Gender Politics and the Uneasy Relation between Masculinity and Male Rape

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Abstract: The article attempts to understand the connection among masculinities, male rape, and gender politics in the context of Bangladesh. Based on a qualitative approach, the paper explores how the social perception of masculinity facilitates male domination in the society and allows men to be violent in particular social contexts. The image of men is established in the Bangladeshi society in such a way that defines them as 'dominant' or 'violent' and does not allow them to take a passive role. Male rape proves that the victim is vulnerable, dominated and unable to hold on to his socially defined gender position and roles; simply put, the victim's masculinity is significantly questioned. Therefore, the correlation between masculinity and male rape is found to be uneasy and contradictory. Moreover, the paper also argues that, like female survivors, male rape survivors also experience a change in their social realities, changed and reconfigured based on their ordeal; however, their way of coping with rape is different than female survivors.

Keywords: Masculinities, Male Rape, Gender Politics, Gender Violence

Introduction

Rape takes a place of central importance for those feminists actively involved in feminist movements and for those who seek to theoretically explain male dominance and female submission. Violence towards women, and rape, is a kind of criminal offence that can, because of its gendered nature, be identified as unique [even peculiar (Berger, 1977)]. It is equally important to remember, however, that across cultures rape is defined as man's aggression on woman. In many cultures, rape is crucially interrelated with sexuality and gender relations. Which is why we hear the common saying, *baap bhaier bisshash nai* (can't trust your father or brother), or this statement

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from an accused in a rape case: "At night I went into *rut* (*maal*), and I lost all sense, your honor." That the man has a *rut*, which carries social value, and that it is the responsibility of the woman to handle that *rut*, is something we as social human beings learn and accept – this is the reality of a male-dominant cultural practice. If such realities was constructed only based on existing gender relations and 'heterosexual biological determinism' and if it did not have relation with power practice then the rapists[2] would not rape a male child or a man[3].By established social expectations, the rapist and the victim are always arrayed in a dual gender role[4].In witness testimony for a case of anal

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[2] Under Bangladeshi law and medico legal evidence, only the men can be the rapist and the women can be the victim of physical sexual intercourse. Later, the judiciary considers the law and the medical knowledge to determine whether the sex was consensual or forced. On top of that, in the rape trial culture, the discussion of violence against women always involves the popular notion that the male biological urges are desperate. This saying may be indicative of this notion – 'man who shows anger is king, and woman who shows anger is a whore.' That a man will show uncontrolled emotion is a matter to be socially accepted – and that can include beating, torture, physical assault, even sexual assault. In case of verdict the precedence of the man's honor – somewhat like a caste system – is evident. In one verdict the honorable judge says, "The plaintiff (who used to work at the home of the accused as domestic help) is available, therefore her honor is low. She is easy virtue. So, this woman's accusation is not believable. The court has not found any concrete evidence to keep faith on this easy woman's accusations of rape." "The maid is easy" - is the basis on which a case is dismissed (Case reference: [30 BLD (AD) 2010]).Since in society the raping side can always impose this desperate physical desire/hunger/cause on the woman/victim in some or other way, and failing that can find reasons behind the allegation of assault to justify and validate the tale of women trying to entrap men with false accusations – the woman's odds of fulfilling the conditions of the rape myth through this entire process are a slim chance, and that too is a matter of negotiations among various agencies – which in the context of Bangladesh often becomes a part of male politics. (Suvra, 2013; 2016; 2017).

[3] Rahman, Aminur, 2014, "You slut! I will give you such a dose that will have action for ten months": Rethinking the Political Economy of Rape; honors level monograph, Jagannath University, Anthropology Department (unpublished). Fatama Sultana Suvra, was academically appointed as the supervising teacher for the monograph. In this research we wanted to understand male rape experiences. It was a case of a university student, who lived in a bachelor's mess with other male students. There he was raped several times by the other students and the incidents were recorded on mobile phone. Subsequently he was stigmatized as being "not man enough" and girly – and therefore the others had violated him – and forced to do all the housework at that mess. The video will be released online – these sort of threats of social humiliation to force one into negative and unfair work are the realities of male rape.

[4] This matter is like the story, "A Table is a Table." That we call the male genitalia a penis rather than a gourd or an apple is merely coincidental. A penis becomes a penis socially, but the process itself is biological. When a man is in heat, he loses all control, and gender relations do not matter. So, men, women, boy or girl, anyone lacking power can become the victim of his rape, even persons identifying as the third gender. If rape was seen in light of biological determinism, male rapists would only rape women, and men's rape would only be carried out by women. In reality, in the male-dominated society, especially in the middle class, the saying "can't trust your father or brother" - signifies an idea that not only a girl child, a boy child is also at risk; whether we admit it or not. The fact remains that assaults are more often

rape and attempted murder of an 11-year-old inside a jail, a man defends his nephew by saying: "He is young too! Only 20-22. At this age, the blood is warm, and he had nothing at hand. His body was out of control. He admitted his fault to us. He is very scared. The young one made a mistake, it is wrong to punish him so harshly for a moment's lapse. Young boys do this sort of fun among themselves at young age...this is a small matter!"[5] Grounded on this understanding, to counter the various forms of rape and gender-based assault in Bangladesh, the fact that gender relations here have a biological reality cannot be dismissed. To state more precisely, the acquisition of the power to rape is socially understood as a biological reality here; the process of acquisition is cultural, but the result is validated as biological/deterministic/ by default. For this reason, the *male body* can only be identified as that of a rapist, a man who is a "rapist" does not alter the social reality, rather society teaches that a man is like a *duck* who can swim in the water without getting wet. On the other hand, a woman's body is the subject of rigorous biological as well as social policing. The biological aspects of rape is historically taking shape in various forms in these post-capitalist times[6], and that gives

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than not inflicted by those known to victims. But to maintain an apparently "beautiful" interrelation of family, society, institution and all, devoid of aggression, all social humans - male and female - act as patriarchal agents to cover them up. When possible, they identify a fault/error of the victim that can provoke assault (when the aggressor can no longer be hidden), to undermine the social qualification to be a victim, they establish that the woman is creating a false story of assault; the woman is lying. By peddling the story of assault, the woman in society's eyes is in fact selling "sexuality," she is essentially a prostitute. This is the same reason why the current wave of #metoo movement in cyberspace, where women are recounting their past experiences of assault, are stories of various patriarchal agents becoming aggressors. But the powerful patriarchy accords the world dismiss and annul women's experiences of assault, history of facing sexual aggression. But the dominant patriarchy rejects women's history of being the victim of sexual assault. In context of this country, when a former student described her experience of sexual assault from the renowned Jahangirnagar University professor Selim Al Din, she was undermined socially (https://www.jagonews24.com/opinion/article/464083).

5. One of our authors Fatama Sultana Suvra conducted an ethnography in jail in 2014-15 while working with BLAST as a consultant on evidence law and witness security. Some of the information used in this paper is also a part of that research.

6. In common knowledge, based on Freud's psychoanalysis of libido, the inherent biological urge of humans is defined as sexuality. Sexuality speaks of the individual's characteristic sexual behavior. It plays a crucial role in the formation of social identity (Andermahr, 2000). Feminist writings identify erotic markers in personal and social life as sexuality. Eroticism is not a matter of the individual's wishes, needs, practices or personal construct, and sexuality is not just a person's moral practice. When, how and whether a biological urge will be utilized, what the chances of eroticism are, whether it is approved or forbidden, pleasurable or unpleasant – sexuality is thus formed by various social understandings and discourse (Jackson and Scot, 2000). In the social notion of sexuality, erotic act or arousal is not a static

assault or rape the form of a global celebration of barbarity (Suvra, 2008)[7]. The biological form becomes deterministic through social practice and relations, and the body becomes entrenched in its type through performance (Suvra, 2019).

Based on this reality, the social perception, media representation, and the feminist researchers' take on the issue of rape and gender violence in such a way that it simply focuses on women. Therefore, gender violence is often considered a "women's issue" (Javaid 2014; Katz 2013). But such generalization is likely to marginalize or draw less

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matter. Social sexuality dismisses universality and creates types differentiated by culture (Gagon and Parker, 1995). Feminists emphasize on the politics of sexuality beyond universal sexuality in their discussions. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the proscribed notion of women's sexuality devoid of pleasure was criticized (Brand, 1986). Sexuality is, like taboo, danger and fear, a domain of women's agency, pleasure and exploration. If women's sexual pleasure is emphasized, the repressive nature of the patriarchal structure is nullified, and if only assault is seen, the woman's choice, her sexual agency is dismissed (Vance, 1984). In this reality, the work of feminists determines that pornography and other physical discourses have been imbued with a male-dependent standard of sexuality - sexuality means a specific 'sex act,' and the only pleasurable sex act is heterosexual 'sexual intercourse' with men (Geer 1971, Hite 1988, Koedt 1974, Jeffreys 1985, Jackson & Scott 1996, Millet 1971, McIntosh 1993, Allen 1982, Gilman 1985, Marshall 1994, Porter & Hall 1995, Cranny-Francis 1995). In dominant discourse, women's sexuality is either pleasurable or unpleasant. There are no other ways to actualize sexuality beyond these two poles (McIntosh 1993, Fuss 1989). In this polar sense, sexuality in all its observations (homosexual, heterosexual, bi-, queer, trans etc.) remains confined to a specific act (Millett 1986, Kemp & Squires, 1997). This understanding of sexuality defines it as something physical, external, material and biological. The biological becomes one with social approval or taboo. In nonsexual social relationships, or the sphere that a woman considers asexual or where she does not want to practice her sexuality, in that social need and context the standard of sexual aggression is created, the woman suffers unpleasantness in the non-consensual act of sexuality. Again, woman's feelings of sexual experience, physical exploration, arousal, emotional touching, sensitivity, irrational emotions give her pleasure (Vance, 1984). Firstly, this caricature of pleasure and sensitivity is nothing but an expression of male liberal romanticism. The definition of sexual pleasure takes the shape of social approval and legitimacy in traditional thought (Wherein rape cannot happen with the husband, sex between man and wife is always natural, rapist is always an outsider, not someone close, the husband can never be a rapist, rape is not sex, it is something else, a woman will engage in pleasurable sex with her husband, the woman's sexual encounter with a rapist is only in a mishap, all sexual encounters apart from those with the husband have seeds of rape in them, with the chance of unpleasantness). Which means that woman's possibility of experiencing sexual pleasure is created in the specific domain in which she hopes to experience sexuality or is allowed to experience it. 'This standard of sexuality indicates that the social woman does not have the capability to experience sexual pleasure in mere physicality' (Dworkin 1981, Light 1984, Vance 1984, Sedgwick 1985). In post-capitalist social reality, sexual pleasure attains multifaceted visual aspects of pornographic nature. The issue merits its own investigation.

8. Suvra, Fatama Sultana, 2008 (December), *The concept and practice of purdah: The uniqueness of woman's experience in different spheres*, master's thesis for Jahangirnagar University Anthropology Department, Unpublished.

attention than necessary on the involvement of men as both perpetrators and victims (Graham 2006; Owen 1995).

The study of masculinity and man is considered as one of the current academic interests, but it has not yet been 'adequate' (Ghaill 1996; Javaid 2015). Although the early work on gender issues covered masculinity, that work mainly focused on women and femininity. Most of that work presented patriarchy as the only reason behind women's oppression, where masculinity was presented as a normal and unproblematic issue (Ghaill 1996). In 1960s and 70s, the women movement first attracted the attention to the fact that gender mattered (Loveday 2009). Feminist work during that time revealed that there was a significant connection between gender and power in the patriarchal society. Men were the head and only decision maker. Such society preferred women to be inhibited by feminine behavior, which helped men have socio-economic advantages (Walby 1990; Islam 2009; Pasley 2001; Loveday 2009). In the 1990s, the study of gender began to be incorporated into the study of feminism. As a new part of gender studies, masculinity studies raised some significant questions that resulted in an influence on further study of gender and masculinity (Bederman 2011).

As for male rape it was not considered a topic of study in the early stage of feminism (Javaid 2014). Although the issue of male rape also began to get attention as a social problem within the social sciences during 70s, it was still not adequate, and focus usually went on incarcerated populations (Graham 2006). Focusing on oral and anal penetration by a man against another man, some researches attempted to explain the reasons behind the occurrence of rape among men (Groth and Burgess 1980; Graham 2006). Moreover, the researches on male rape were mostly emanated from the United States of America (Javaid 2015).

In light of this reality, while the official line is that rape is judged by an objective law that is above social biases, all the social and cultural meanings of rape pervade every step of the judicial process. The social humans who with their application of the law, discharging of administrative duties and knowledge of medical science work at the various levels of examining rape in the police, court and judicial practices – are infused with the notions of social sexuality, and they confront the reality of rape with those notions in their mind, in most of the cases (Adler, Z., 1987; Suvra, 2008; 2009a; 2009b; 2011; 2013;

2016; 2019). So just as a list of what is acceptable as a woman's rape emerges socially, similarly there are no generalized standards for understanding the reality of rape of male children and men in Bangladesh's rape discourse, despite rape being a legal, judicial matter (Suvra, 2011; 2016; 2019).

In this context, a number of studies are being conducted on rape and gender violence against women in Bangladesh every year. Besides the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), many other sources[8] have data on such violence. In contrast, there is a lack of authentic data on male victims of rape or sexual violence and their correlation with masculinity. It is even difficult to find out a single study which took male experiences of rape into account. Moreover, male rape has not yet been defined by any institutional definition of rape.

With such background, the aim of the article is to build a way to understand male rape and its connection with masculinity and gender violence in the context of Bangladesh. It specifically tries to understand how the concept of masculinity and 'man' are perceived in the Bangladesh society, and how the society deals with the phenomenon of male rape as a form of gender violence. The political aim of this article is to investigate in what ways and various degrees the experience of assault takes shape for social humans with the "male" gender identity – what are the similarities in the form of the aggressor, among the victims and what is the political unity.

Procedure of the Study

The study was qualitative in nature. A purposive sampling method was followed to select 35 respondents for in-depth interviews from the following categories: common people, rape survivors and perpetrators (accused). Due to the social perception and a significant lack of reporting on male rape, it was difficult to reach many victims. Therefore, the numbers of male rape survivors were 7 while female survivors were 5. The numbers of the perpetrators (accused) were 8 and all were male. Among the perpetrators, one respondent had previously been raped, but later he himself was accused of committing rape. A total of 15 common people were also interviewed - 9 males and 6 females.

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8. http://en.banglatribune.com/others/news/49105/Rape-Children-are-the-Prime-Targets

Data were collected mainly through in-depth interviews of the respondents. The interviews were conducted in different places of Jessore (arbitrations, madrasas, villages etc.) and Dhaka (shelter homes, jail, Juvenile Correction Center, etc.). An open-ended checklist was followed to conduct the interviews. Ethical issues were also strictly considered during the interviews. Every interview was conducted upon taking either verbal or written consent of the respondent. It was done out of concern that the interviews might bring up different issues, some of which might make the respondents recall their traumatic experiences. Therefore, they were not directly asked any question that could potentially hurt them psychologically and emotionally.

It was also in consideration that constant interrogation in interviews could interrupt the spontaneity of the respondent. Therefore, the respondents were not guided by the sequence of the questions, rather, they were free to express their experiences and perceptions in their own way. Since the topic of the study was sensitive and highly confidential, respondents were free to choose their preferred place for the interview. They were neither forced nor requested to be present in the researchers' preferred place; rather, they were asked where they would feel more comfortable to share their experience. Each day, one interview was conducted. Data were not written in detail in front of the respondent; rather, they were coded, noted and stored using several methods, such as audio recording, short note taking, jotting etc. At the end of the day, every single interview was explored and transcribed in detail. No real name or direct information has been mentioned in this paper that can be used to trace the respondents; we have opted to use pseudonyms to articulate the relevant contexts and the experiences of the respondents.

As researchers we went to the "field" to know the reality. In this research, the field is a part of our passed days of life, our thoughts and minds. The field is not simply a geographic expanse, rather when we are conducting this researches being a social "female" and "male" gender identity, as mother of a male child, or as a professional researcher, then it is also an issue and technique of creating "otherness" of field relations as well (Suvra, 2009 A; 2009B; 2010). When the researcher's self is faced with various deterministic social statements and associated "othering" processes, often she/ he too "becomes busy trying to prove she/he is not against assault, 'not a

feminist'". The relationship between the researcher and the subject too, then falls under the scope of 'field' under this social process.

Under the political relation between the researcher and the subject, our work is of course 'observational', some of the incidents in the information is of course based in reality (Scheper-Hughes, 1992). But in a research process, the information is of course sorted and analyzed – and dependent upon the researcher's consideration and rejection at the particular moment. Therefore, as an anthropologist our understanding is always partial. Our research is observational but not observationist, the philosophical responsibility of 'search for truth and cause' is not the objective. We did not seek to establish any verifiable truth in this article. Rather we wanted to know, understand and widen the avenue for analyzing the topic matter. In this study the recollected events from the subjects have been rebuilt with our own memory, sorting and understanding – as information for the study. In recorded statements of women, due to the researcher's difference of position during the recording and while listening to them – the information becomes a construct of the researcher. There is no 'pure' information in research, only a continuous sorting and verification process (Peter, 1983). In line with the objective of the research, some selected incidents and small stories have been included and some excluded – based on which the oral accounts have been written as information. This remembered[9] writing is shaped by experience and rational in experiences. Sufficient reality is constructed through the mediums of experience, memory, speech and writing (Stanley, 1992; Moran- Ellis, 1996). As a researcher the truth constructed by my experience, memory, listening of records, sorting and verification and writing is only a form of reality and the truth (or no kind of truth).

When during this research, we were examining the case files of an eight-year-old boy child being treated at a shelter, and speaking to his parents, a worker at the shelter told us she would be able to handle her son being a rapist. "I will send him to jail. But if my son gets raped,

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[9.] Remembered meaning recollected from memory. The person giving the oral account was searching their memory to describe the many kinds of experiences and talking about various events. We did not listen to the record to create a full transcript. From the recorded subject's statements, the pieces that seemed important, seemed unique, we brought them in verbatim as case studies from oral accounts of middle class, feminist and Muslim woman/ man /mother of child/ married man or woman. While documenting, we have tried to recall the various expressions and behaviors of the subject; during this the feelings during the recording were constantly recalled. Even as we researchers listen to the recorded information and write from it in our own way, the information becomes remembered.

I will not be able to tolerate that. The children who come here, their organs are never repaired. This pain is unbearable. We are women, but mothers too. I keep thinking of my own son". Multidimensional assault experiences of male rape increasingly frighten us as researchers. As social humans we too perceive the urge to question the scopes of known and unknown, and even what rape is. It is not just that the research is influenced by the researcher, the research can influence the researcher's self as well. The researcher and the subject are connected by the same pattern (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Moran-Ellis 1996; Suvra, 2010). This study is not only woman-friendly; it is also written with political spirit against anti-feminist culture.

Masculinity as a Cultural Construction

Masculinity is a stereotypical construction of 'man,' which sets them apart from other gender types. Masculinity presents male identity with some behavioral characteristics. As the works of an anthropologist suggested, the formation of and perception about masculinity may manifest in many forms in different cultures (Tuncay 2006), where the historical background of a culture, geographical location, social class, ethnicity etc. are important factors. From such point of view, it is difficult to have any universal understanding of masculinity (Connel 1995, Tuncay 2006).

Although the study of man and masculinity was comparatively new in the field of anthropology (Gutman 1997), the discipline paid significant attention to the diversity of the concept of masculinity in different cultures. As a discipline, anthropology had great interest in 'other culture' from its origin. Anthropologists conducted ethnography in different parts of the world in the beginning of the 20th century. Anthropologists studied the social structure, household, kinship, rituals, power relation etc. to understand that 'primitive' societies. These studies brought a lot of rich information about gender relation within those societies, which also significantly contributed to feminism, psychoanalysis and sex role theories (Connel 1995).

The debate on 'Oedipus Complex' was also found in the famous work of Malinowski in Trobiand Island. Furthermore, Margaret Mead (1963) explored cultural diversity of the meaning of femininity and masculinity in her prominent work *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*. While the dominant psychoanalysis theory of Freud emphasized on the biological explanation of masculinity, Mead's

work identified the difference of temperament between men and women, and argued that every sex achieved the kind of temperament that their culture expects from them. For example, among the Arapesh people, both men and women displayed a personality that is feminine (passive and cooperative) in its sexual aspects. But among the Mundugamor community, both men and women displayed masculine personality (active and competitive). Unlike the Arapesh and the Mundugamor, the Tchambuli men and women showed different personalities that are different from the western societies. In this society, men were emotional and the women were active and mechanical. Questioning the existing concept of masculinity and femininity, this work of Margaret Mead identified the inappropriateness of biological explanation of gender behavior and identity.

The Second Wave of feminism made anthropology of gender more advanced, but most of the studies in this wave were being conducted by women focusing on the women's lives. Some of them paid attention to the cultural explanation of masculinity (Connel 1995). Anthropologists, in their ethnographies, explored the importance of culture and ideology in the construction of masculinity. Michael Herzfeld's *The Poetics of Manhood* (1985), for example, revealed how performance of masculinity took place in sheep-stealing contest in Cretan mountain villages. Evans-Pritchard's ethnography *The Nuer* (1940) spoke about the rituals of initiation through which boys became adult men. Herdt' ethnography *Guardians of the Flutes: Idioms of Masculinity (1982)* focused on the unequal distribution of labor and 'aggressive masculinity'. Herdt's account presented the cult of men and the initiation rituals which involved sustained sexual relationships between the boys and young adult men, in which penises were sucked and the semen devoured. Semen was considered to be the essence of masculinity that required to be transmitted to the next generation of men (Connel 1995).

However, as discussed above, the work of anthropologists brought to the table a set of narratives that goes against universal and generalized definition of masculinity; rather, ethnographies explored the multiple perceptions of masculinity in regards to the cultural relativism.

Masculinity, Gender, and Violence

Women body is considered in the male-dominated society like Bangladesh as a space for the practice of male power. For example, to humiliate a man, he may be beaten physically but to humiliate a woman, she may be raped or her *Orna* may be pulled (Suvra, 2008). It indicates that violence is gendered (Kannabiran, 1996). There is some particular violence which are constructed and specified for only the female identity in the male dominated society. Contextually patriarchal agent also learns how he has the 'right' to make sexual contact with a woman beyond her consent or dissent (Redford and Kelly 1996). Such a patriarchal perception exists among 82 percent men in rural Bangladesh where 79 percent urban men believe that such learning creates the possibility by provoking them to commit rape[10]. The sexual oppression against women get enabled environment through the patriarchal culture, the patriarchal structure and even the patriarchal knowledge-law system (Suvra 2007; 2019).

There is a significant perception on gender-based violence in Bangladesh context which connotes that 'male rape' is a kind of "system loss". The perception claims that if a bearer of male gender identity is a 'real man', he cannot be raped. Such an ideology remains strongly among the in-depth of society's law system, family and even exists among the rape-survivors.

The case of a 17-year old boy living in an adolescent rehabilitation center who was accused of a murder case, has been stopped. During interview session when his experience was discussed, he suddenly uttered, "it has been a system loss with me, and everyone expressed so". He kept stating "probably those who committed this with me having no earlier intention to target me for this job. Perhaps, they were drunk and did not get any woman nearby. I was sleeping on the bench at Kawran Bazar, behind the Wasa. They brought me from there by shutting my mouth. We have no home address, no certainty in our life! The Dhaka people do not even know where we left our shits…There were almost 7/8 persons. After fulfilling their thirst, one of them intended to kill me. This scared me and I was lying on the ground, found a piece of brick close to my hand and thrown it to him,

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10 *Why Do Some Men Use Violence against Women and How Can We Prevent It? Quantitative Findings from the UN Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific*, UN Study, 10 September 2013.

he died! Later, police had brought me here. This would not happen if they could manage a woman… everyone claims it as a system loss!"

Initially, on the basis of the oppression against multiple survivors and violence related realization, two conceptual challenges regarding 'male rape' has been identified by us. Firstly, while working with a sensitive topic like male rape, we felt lack of both social and academic words for expressing their realities properly which can be identified as a kind of silencing (this will be discussed later). Secondly, in the existing social structure where rape is defended as a practice of men's power over women's body? Where do male rape survivors find them in the definition of rape? More clearly, the gender roles of men and women are determined in our society and these roles also determine which abuse or oppression is expected/normal for which identity. When a man becomes raped, he neither remains a "perfect man" nor a "woman body"; he is raped not as a 'rapeable' but due to the 'lack of rapeability', he becomes 'rapeable imperfect man'.

Therefore, to understand rape as gender violence in this article, it was important to understand existing relations among masculinities, gender roles and the hierarchical order of genders in the particular context. Men are perceived as the dominant gender in Bangladeshi society and culture likely to practice power over other genders with the normative support from the society (Sarker, 2014). Besides, existing norms regarding the social position of men in a patriarchal society enables them to be 'advantaged', dominant and even violent to hold and prove masculinities (Carrigan et al., 1985). It is important to note that the relation between sexuality and gender needs to be explored before going to analyze rape and other forms of gender violence. We often hear that "there is no trust even upon father or brother" or an accused claiming in court hearing "I got provocation badly so I couldn't control me at that night, your honor" (Suvra, 2019). This argument has got social acceptance easily by considering it as 'normal' or even 'natural'. This is symptomatic of gender socialization (Omar, 2011) and patriarchal reality.

Being socialized and perceived with the traits like masculine men are independent, strong, tough, and even hegemonic (Javaid 2015); the heterosexual men find a specific identity and a certain way of gender performance in the hierarchical order of genders (Butler 1990) which allows them not to be victim. For example, to refer to the ideal male image in Bangladeshi culture, people often use the term *'Marda*

Manush' which carries a sense of hegemonic ideal or hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, the body of masculine man, a *Marda Manush* cannot be a victim body it can rather be a body of perpetrator. In the same time, in the social perception and process of victimization, one also requires to perform in a certain way as victim. Therefore, the perpetrators or rapists and the rape victims exist in a binary order (Suvra 2019). To make it clearer, males are widely called and understood as "beta" in Bangladesh society and culture (Bangla Academy 1990). The process of *'betagiri'* teaches the men that "men never cry". This is how the society determines how the socially expected men will act by following a certain way or a list of behaviors. In such context, a man is accepted as a rapist but if he is raped, the situation is likely to be something more than 'mockery', unbelievable, something beyond violence or the lack of physical control of the perpetrator may be the topic of discussion. A studied victim stated, "Till now no one believes that my uncle could do such a heinous job with me. I am now grown up; I do not speak about it even if I am eager to share my feelings...it is not a matter of sharing at all. If I died or likely something happened with me, only then possibly it will be an issue. Nobody will think of such men's issue until it comes in public with the bold letter of newspapers. Have you ever noticed any rapist got punished for raping any boy? At least one-year punishment?"

However, a man is considered as incomplete until he is a "social man", and he is not "social" enough until he has the traits of all those masculinities what society expects from him. Therefore, having lack of somatotonic features, one found himself in cerebrotonic social position like above experience. Moreover, such expected way of behavior from men, creates the concept of "real man" that is also important to understand the realities of 'male rape'. This concept required a man having all of above-mentioned masculine traits (Javaid, 2015). From the very beginning of life, like other children, a male child starts learning the specific role and way of playing, speaking, moving, etc. and all of which are specified based on his gender identity (Butler, 1990). This is a beginning which occurs in the family and keeps continuing through all the social and institutional spheres and practices of a human being. Since he starts understanding what would be his role, he also starts perceiving the difference with that of other gender categories, more specifically the difference

between masculine and feminine acts (in terms of practical and conceptual sense).

Feminist theories also presented the psychoanalysis of masculinities focusing on the existing patriarchal social structure. Lacan figured out the function of *symbolic order* in formation of femininity. She argued that children perceive existing *symbolic order* through the language. Therefore, the gender role and class role start being established in human mind; every people learn to speak in same style; and society can continue its system (Tong, 1989). Similarly, male children of our society are forced to speak more strongly and loudly that is considered as men's tone of voice while women's tone is supposed to be lower and softer. Helene Cixous presents the difference of masculinity and femininity through the binary oppositions: activity/passivity, culture/nature, sun/moon, day/night, speaking/writing, and high/low. Cixous pointed out that all these binary pairs referred to the male/female differentiations. First word of each pair represents male where second word symbolizes female (Tong 1989).

The post structuralist theories argued that the construction of masculinity and femininity is based on heterosexuality. Rejecting the naturalization of gender, Judith Butler argued that the difference between male-female and homosexuality-heterosexuality is a symbolic order which is socially constructed. She has collapsed the sex/gender difference to argue that there is no sex that is not always already gender. Claiming that there is no "natural body" that pre-exists its cultural inscription, she argued that all bodies are gendered from the beginning of their social existence (and there is no existence that is not social) (Salih, 2013).

To understand multiple forms of rape in Bangladeshi society, this social perception of 'body' also needs to be focused. It needs to be clearly noted that the ability and potentiality of committing rape is socially perceived as a biological and generalized reality in Bangladesh context. This is why it is socially acceptable when the body of rapist is a body of a man. It is rather socially taught that "men are like the duck, swimming on the water but not getting wet in the water". However, the biological and body related understanding of rape has been changed and reshaped over time (Suvra, 2019). The body of men becomes universal through social practices and gets completed in its type through performance.

In such a social perception, as indicated above, a man's body or a masculine body, a body of a *marda manush* cannot be a victim of rape. Rape of man, has not only questioned his gender performance but also made him subjected to dual crisis or repeated victimization. This happened due to the combination of male rape and negative attitudes toward homosexuality in the society. Due to such combination, it is believed that the male child or the man who has been raped or is vulnerable to rape really lost his acceptance as 'social men'. He lost the normality of his body. In this sense, he has even lost the body-purity. Multiple victims and survivors found their whole life reformed since they lost their social position after their victimization. Moreover, the same sex and male rape realities is important in this sense that society labels gay men or same sex attraction as 'abnormal', 'deviant' or 'effeminate' due to society's perception toward masculinity that cannot be made for same sex attraction; the concept of the masculine male is only reserved for heterosexual men, leaving gay men marginalized in societies (Connell, 2005).But in the context of Bangladesh, we argued that the 'male child rape' or 'male-rape' can neither be understood by biological determinism of severe sexual impulse of a homosexual man nor be explained as a "male victim of women's aggression"[11] and this is why there is no scope to explain male rape from a single aspect of male fantasy. Furthermore, the

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[11] In different pornographic contents, adolescent or young boys are seen to make sexual contact through incest. This is presented in both printed and online versions. While doing ethnography in jail, we discussed with Jailor on the psychology of those who were there as accused and for security of the jail. Jailor pointed at the availability of pornographic contents as a big reason for creating rape psychology among those who were accused of different cases of women and child repression. He noted that approximately 80 percent of data sharing by these prisoners on cell phone contains pornography. We have conducted interview with prisoners accused of women and child repression cases. We have conducted interview with prisoners accused of women and child repression cases. One of these respondents was accused of burning his brother's wife using combustible substances and the case was still under trial (Suvra 2016; 2019). He required psychological counselling in different times. The counselor was repeatedly mentioning that the accused person was severely addicted to drug and pornography. He was stating in his own words "I can realize that I feel problem if I couldn't watch those videos. I feel abnormal. My body gets cool after watching the videos. My family wants me to marry someone else but the woman I will get married to will not be my brother's wife (*bhabi*)…I have tried to make *Moni* (the victim) understand this thing that brother stays abroad; so, stay with me! If she allowed it, such incident would not occur. Initially, I did not force her at all". In this time of knowledge and power, people's eyes - our minds create such a "sexual image" which blurs the "pornographic fantasy" and simultaneously becomes the subject to those fantasies. These images further function as the *national sexual consciousness (Jatio Jowno Chetona)* and *sexual domination* for the *young generation*.

setting of power structure and its practices in the society also need to be explored in this regard. Gender as a system, structuralizes the domination and responsibilities where women's suppression is legitimized not the oppression of men (Dobash and Dobash, 1998). Men use violence to punish women when they fail to meet the physical, sexual and emotional demand of men and this is assumed as normal due to the gendered ideologies (Lundgren 1998). Men and women remained in a social position where violence is one of the medium to prove the 'manliness' or masculinity' (Hearn, 1998). Significantly, such explanation of masculinity has clearly identified the ('normal') relation between masculinity, gender hierarchy and violence. Masculinity is a way of practices developed on the basis of the social position of men in particular society (Edley and Wetherell, 1996). In other words, these are set of practices which are expected by the society from men. In existing 'patriarchal society of Bangladesh, the way of men's behavior has become dominant and hegemonic in nature, which can be defined as hegemonic masculinity. The current perception and understanding of gender and domination support this hegemonic ideal or hegemonic masculinity. This is changeable if patriarchy changes or values of race, class, and heterosexuality changes in any specific cultural context (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Masculinity, however, may not always be hegemonic, or hegemonic masculinity may not always be violent, but it is still a form of domination over weak and subordinate, which tends to be violent. For example, in Bangladesh where men are perceived to be dominant and hegemonic in (almost) all public and private spheres (Sultana 2011) and such domination is supported by most of the major religion (Sarkar 2014), it is a crisis for men if they fail to hold or prove their *'mordani'* (masculinity) in particular social context. Therefore, men often commit violence to prove their masculine nature and gender superiority. For example, it is common to see in rural Bangladesh that husbands severely beat wives just because of silly reasons like not being able to serve meal on right time or not being able to provide enough care for husband which is called *Shamir Khedmot* in local language, etc. The case of Rumana Manjur, the teacher of University of Dhaka, is one of the examples of such type of violence. In addition to that, we often notice different news of grievous violence against women in newspapers[12], which has a relationship between the

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12 https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/article/311719
https://www.kalerkantho.com/online/miscellaneous/2018/06/29/652294

similarities and dissimilarities of both urban and rural contexts. We cannot simply draw such a conclusion that there is single pattern of hegemonic masculinity or violent masculinity in boomed realities of gender violence of urban or rural context of Bangladesh, because hegemony in such context is not always definable or visible. In cases of different social status, educational qualifications, and socio-economic status, the types of rapes and rapists becomes a liquid boundary. It is questionable and contradictory to describe who will and will not be the rapist and the rape survivors.

In this Bangladesh context as patriarchal society, the relation among masculinity, gender and gender hierarchy is significant to understand rape, especially male rape as a gender based violence. This relation not only determines the experiences of rape to be counted but also those to be left marginalized or not focused. It is important to remember that in our society, the structure of gender relation determines how and which process a male rape survivor will deal with his experience and whether he will mention the sexual violence committed against him.

As one of the oppressed, as a victim 'self' of the sexual oppression, the man finds himself in a dilemma of not remaining a 'perfect man' and being 'other' through the society's process of constructing masculinities.

Dealing with Male Rape: Myths vs Social Realities for the Male Rape Victim

The difference of gender-based violence particularly rape from other type of oppression is that the judicial discourse wants a kind of 'trauma show' in the cases of rape (Burt, 1980; Du Mont et al., 2003; Bohner et al., 2009) and this 'trauma show' requires the reflection of all kind of generalized gender stereotypes, gender-based distribution of labor roles, and images to get justice in court as a social being (Suvra 2019). For example, we see the big stars, the dominant women and even the heroines wearing headdress while going into the courtrooms; these are the dresses that they usually do not wear. Or, maybe father drinks wine regularly, it is not considerable; but, if mother drinks for one day and it has a photography, it would be a big

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https://www.bd-pratidin.com/first-page/2018/05/21/331691?fbclid=IwAR2xMfyYkUwEwU8n

issue for not getting the custody of the child after divorce. Many instances of such realities are available in the case documents in Bangladesh. If the severe pain and the shame are not reflected in the body language or in emotion of the victim, it may not present adequate value in the court as per the myths of "real rape (Burt, 1980). It is important that these practices are continuing from the medieval era which symbolizes femininities and at the same time, the masculinities are also constructed. "How will be the real victim of rape" this specification repeatedly brings socially expected women's image in front (Smart, 1989; Marcus, 1992) |

The issue of rape is significantly centered on women's identity. Therefore, as mentioned earlier, male rape is marginalized or often denied in the discourse of gender violence (Javaid 2014) (It is not the matter of numbers, we are not also claiming that only men are being raped not women. We rather wanted to make it clear that the politics of rape and the power of rape psychology need to get more emphasized than focusing on the gender distribution in rape. Because, anybody with any gender identity could be under the tension of being a victim of rape in any form of relationship at any time).

In Bangladeshi society, all humans are expected to be either male or female in their cultural behavior. The social identity, responsibilities and all other factors regarding their existence in the society depend on the gender identity (Suvra, 2009). Therefore, being male or female is mandatory in this social context. It does not simply refer to the biological structure of male or female human body; rather; one is expected to prove it in his social practice, otherwise s/he will fall in an identity crisis. A case of this study presents such realities. Kabir (25) studied in a public university situated in Dhaka and lived in a residential hall of the university. Kabir spoke less and silence loving guy. He liked to avoid all those places where many people gather and make noise. Kabir had friendship with a few boys and girls. He was too timid, and poor-spirited to act and speak. He was naturally afraid to go out of his room at night. Kabir never protested if anybody threatened or assaulted him without his fault. He was so emotional that he could not control himself in emotional moments, for instance, he tended to cry while watching tragic scenes in movies. His friends used to mock and insult him calling "dude! Are you a half lady", "why do you act like a girl" "you are a *Hijra*"; "Dude! You are not a man" or "god wished you to be a girl but you have been a boy by

mistake", "why don't you act like a beta manush (man)!", "why don't you have anger like the other men? "Aren't you a male?", "Won't you be a real man?". Kabir's family is also frustrated for his "abnormal behavior". His parents often regretted that "you are a beta chele (son), you have to take our responsibility; don't you see your mates' behavior? They are growing a *purush* (man) and you are still a *baccha* (child); god knows what is in our fate!" In this case, Kabir is found lacking masculine traits, which caused so many crises for his social existence and identity. He has been treated as neither a male nor a female. This is why his friends mock him calling a "half lady"! As in western society, men are expected to attain particular norms and standards otherwise they would be labeled as homosexual or 'womanly' and this urge young men to have stereotypical forms of masculine behaviors as the procedure of impression management (Goffman, 1967). In Bangladesh society, similarly, men are also expected to have a particular type of behavior having the fear of being labeled as 'half lady'. From the social constructionist perspective, the masculinities are composed of a set of traits or gender ideals which are multiple and vary in different contexts such as a man is supposed to be able to control his emotion; he is independent and confident; tough, powerful, dominant, competitive, polite, intelligent and so on(Connel, 1995; Tong, 1989 and Javaid, 2015). This is part of socially constructed gender ideals. If men fail to achieve society' gender ideals, it can be harmful to their sense of self and identities as men (Javaid, 2015). These traits define and categorized the "man" and separated them from all other gender categories.

Since Kabir was found to be short by almost all of these traits, he was not able to meet what society demands from him; therefore, he found himself with a crisis of identity. The biological determinism which differentiates between male and female does not come alone to be considered in Kabir's case. If a man is defined only by his physical structure, Kabir is a male, but, since it does not happen in the case of Kabir, it is argued that the identity is not only a natural or biological matter but social perception and construction also played a significant role in this regard[13]. Therefore, the study found a difference between a physical "man" and a recognized/ acceptable "social man".

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13 Kabir in this case goes against his culturally ascribed gender roles. Although, Kabir's body structure is as like as other men but his way of behavior is different, for example, the way he was expected to be dominating, aggressive or manly while interacting with others and even

Significantly, failure to be a social man is the biggest pressure on men in society. A father of 8 years old child who is under treatment at OCC was speaking on child sexual abuse. He stated "We kept our child with him for a long time. He liked and adored him as relative. Look, we are civilized people, can neither stand on the road with a sharped weapon nor become able to attack the culprits. My kid can never be a normal human. He required a rectal surgery now. I could not realize such a miserable situation if I do not go through it. I never ever thought that I would be such failed father to ensure the safety of my own child. Would my son be a normal human? Will he forget everything?" When the 8 years old child got well by the treatment at OCC, the father was going home carrying the quiet son and repeatedly asking these questions to everyone?

In the context of Bangladesh where the dominant male image is normatively established and supported by the religious and other social values, male rape is almost undefined and unacceptable since it is a 'humiliation against men'[14]. It is humiliating not because it is only abusive, but because it is socially labeled with women. Therefore, the realities for the rape victims are different according to their gender identity. Society subjugated the rape survivors through the process of making them 'rapeable' which refers to the notion of sexual and bodily purity in the case of female survivors and for male survivor it indicated that he is not 'adequately man'. Rape creates such feeling of being 'rapeable' among the survivors who started discovering themselves in 'identity crisis'- the crisis of losing masculinities - the crisis of being displaced from the expected social position.

For example, the case of Mithun significantly revealed how society deals with male rape. Mithun was a university student and lived in a "bachelor flat"[15] situated in Mohammadpur, Dhaka. He lived there along with some other students. The flat had two rooms and there were a total of six residents sharing the rooms. One of the roommates named Milon rented the room from the owner and performed the role as a focal person of the "bachelor flat". All sort of liabilities and

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while sitting and eating; he is not following this and therefore he is not being recognized as the type of social man.

14 'Humiliation', as indicated here, has no universal meaning; rather, it is related with historical, social and gender position of the victim.

15 "Bachelor flat" refers to the apartment where single males live paying monthly rent and charges for their accommodation and food. The term is widely used in urban areas in Bangladesh.

communication with the owner was maintained by him. They were living in peace. But after some months, they got involved in a conflict among them and had been divided into two groups. Mithun was against Milon. Once, Milon sexually assaulted Mithun with the help of the others to take revenge. The perpetrators made a video clip of the rape scene of Mithun by Milon; then, started blackmailing him that they will share the video with the friends if he does not follow their commands. They threatened *"we are gonna share this video if you don't listen to us. Friends and your family will see that some people are fucking you and you are acting like a poof"*, *"You acted just like a whore"*, etc. It was a trap. The victim found himself in a deep crisis when he knew about the video record. His mental stress was increasing day by day. He could not sleep and take food normally. He tried his best and did all those activities to satisfy the perpetrators not to leak the clip. But at the same time, he found his normal life was being distorted gradually.

The case primarily raised a significant question that why is the male victim in haste to hide his experiences of sexual oppression just like a female victim? Why did he have fear, shame, trauma and mental pressure like a female victim where men are taught to speak loudly in bold tone in a male-dominated society? Not only in this specific case, but also in many other oral histories, we have found that if rape survivor is a man or a male child, the identity of the rapist is not clear enough; rather, he tries to punish the culprit on his own. One employee of victim support center mentioned "We find many survivor male children particularly from the background of lower income class, lower middle class or from the middle class. Among them, the 10/11 years old children ultimately do not want to speak out about the perpetrators due to the fear or some other reasons. Some days ago, from rail line in Narayanganj area, a home bound school child was kidnapped being trapped with food and later he was left after anal torture. The child was so shocked that he lost his speech. Although he came back home after getting treatment but does not exactly speak out whom he was scared of. A representative stated "Our trauma department has at least been able to make him sleep at night by giving adequate counseling". Rape is a legal issue; which has a relation with 'imposition of men's power' and 'patriarchal politics'. The law presents personality in the fabric of universality and forces to obey it as an unquestionable social institution. The legal discourse finds more scope to see rape in the structure of morality, purity,

honor, and chastity than considering it as violence against women, violence against women's body, and a crime against women (Suvra 2013; 2016). And therefore, if such crime happened with a woman, all the labeling goes to have different meaning regarding her sexual purity, chastity and other traits of femininity (Suvra, 2013). For example, a female maid was raped by her employer in 2010 but the case was rejected by the court based on the argument that "the woman is an 'easy virtue' with the lower social status that is why she cannot be trusted[16]. According to the rape myths, the women who have all those 'qualities' particularly the sexual and body purity may be raped[17]. Since this woman was 'an easy virtue', she was considered not to have the 'quality' to be raped. However, the male victims in the above-mentioned case were found aware of the existing gender division in the patriarchal ideology which always prefers to the superior position of them as men (Chaity, 2017).

Butler's theory of gender performativity is consistent with this finding. According to Butler, a person as a bearer of certain gender identity must play his/her gender role (Butler, 1990). The long term endeavor of patriarchy produced and reproduced itself over time and established many mythical masculine traits that a man is supposed to achieve and show. While the myths of 'real' men are forced to take on a masculine role and avoid behaviors linked to femininity, male rape victims may be judged to have failed as men for not fighting off their aggressor (Lees, 1997). Feminizing or gendering victimization is mostly seen through the use of derogatory labels ascribed to men who have not achieved expectations of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005) and men who have been the victim of a sexual attack undermine the dominant, social ideal of masculinity (sexually dominant, powerful, potent and in control) (Weiss 2010 in Javaid 2015). Hegemonic masculinity, coupled with heterosexuality, has been presented by feminist theory as the dominant norm in which society intrinsically expects 'real' men to want, initiate and pursue sex only with women (Connell, 2005). In a culture that emphasizes male superiority, power, and control, subordination or powerlessness are unacceptable (Lees, 1997 cited in Javaed 2015). Therefore, the victimization of male questions the social perception and the myth of maleness, which tends to create a crisis in society.

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16 Case reference: [30 BLD (AD) 2010]

17 Case reference: [25 BLD (AD) 2005]

Rape experience allows to able to make a bridge between the pains of the two different social binary categories-male and female gender identity. This is a kind of political similarity and dissimilarity. The similar trend is that male also wants to conceal their victimization as a female victim does. But the difference is the female victim hides her experience not to lose her socially defined and demanded chastity and sexual purity because her social position, relation, and even her identity will be questioned and reformed due to the loss; whereas, the male victim does the same job just because it is the question of his masculinity that may take away his socially given gender superiority or the dominant and 'normal' man image (Tong, 1989). Similarly, when people mock the male victims of the cases calling '*magi*' / ("Tui ekta maiya manush", it was just a matter of his lack of masculinity. In the entire process, the perpetrator stays in the position of a ruler, and also remains as the creator of ideology. When the victim is a woman, the perpetrator himself determines whether the victim is 'characterless' or not; if she is proved as a bad character, then it is a question that how could she be a repressible woman when she does not even have good character (Suvra, 2010; 2013; 2016; 2019). Similarly, the perpetrator reject rapeability of a man or a male child based on the power relation and knowledge politics. This rape is identified as unbelievable or (*Duniyate Keyamot Ashonno*"). Thus, the society does not have any space to remain for the experiences of rape of a male child and does not keep any scope to consider any form of male sexual oppression. The victim loses the words, becomes speechless and silenced. In context of rape, the entire system remains functional as an 'othering process' of patriarchal society.

Sexualizing Rape and the Politics of Silencing

In the misogynistic context of the male-dominated society, since trial and discussion about violence against women particularly the sensitive violence like rape is still going on, it is positive that women are not at all excluded as an agency group (Suvra, 2019). If we consider the 'women' category is oppressed as subordinate in the gender relation system, we believe that their activeness, such ability to raise the question is the most effective strength against gender-based violence. When we conduct the research on sensitive issues like rape, we have to face a common experience and a question regardless of the victim and survivor. Several guardians of survivors and victims asked if sexual abuse, male child rape/male rape/female child rape

or rape of women is a crime, why do we not get people beside us while demanding justice? Why the victims are excluded from society?

Wherever we seek the answer to this question in the women's experience of rape or men's or male child's experience, we found the root in the context of 1971. Besides considering rape as a violation of human rights and as political torture, for the first time, it comes up with the state permission of abortion to prevent unexpected pregnancy in the context of 2 lakh women raped in 71. Bangladesh is the only country where Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibar Rahman suggested to write his home address as the address of *'Birangana'*. National-level steps were also taken to rehabilitate and repatriate the rape survivor in the society (Brownmiller, 1975). Because of the women suppression during liberation war, the invisibility of her story, the collapse of women actors/leaders (Khatun, 2015) and moreover, the inability of recalling during victimization, there are no citizen benefits gained in "*Birangana*" quota at present times[18]. The root of such context is found when they are further called as "freedom fighter (*Muktijoddha*)" instead of "*Birangana*" in recent time and also found in the history of their rehabilitation (Suvra, 2018).

We were talking with one freedom fighter who worked in the intelligence department and was captured by Pakistani force in their torture cell. He is now suffering from anal cancer and Testicular cancer. Pak force took him to the torture cell and tortured him entering hot boiled eggs into the anus and beaten on his sexual organ by using rattan to make contact with his co-fighters. As he talked about his war-time memories, he was saying that "the Pakistanis left their descendants in the uterus of our women, likewise, as I could realize later, they also had an intention to destroy men's sexual ability along with killing them. They came up with the intention to destroy the *Bangalis*." When we asked that honourable person, "why do you not speak out about your abuse?" He replied, "When the society did not accept *Birangana*, the mothers, how could I be able to lead a normal life if I expressed all these stories! These are private talks; it should remain as private and secret!"

The real scenario of rape in Bangladesh is not published by newspapers due to such social trend of hiding in the history of sexual violence. Moreover, one in every four female children and one in

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18 https://opinion.bdnews24.com/bangla/archives/23128

every six male children are a victim of rape in Bangladesh[19]. A rapist who was punished for raping a class eight student was stating "my case was also published in a newspaper in that time. I learned dancing. Cultural minded family-both father and mother were job holders. Perhaps I stayed with my dance guru from 7/8 years of age. The teacher who taught me dance was well established in the municipal society. I often had joined the troupe with our boss/guru. I could not realize that he abused me sexually. I thought it happens like this. I started feeling abnormal while growing up; I went to do such a thing with others also. Everyone started to avoid me. I completed my college. After that I had raped several women by making false promise of marriage and other fabricated offers. This girl was my student. I taught her dance...I raped her... but when I came to realize that sexual education of my entire life was wrong, I have already been an accused of committing rape. Just after realization I confessed the whole thing to the court". After the verdict, the defendant's party appealed claiming that the accused person was not mentally stable. They also showed medical evidence supporting their claim. Several witnesses also gave a statement in the court that the class eight student having carnal knowledge knew about the teacher's mental instability and she willingly made the sexual contact to take sexual preference from him. She had possessed a bad character (*Choritto kharap chilo*). Later, the verdict of the case was not effective (Suvra 2016).

Patriarchal social values put the structural distinction between masculinity and femininity under its constant surveillance and facilitate men's superiority. Foucault's theory of governmentality can be helpful to understand this context. According to Foucault, if something is threatening for the society's existing power structure, it will be considered 'abnormal' (Bashu, 2002). Since male rape questions the normal conceptualization of 'rape', rape victim and even the rapist, it is often considered abnormal and a threat for the established image of men in the society. Moreover, the vulnerability of rape questions the manliness (*betagiri*) of the men. Therefore, if the man who is "rapeable" is not proved as "not a man" and as "other", the capable, brutal and dominant image of men could not be established and re-established in the society. It even questions the

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[19] http://www.banglatribune.com/others/news/476141/%E0%A6%AF%E0%A7%8C%E0%A

power that society has given to men to practice domination over women's body. It also gets interrupted as an agency.

However, rape, as violence, becomes sexualized[20] due to the existing gender orders. According to several informants, the experience of being rape brings the realization of a 'kind of vagina' for even a man survivor. Shimul (pseudonym), a respondent of this research, took shelter in jail in his adolescent age for the sake of security. He mentioned 'while the *bad job* was happening with me… they were repeatedly saying 'totally baby'. Whenever I get released, I come back to jail again and again; Jailor likes me. I cannot get in touch with people. It seems to me that I could never have any *Shongshar*, whenever I see a woman it makes me feel myself dirty. My parents cry and want me to marry someone but I escape…all suggest me to forget everything. They tell me "you too become the same…be a man!" If becoming a 'man' is this, I do never need to be such a man; Jail is a much better place to me….'

As we hold female and male gender identity, we two researchers are different in the existing gender category. But while writing the article, we found similarities in the realization of 'vagina'-the similarity in being abused regardless of both male and female survivors' experiences, which makes us politically sensitive in the question of violence to understand this similarity. In the traditional conceptualization of rape, the rapist is always a man and man can only be raped when the perpetrator is only women (we can see such instances in *Choti* stories or in different pornographic contents which we considered as an important way of developing patriarchal mindset in our society, it requires a further research). The male rape experiences including male child rape experience usually got rejected/muted, denied or invalided through such binary oppositions. Like the experience of female survivors, such experiences also get shaped and minimize their multiple reformations. Since a male rape proves the failure to hold adequate masculinities and 'normal' male image, it makes the male survivors feel them as a 'dominated other'. To avoid such othering, male survivors hide the

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20 'Sexualization of rape' indicated that the rape as a crime is different from many other crimes like murder, grievous hurt, abduction, etc. and the base of this difference is the existing gender order. In the cases of rape, the rapist image of men got determined by the society and this 'rapist' image becomes generalized due to such determination. As a result, the man who is 'rapeable' is not a 'real man'; it is such a binary opposition.

experiences and remain muted; and therefore, another victim, as a category, gets silent.

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