into force, but still this independence is not fully ensured. Without the full implementation of this, democracy or constitutionalism will remain fruitless because along with this,

judicial review is linked which is the essential feature of Bangladesh Constitution. Only independence of judiciary cannot ensure justice of the people. In the research conducted by U.S based International Organization World Justice Project (WJP) in the year of 2011 among 66 countries, it was reported that the civil justice system of Bangladesh faces many problems particularly with regard to the lengthy duration of cases and corruptive practices in lower level courts, where it ranks 62nd overall and third to last among low-income countries.

Weak Rule of Law: The preamble of the Constitution of Bangladesh states 'rule of law' as one of the objectives to be attained. A.V. Dicey's concept of rule of Law included three things-

i)   Absence of arbitrary power, that is, no man is above law and the persons in authority do not enjoy wide, arbitrary or discretionary powers,

ii) Equality before law, that is, every man, whatever his rank or position is subject to ordinary laws and the jurisdiction of ordinary courts and

iii) Individual liberties.

Though Dicey's theory has been criticized from various angles, but still his three themes remain undisputed themes of rule of Law.

Professor Wade has given three meanings of Dicey's rule of law which are as follows:

i)   It expresses a preference for law and order within a community rather than anarchy, warfare and constant strife,

ii) It expresses a legal doctrine of fundamental importance, namely that government must be conducted according to law and that, in disputed cases what the law requires is declared by judicial decisions and

iii) It refers to a body of political opinion about what the declared rules of law should provide in matters both of substance and of procedure. (Islam, 2002)

Again "according to Hilaire Barnette, 'The rule of law in its many guises represents a challenge to State authority and power, demanding that powers both be granted legitimately and that their exercise is according to law. 'According to law' means both according to the legal rules and something over and above purely formal legality and imputes the concept of legitimacy and constitutionality. In its turn, legitimacy implies rightness or morality of law." (Islam, 2002)

Hilaire Barnette's conclusion represents the relation between 'Rule of law' and 'Constitutionalism' as we know the basic theme of constitutionalism is the limiting the government under constitution which is not allowed to do or enact what it wishes without reasonable or legal connotations.

"It was reiterated in *Anwar HossainChowdhury v. Bangladesh,* 1989 BLD (Spl.) 1, Para 443, that the 'Rule of Law' is a basic feature of the Constitution of Bangladesh.Rule of law contemplated in Bangladesh Constitution concerns the certainty and publicity of law and its uniform enforceability and has no reference to the quality of the law."(Islam, 2002)

Constitutionalism in the context of Bangladesh necessarily implies the descriptive use rather than prescriptive though the framers of Bangladesh Constitution included Article.27, 31 and the preamble and Part III to take care of the qualitative aspects of law. Independent judiciary is not only a pre-condition of constitutionalism, but also, of rule of law as earlier I mentioned that there is a strong linkage between rule of law and constitutionalism. In the absence of an independent and impartial judiciary, there is no machinery for enforcement of constitutional provisions faithfully and constitutionalism will turn into mere moral precepts which will have no effective result.

Not only that, there must be access to justice for the common people. Access to justice is meant that the cost of having recourse to the courts must be such that there is real access to the courts. Having regard to the economic situation of the common people of Bangladesh, we see that the cost of litigation in Bangladesh is high and most people cannot afford to seek remedies in courts. As there is no fixed rule about lawyering remuneration, lawyers are sucking bloods of common people on various pretexts and common people are losing their trust on legal mechanism. To ensure access to justice, it is absolutely necessary to adopt a meaningful legal aid scheme and to save common people from the greedy lawyers and their agents by a strong observation of Bangladesh Bar Council.

To understand the level of implementation of rule of law in Bangladesh, the research of the World Justice Project (WJP) will throw light to a great extent. The World Justice Project (WJP) conducted research on rule of law situation of 66 countries in the year of 2011. In the Rule of Law Index of 2011, WJP conducted research in the three largest cities of Bangladesh, namely, Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna.

Table:1

Factor No.	WJP Rule of Law Index Factors	Score	Global Ranking	Regional Ranking	Income Group Ranking
Factor 1	Limited Government Powers	0.48	48/66	2/3	3/8
Factor 2	Absence of Corruptions	0.32	58/66	2/3	4/8
Factor 3	Order and Security	0.69	42/66	1/3	3/8
Factor 4	Fundamental Rights	0.54	48/66	2/3	3/8
Factor 5	Open Government	0.37	54/66	2/3	3/8
Factor 6	Regulatory Enforcement	0.42	58/66	2/3	4/8
Factor 7	Access to Civil Justice	0.41	62/66	2/3	6/8
Factor 8	Effective Criminal Justice	0.49	40/66	2/3	2/8

Source: The World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index®, 2011, p.44

The first and second column lists the eight factors that made up the index. The third column displays Bangladesh's aggregate score for each of the eight factors. The fourth column displays global rankings of Bangladesh among 66 countries for each factor. The fifth column shows the regional ranking of Bangladesh among three countries (Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) of South Asia region and the sixth column shows the ranking of Bangladesh among countries with comparable per capita income levels. Therefore we can see that the scores of Bangladesh are quite poor in all factors which are necessary ingredients to establish rule of law and constitutionalism.

The sub-factors of the above-mentioned factors are shown in the following graphs and described clock-wise:

The **first title 'Accountable Government'** comprised of factor 1 and 2 is divided into several sub-factors- 1.2 Government powers limited by legislature, 1.3Government powers limited by judiciary, 1.4 Independent auditing and review,1.5 Government officials sanctioned for misconduct, 1.6 Government powers limited by non-governmental checks, 1.7 Transition of power subject to the law, 2.1 Absence of corruption in the executive branch, 2.2 Absence of corruption in the judicial branch, 2.3 Absence of corruption by the police and military.

The **second title 'Security and Fundamental Rights'**comprised of factor 3 and 4 is divided into several sub-factors- 3.1 Absence of crime, 3.2Civil conflict is effectively limited, 3.3 People do not resort to violence to redress grievances, 4.1 Equal treatment and absence of discrimination, 4.2 Right to life and security of the person, 4.3 Due process of law, 4.4 Freedom of opinion and expression, 4.5 Freedom of belief and religion, 4.6 Arbitrary interference of privacy, 4.7 Freedom of assembly and association, 4.8 Fundamental labour rights.

The **third title 'Open Government and RegulatoryEnforcement'** comprised of factor 5 and 6 is divided into several sub-factors- 5.1 Laws are clear, 5.2Laws are publicized, 5.3 Laws are stable, 5.4 Right to petition and public participation, 5.5 Official drafts of laws are available, 5.6 Official information requested is available, 6.1 Government regulations effectively enforced, 6.2 Government regulations without improper influence, 6.3 Administrative proceedings without unreasonable delay, 6.4 Due process in administrative proceedings, 6.5 The government does not expropriate without adequate compensation.

The **fourth title 'Access to Justice'** comprised of factor 7 and 8 is divided into several sub-factors- 7.2 People can access legal counsel, 7.3 People can access and afford civil courts, 7.4 Civil justice is free of discrimination, 7.5 Civil justice is free of corruption, 7.6 Civil justice is free of improper government influence, 7.7 Civil justice is not subject to unreasonable delays, 7.8 Civil justice is effectively enforced, 7.9 ADRs are accessible, impartial and effective, 8.1Criminal investigation system is effective, 8.2 Criminal adjudication system is timely and effective, 8.3 Correctional system is effective, 8.4 Criminal system is free of discrimination, 8.5 Criminal system is free of corruption, 8.6 Criminal system is free of improper government influence, 8.7 Due process of law.

From the graphs, we see that in the highest possible score of 1.00, the score of Bangladesh in each sub-factor are under 0.5 in most of the sub-factors, in few sub-factors the score are near 0.5 or above which indicates poor performance of Bangladesh in establishing rule of law.

Scores for all WJP Rule of Law Index sub-factors

In each graph, a sub-factor is represented by a radius from the center of the circle to the periphery. The center of each circle corresponds to the lowest possible score for each sub-factor (0.00); the outer edge of the circle marks the highest possible score (1.00).
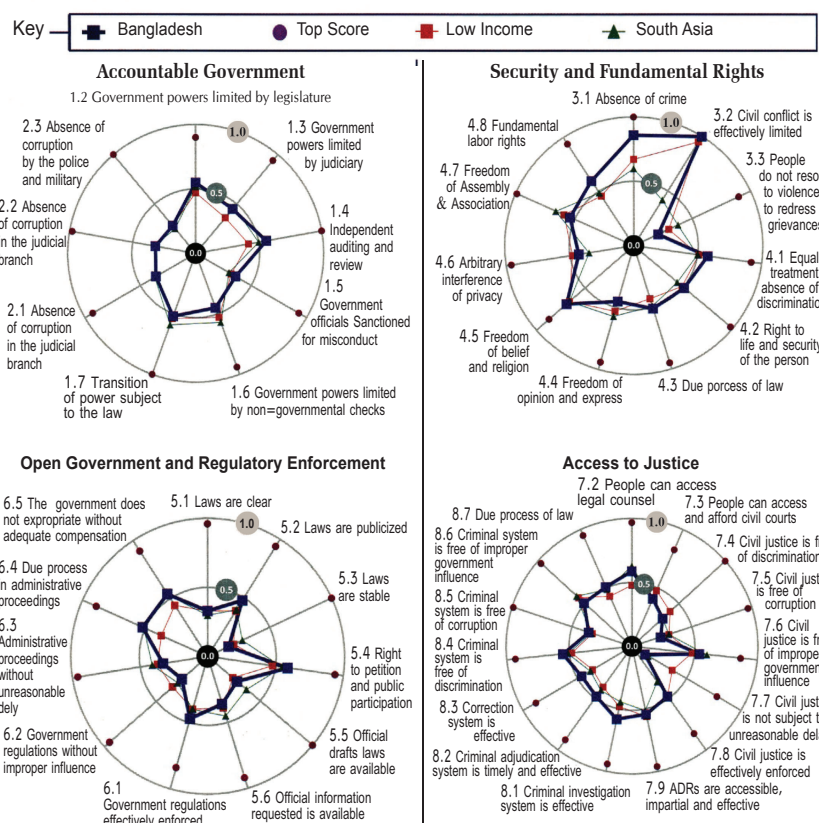
Source: The World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index®, 2011, p.44

The **fourth title 'Access to Justice'** comprised of factor 7 and 8 is divided into several sub-factors- 7.2 People can access legal counsel, 7.3 People can access and afford civil courts, 7.4 Civil justice is free of discrimination, 7.5 Civil justice is free of corruption, 7.6 Civil justice is free of improper government influence, 7.7 Civil justice is not subject to unreasonable delays, 7.8 Civil justice is effectively enforced, 7.9 ADRs are accessible, impartial and effective, 8.1Criminal investigation system is effective, 8.2 Criminal adjudication system is timely and effective, 8.3 Correctional system is effective, 8.4 Criminal system is free of discrimination, 8.5

Criminal system is free of corruption, 8.6 Criminal system is free of improper government influence, 8.7 Due process of law. From the graphs, we see that in the highest possible score of 1.00, the score of Bangladesh in each sub-factor are under 0.5 in most of the sub-factors, in few sub-factors the score are near 0.5 or above which indicates poor performance of Bangladesh in establishing rule of law.

Absence of Sound Political Culture:

In Bangladesh, there is the absence of sound political culture. Still the culture of accepting defeat sportingly has not grown-up in the minds of political parties. In each of the five elections the party that lost the election has refused to accept the popular verdict and has attempted to challenge the legitimacy of the winner to rule the country by giving the charge of vote rigging. The proper meaning of opposition party in the parliament is not implemented yet. The inability to play by the rules of the constitution has not only undermined popular confidence in democratic institutions and processes, but it has also made the normal functioning of the government very difficult. Each defeated party in turn has used various meansto harass and oust the elected government. Though mobilizing the public against the government is a legitimate constitutional right, the opposition groups have often resorted to the tactic of 'hartal' which forces the shut-down of offices, educational institutions, and factories by creating anarchy. Hartal creates a severe negative impact on the country's economy. Hartal and the policy of anarchy during hartalby every party when the party is in opposition are used indiscriminately for capturing power. It is seriously questionable whether or not 'hartal' convened by the opposition parties is reflective of popular feelings or whether hartal is convened for securing public interest. Though political parties convene hartal in name of public demand, but reality is far from their claim. The effects of such strikes on people's daily life are disastrous. The government is deflected from carrying out its mandate.During hartal, the government officials and police are misused on partisan basis and government institutions are undermined. Already Bangladesh is listed as low-income country. The economic consequences of hartal on Bangladesh are also extremely painful. The livelihood is affected, industrial production comes to a decreasing point; exports are slipped and education of the students suffers a lot. Though 'hartal' to express public outrage is a perfectly legitimate and constitutional tool, but its misuse by opposition partieswithout public's demand is having a debilitating impact on the establishing of constitutional process.

Another striking feature of culture of politics in Bangladesh is the boycott of the parliament by opposition groups. This is now a common scenario. Both the main parties are regular to resort to this culture. A member of parliament is elected by the voters to represent his or her constituency and by choosing to boycott the parliament the members are violating their commitment to the elector voters to represent them. In other words the voter goes unrepresented in parliament without which democracy cannot be implemented. While a symbolic walkout or token absence for valid discontent is permissible, prolonged boycott undermining the very heart of the democratic process and institutions should be banned constitutionally and a constitutional alternative of protesting should be given a thought. Parliament has

lost much of its public esteem because of contempt of parliament by the political parties and it has been difficult for the parties to serve out the full term of their office because of non-cooperating opposition groups. Other political problems include harassment of opposition political leaders and supporters by filing false cases, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearances, creating political anarchy, partisan corruption, high level extortion etc., which are existing impediments in establishing constitutionalism in Bangladesh.

Suggested Policy Measures for Overcoming the Problems of Constitutionalism in Bangladesh:

1. Sound Party System should be developed. Difference in views in democratic system should not only be tolerated but it should be encouraged. In order to establish democracy and constitutionalism, the existence of strong opposition is the requisite condition to prevent transformation of the ruling party into an autocrat.

2. Constitution should be revised. All amendments against the notion of constitutionalism should be repealed such as 5th and 7th amendment.

3. Necessary conventions should be adopted to develop parliamentary culture and these should be strictly adhered to. Violation of these should be enacted as punishable offences and these should be implemented neutraly.

4. The budget for army should be fixed in such way that these do not undermine other developing sectors of the country,for example, education or povery alleviation schemes.

5. Police or other security forces must not be given indemnity for their misuse or abuse of power. They should not be allowed for extra-judicial killings. They should not be misused in political conflicts among political parties in name of security.

6. Government should respect the spirit of constitution and proper implementation of Constitutional directions.

7. Ombudsman incoporated in article.77 of Bangladesh Constitution should be established.

8. Independence of Judiciary must be ensured to uphold citizen's rights against the actions of the government.

9. Government elections must be free from vote rigging and use of might by political parties; and local government institutions must be strengthened.

10. Constitutional interpreters should interpret constitutional issues neutraly rather than party interest basis.

11. Government's accountability must be ensured through parliament and judiciary and also by non-governmental checks.

12. To stop widespread corruption existing in the country, polical parties have to come out from their traditional anti-democracy practices. Whoever is accused of corruption, must be met by legal procedures and indemnity or political influence to divert the result of investigation must be stopped. To end corruption, people should not elect the proven guilty political leader in the next election and it should be included in disqualifying factors in the local and general elections so

that political leaders can maintain transparency and inherit democratic cultures in their political walks.

However these barriers have to be over-come by *bona fide* intention of all political parties, civil society and mass people along with a well-planned structure of constitutionalization.

Overall, we can say that the path of establishing constitutionalism is not a bed of roses, it is not a easy task which can be implemented over-night. But specific measures and strict implementation of measures devoid of red tape and bureaucratic influence can contribute successfully in the establishment of constitutionalism. It is not a mere theory, if we can institutionalize this theory in the context of Bangladesh, it will produce overall developments of the country in politics, economy, democracy, rule of law, better standard of living and in others aspects which obviously will raise the image and standard of Bangladesh as a country to the world. Though Bangladesh is showing poor record in establishing constitutionalism, but still we are hopeful for a better performance of Bangladesh in this context.

Conclusion:

Though Bangladesh could not institutionalize constitutionalism yet, but it has restored democratic institutions 'the parliamentary supremacy'. The general elections have been largely free and fair. The army has not attempted to capture power despite its pervasive political influence and there is a thriving and free press. The independence of judiciary is not fully impaired. But despite these significant achievements, there are also some frustrating pictures. The constitutional mechanism of caretaker governments to conduct the election has been repealed by 15th constitutional amendment, which brought the earlier debate of ensuring fairness in conducting election and political stability of the country will be at stake because of demand for restoration of caretaker government by the opposition and refusal to accept by the government. The 15th amendment brought confusion regarding State's nature as it simultaneously adopted secularism and Islam as State religion which opened the door of more political anarchy and hardening the establishment of constitutionalism. Our politics are crippled by corrupted political parties and bureaucrats, people are unaware of their civil and political rights; even aware, they are unable to establish their rights because of lacking of political good faith of political parties. Constitution became a toy in the hands of ruling party and as a result the implementation of constitutionalism transformed into a myth. One thing must be noted that 'Constitutionalism' is a politico-legal theory which cannot be established without real supports and attempts of the political parties, government agencies and institutions, security forces and proper interpretations by the lawyers and judges. So for the sake of betterment of Bangladesh as a country, patriotism and the spirit of abiding by constitutional notions should be arisen and carried by all. Without establishing constitutionalism, democracy and rule of law will remain as unfulfilled high aspirations and that is really very sad for the people of Bangladesh who are waiting since last 42 years to establish democracy and rule of law in this region.

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Estimation of Solar Radiation and Determination of Regression Coefficients on Sylhet

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Golam Moktader Nayeem**

Abstract

This study is carried out to compute global, diffuse and direct solar radiation empirically on a horizontal surface for the divisional district "Sylhet" in Bangladesh (latitude 24° 53'N and longitude 91° 51'E) as well as to predict specific correlations for Sylhet by using meteorological data for 23 years between 1985 and 2007. The global radiation is found to be maximum in the month of April and minimum in the month of December here. The values of the Angstrom's regression coefficients a and b are computed to be 0.2569 and 0.5161 respectively. The values of the other regression coefficients (c, d, c´, d´, e, f, e´, f´, c_O, d_O, e_O and f_O) were also computed. The correlations proposed for Sylhet can be readily used for estimating global, diffuse and direct solar radiation if the meteorological parameters are available.

Keywords: Bangladesh, Correlation, Radiation, Solar, Sylhet.

Introduction

The growing populations of the world, the fast depleting reserves of fossil fuels and the awareness of environmental impact have led the researchers to think of alternative sources of energy for a safer life on this earth. Therefore, the whole world is looking for non-exhaustible energy sources for their future. Among all non-conventional energies, solar energy is the best option if it can be used in a cost-effective manner. Moreover its conversion technology is environmentally sound. As the solar energy intercepted by the earth in one year is ten times greater than the total fossil resources including undiscovered and unexplored non-recoverable reserves [1], it is expected that the present worldwide research and development program on solar energy will help solve the future energy crisis of the world.

The applications of solar energy require information of the availability of solar energy for its optimum use. Since solar radiation is not uniform over all places on the earth, any solar energy conversion installation at a certain place requires

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knowledge of the amount of solar radiation at that place which again varies from time to time. Bangladesh, being situated between $20^o34'$ and $26^o34'$ north latitude, $88^o01'$ and $92^o41'$ east longitude, is endowed with abundant sunshine for at least 8 months of the year. The prospect of utilization of solar energy is thus very bright. But solar radiation data, a prerequisite for the designing and sizing of solar energy systems, are not available in many locations of Bangladesh due to absence or malfunction of measuring instruments. However, the climatological data such as sunshine hour, temperature, humidity etc. are available at meteorological department for most districts of Bangladesh. These data can be used in empirical models to estimate the global solar radiation and its components at any location. These data are used to compute empirically the global, diffuse and direct solar radiation over Sylhet.

ESTIMATION OF RADIATION

For estimation of global solar radiation G, the formula proposed by H.P. Garg and S.N. Garg [2] expressed by eq (1) is used.

$$G = G_o (0.414 + 0.400 \ n/N - 0.0055 \ W_{at}) \qquad (1),$$

where G_o is the extraterrestrial radiation, n/N is the ratio of sun shine hour and day length and W_{at} is the atmospheric water content per unit volume described by eq (1d). From geometrical consideration extraterrestrial daily global solar radiation (G_o) on a horizontal surface for each station is given by eq(1a):

$$G_o = 0.01163x\{(24 \ x \ F)/\pi\} \ (\cos\varphi \ \cos\delta \ \cos W_s + W_s \ \sin\varphi \ \sin\delta) \ (1a),$$

where φ is the latitude in radians, F unit of conversion factor, W_s the sunset angle and δ the solar declination given respectively by equations (1b), (1c) and (1e).

$$F = 1.95 \ x \ 60.0 \ (1 + 0.033 \cos 360 \ x \ d \ /365) \qquad (1b),$$

$$W_s = \cos^{-1} \ (- \tan\varphi \ \tan\delta) \ \text{in radians} \qquad (1c),$$

$$W_{at} = H_{rel} \ x \ (4.7923 + 0.3647 \ T + 0.0055 \ T^2 + 0.0003 \ T^3) \quad (1d,)$$

$$\delta = [23 + (27/60)] \sin (360 \ x \ d/365) \qquad (1e),$$

where T is the ambient temperature in ^{o}C for the fractional sunshine duration n/N, H_{rel} the relative humidity and d being the number of days after spring equinox (21st march).

For estimation of diffuse radiation (D), the formula proposed by M. Hussain [3] eq (2) is used.

$$D = G_o\{0.306 - (0.165 \ x \ n/N) + 0.0025 \ W_{at}\} \qquad (2),$$

For estimation of direct or beam radiation (I), the subtraction method eq (3) is used.

$$I = G - D \tag{3},$$

Hence it should be noted that all the radiation data are estimated in the unit of Kwh/m^2 – day.

DETERMINATION OF REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS:

Angstrom correlation [4] modified by Prescott [5], given by eq (4), for estimation of global radiation is generally employed all over the world. So, firstly the values of the Regression coefficients (a and b) are determined for Sylhet.

$$G/G_o = a + b \, (n/N) \tag{4},$$

Secondly, from Page correlation [6], given by eq (5), for diffuse radiation, the values of the correlation coefficients (c and d) for this station are determined.

$$D/G = c + d \, (G/G_o) \tag{5},$$

From Angstrom like correlation [7], given in eq (6), for predicting diffuse radiation over Sylhet the values of the coefficients c' and d' are determined.

$$D/G_o = c' + d' \, (n/N) \tag{6},$$

Thirdly, from both Page like and Angstrom like correlations [8], given by eqs (7 and 8), for estimation of direct solar radiation, the values of the correlation coefficients e, f, e' and f' are determined.

$$I/G = e + f \, (G/G_o) \tag{7},$$

$$I/G_o = e' + f' \, (n/N) \tag{8},$$

To estimate diffuse and direct solar radiation directly from global solar radiation[8], the values of the coefficients c_o, d_o, e_o and f_o are determined.

$$D/G = c_o + d_o \, (n/N) \tag{9},$$

$$I/G = e_o + f_o \, (n/N) \tag{10},$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

The estimated values of monthly averaged global, diffuse and direct solar radiation for Sylhet are given in tabular form below:

Month	Global(G) Kwh/m²-day	Diffuse(D) Kwh/m²-day	Beam.(I) Kwh/m²-day	n/N	G/Go	D/G	I/G
JAN	4.201	1.552	2.652	0.671	0.613	0.369	0.631
FEB	4.940	1.833	3.105	0.668	0.611	0.371	0.628
MAR	5.503	2.297	3.205	0.613	0.578	0.417	0.583
APR	5.646	2.914	2.731	0.507	0.517	0.516	0.483
MAY	5.593	3.366	2.192	0.408	0.474	0.601	0.391
JUN	4.790	3.866	0.927	0.269	0.394	0.807	0.193
JUL	4.692	3.816	0.940	0.251	0.392	0.813	0.200
AUG	4.733	3.445	1.243	0.328	0.422	0.727	0.262
SEP	4.288	2.995	1.292	0.347	0.433	0.698	0.301
OCT	4.488	2.164	2.323	0.570	0.537	0.482	0.517
NOV	4.345	1.575	2.768	0.727	0.619	0.362	0.637
DEC	4.192	1.368	2.934	0.755	0.649	0.326	0.699

Table 1: - Data tables for Sylhet.

The variations of monthly average Global, Diffuse and Beam solar radiation of Sylhet throughout the year is shown in fig – (a). It is clear that the first peak in the global solar radiation occurs in April/May (summer). In this period, both sunshine hour and temperature are high. But the second peak occurs in August (autumn) which is not so prominent because of short sun shine period although temperature remains high. Again, in November/December (winter), though there is enough sun shine periods but the temperature is low. Therefore, it results in low global solar radiation.

The diffuse solar radiation depends on relative humidity and atmospheric water content. It increases with the decrease of sun shine hour and increase of atmospheric water content. Therefore, the diffuse radiation is maximum in June/July (rainy) and minimum in December/January (winter).

The direct solar radiation is directly related to sunshine duration. The direct solar radiation is, therefore, maximum in March/April (summer) and minimum in July (rainy).
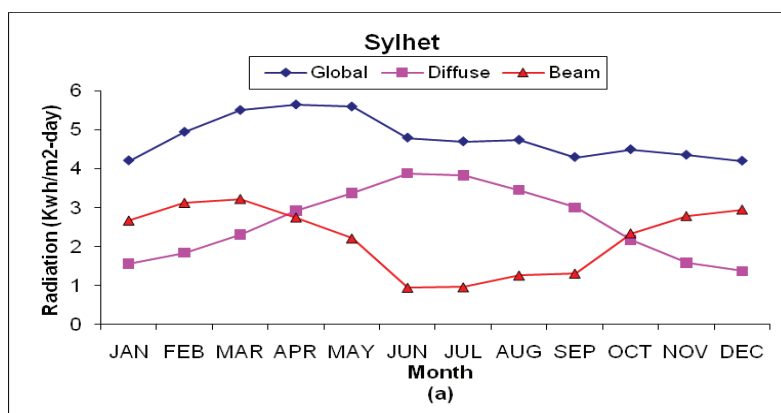
Fig. a : Monthly variation of Global, diffuse and beam solar radiation on a horizontal surface for Sylhet.

The year to year seasonal variation of Global solar radiation and the variation of annually averaged global solar radiation is shown in fig (b) and (c) respectively. There is up and down in the graph but no cyclic pattern or symmetric variation is found. From fig-b it is clear that the monthly average Global radiation is maximum in the month of April.
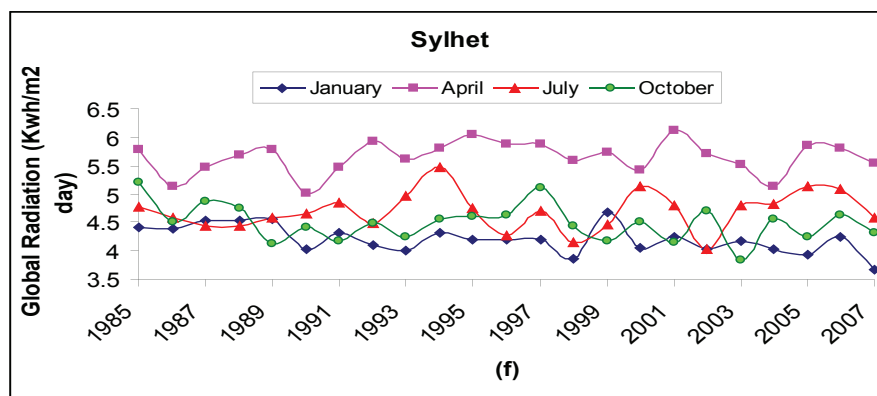

Fig. b : Year to year seasonal variation of Global solar radiation for Sylhet
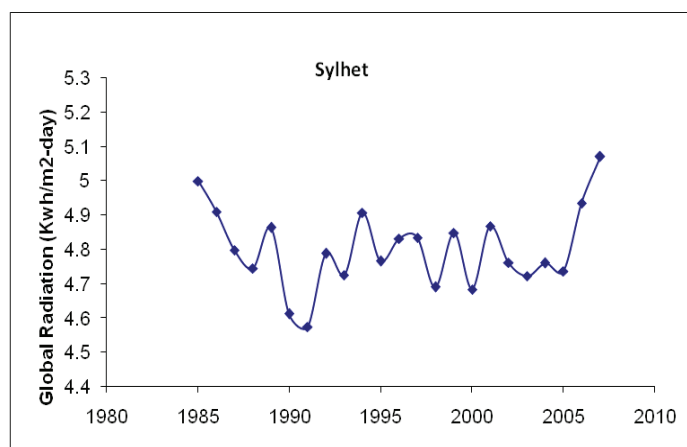
Fig. c : Variation of annually averaged global solar radiation for Sylhet

Using the estimated data in the empirical formula given by eqs (1 to 3), several correlations are developed eq (4 to 10) and the corresponding regression coefficients (given in table-2) are determined. The graphical representations of these correlations are described in the following figures (fig- d to j):
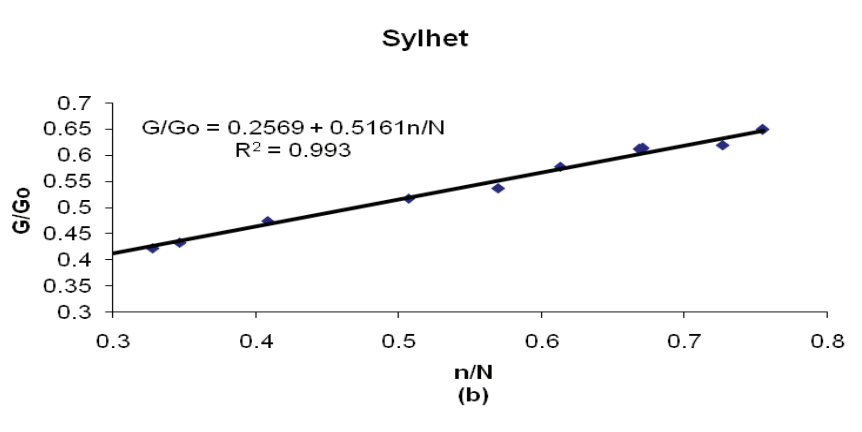
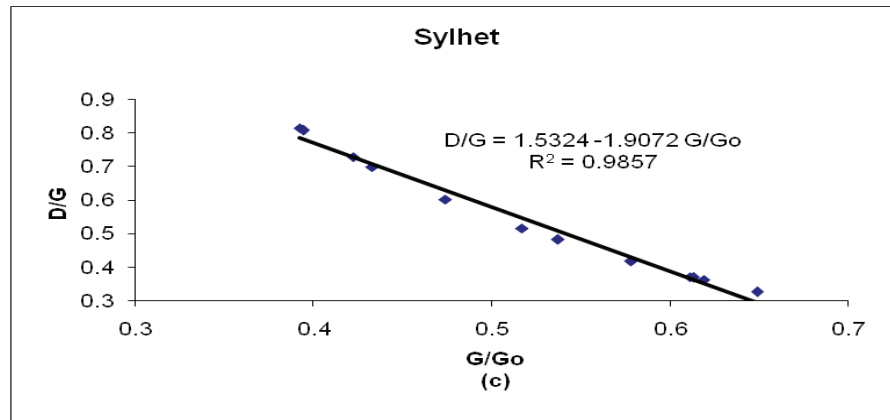*Fig. d : Correlation between n/N and G/G_o for coefficient a and b.*

Fig . e : Correlation between G/G_O and D/G for coefficient c and d.
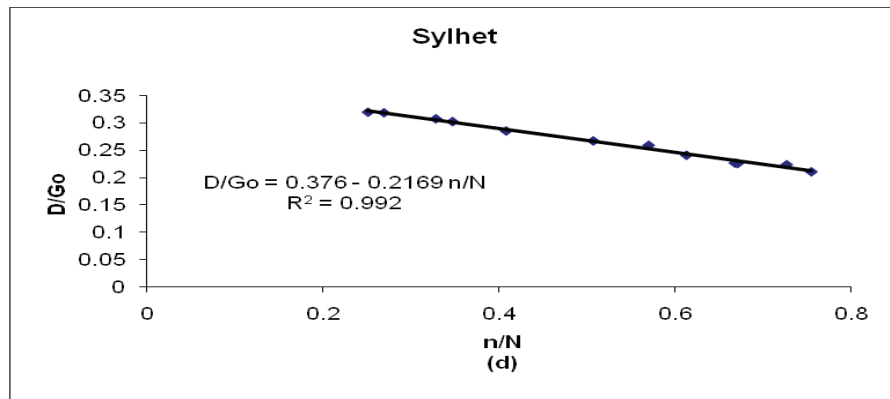
Fig. f : Correlation between n/N and D/G_O for coefficient c' and d'.
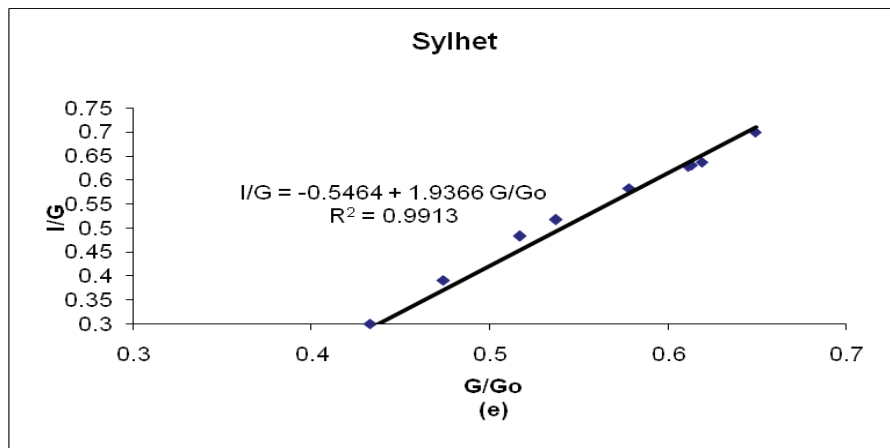

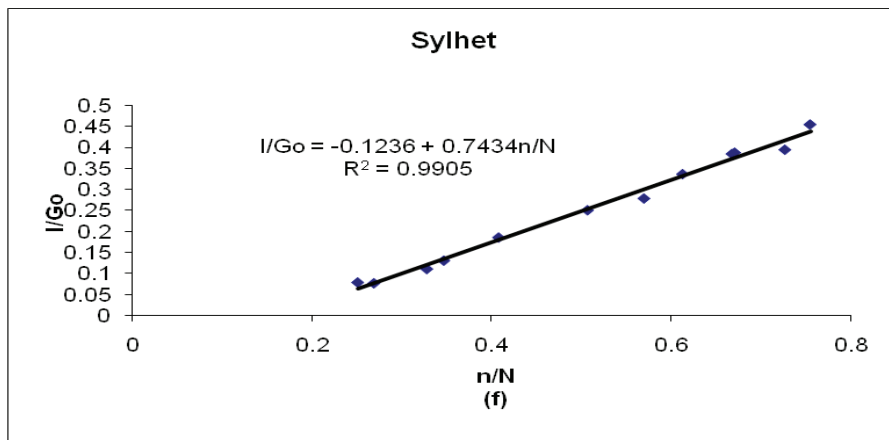*Fig . g : Correlation between G/G_O and I/G for coefficient e and f.*

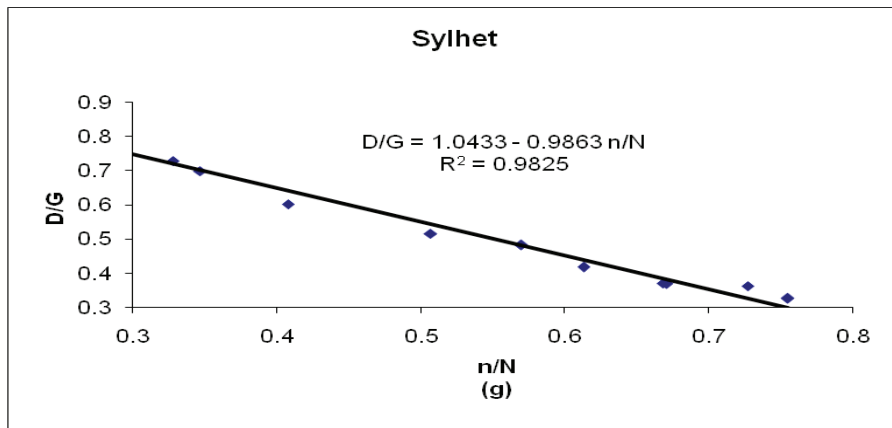*Fig . h : Correlation between n/N and I/G_O for coefficient e' and f'.*

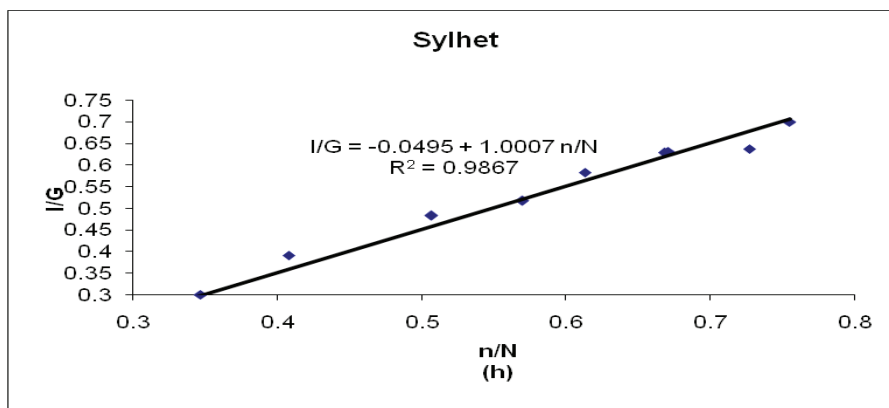*Fig. i : Correlation between n/N and D/G for coefficient c_o and d_o.*

Fig . j : Correlation between n/N and I/G for coefficient e_o and f_o.

Here, fig-d represents the correlation between n/N and G/G_O (eq - 4) and the values of the regression coefficients a and b are determined. Similarly fig- e to fig-j represent the correlations given in eq- 5 to eq- 10 respectively and the values of the coefficients c, d, c´, d´, e, f, e´, f´, c_O, d_O, e_O and f_O are determined from these graphs. The values of the regression coefficients are represented in table- 2 and table- 3.

Station	a	b	c	d	c´	d´	e	f	e´	f´
Sylhet	0.2569	0.5161	1.5324	-1.9072	0.3760	-0.2169	-0.5464	1.9366	-0.1236	0.7434

Table 2: Computed values of regression coefficients c, d, c´, d´, e, f, e´ and f´ for Sylhet.

The value of the sum of the regression coefficients (a + b) which represent the maximum clearness index (when n/N = 1) is found to be 0.7730. Using the values of the coefficients a and b for Sylhet, a linear equation (eq 11) has been recommended for the estimation of monthly average global solar radiation over Sylhet.

$$G/Go = 0.2569 + 0.5161 \, (n/N) \qquad (11),$$

Eq- 11 implies that about 25.69% of extraterrestrial radiation over Sylhet penetrates the atmosphere on a fully cloudy day (n=0) and about 77.30% on a clear sky day.

Station	c_O	d_O	e_O	f_O
Sylhet	1.0433	-0.9863	-0.0495	1.0007

Table 3: Computed values of regression coefficients c_O, d_O, e_O and f_O for Sylhet.

Using the values of the coefficients given by equations (5 - 10), the linear equations has been recommended for the estimation of monthly average diffuse and direct solar radiation over Sylhet and are given by

$$D/G = 1.5324 - 1.9072 \, (G/G_O) \qquad (12),$$
$$D/G_O = 0.3760 - 0.2169 \, (n/N) \qquad (13),$$
$$D/G = 1.0433 - 0.9863 \, (n/N) \qquad (14),$$
$$I/G = -0.5464 + 1.9366 \, (G/G_O) \qquad (15),$$
$$I/G_O = -0.1236 + 0.7434 \, (n/N) \qquad (16),$$
$$I/G = -0.0495 + 1.0007 \, (n/N) \qquad (17),$$

Therefore, using the equations (11 – 17), the values of the Global, Diffuse and Direct solar radiation can be readily estimated for the district Sylhet if the meteorological data such as sun shine hour, day length, relative humidity, ambient temperature etc. are available.

Conclusion:

The applications of solar energy require information of the availability of solar energy for its optimum use. But the measured radiation data for a long period are not available all over Bangladesh. This study is carried out to determine empirically global, diffuse and direct solar radiations on a horizontal surface for the district Sylhet as well as to predict correlations for it. From the study it is clear that the solar radiation in Sylhet is quite high on an average throughout the year and is, therefore, suitable for efficient solar energy system implementation. The correlations proposed for Sylhet in this study can be used in future for estimation of solar radiations if the mateorological data are collected. A comparative study on the measured and the estimated values of different radiations for the same station can be done in future.

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