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**EXPLORING THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY HIJRA
INDIVIDUALS IN DHAKA, BANGLADESH**

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Abstract

Debangshu Das: Exploring the social and economic challenges experienced by hijra individuals in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

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Comparative social policy and welfare (COSOPO), Social Science Research.

This study explores the social and economic experiences of the hijra persons in Dhaka, Bangladesh. In general, Hijra are known as non-binary individuals and are recognized as third gender by the government of Bangladesh. This research aims to contribute a deeper understanding of the challenges, oppression, and other experiences that hijra face in maintaining their livelihood and what measures they see as necessary to improve their socioeconomic status.

In the data collection phase, one-to-one interviews were conducted with four third-gender respondents from the hijra community. The interviews were conducted based on some pre-organized questions. In addition, Thematic Analysis(TA) is applied to identify, interpret and analyze the contents. TA also categorizes the most appropriate themes and codes from the qualitative research data.

The findings reveal multifaceted experiences related to social, economic, cultural, and other factors that shape their livelihood. Though the results broadly show the challenges and oppression, there are currently some social and economic improvements visible in the Hijra individuals. Furthermore, a few community members have already started some businesses, and few got opportunities for formal employment with some extra technology skills (The Prothom alo, 2021). Such improvement shows that they are trying to leave informal activities like begging and sex trade. On a greater scale, such a move supports third-gender people's inclusion in mainstream society. Overall, their experiences and improvement status in all aspects of society have changed but still not satisfactory.

Keywords: Hijra, third gender, non-binary, socioeconomic experience, Bangladesh

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1. **Language correction and refinement:** Grammarly AI tools were used for sentence and grammar correction in my thesis, this tool helped me to fix any grammatical and punctuation errors. In addition, helped me to rephrase the sentences to improve clarity and fluency.

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1. Chat GPT and Google Gemini tools were especially used in the literature review process. It assisted me in understanding some academic papers' critical explanations. Overall, it helps improve clarity, and articulation in complex ideas of discussion and findings section as well.
2. Grammarly tool used to refine the content and sentence structure

I acknowledge that I am fully responsible for the entire content of my thesis, including the parts generated by AI, and accept accountability for any violations of ethical standards in publications.

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Glossary

Guruma – hijara community Leader

Guru - hijara community leader

Maigga – a derogatory term, slang

guru-chela – mentor disciple

Esho socheton hoi – let's raise consciousness

Socheton hijra jubo songho – consciousness hijra youth organisation

Bandhu Social Welfare Society - Friends Social Welfare Society

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1. Introduction

The third gender is commonly known as hijra in Bangladesh and some other South Asian countries; they have been living distinctly from the contemporary binary categories, both male and female. Though their cultural and historical roots are ancient, they retain systematic experiences of discrimination and marginalization. Despite the Bangladesh government legally recognizing hijra as the third gender in 2013 (Akter et al., 2024), their valuable lives remain in the challenges and struggle for fundamental rights as well as acceptance in society.

Hijra refers to persons identified as neither male nor female; however, at birth, they are usually assigned biologically as male despite feminine characteristics (khan et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2009). Their existence creates a dilemma to sexuality and gender norms of civilization, which are so steadfastly held, proceeding to the ostracism from one step to another step in many cases, keeping them marginalized economically. Reddy (2005) mentioned that they have had a massive role in ceremonies or rituals; however, nowadays, they are frequently connected with bias and suspicion. Such types of racket between the synchronic vulnerabilities and traditional acceptance express the specific community's critical and ever-moveable social placement.

Hijras face several challenges, all rooted in deeply intrinsic societal discrimination and functional inequality. According to Human Rights Watch (2018), most of the marginalization and discrimination are encountered in employment, education, housing, health, and other fundamental rights. Such leads to a variety of discrimination, physical violence, and verbal abuse, as well as abscission of their daily needs and resources. Many third-gender individuals think of themselves as socially and economically vulnerable and marginalized due to structural and systematic discrimination as well as a lack of skill recognition. Many believe that returning to traditional activities like begging, collecting money, and dancing in ceremonies or cultural programs can create stereotypical behaviours instead of aiding their economic progress.

1.1 Problem statement and significance

Despite the government of Bangladesh's recognition of the hijra community, a visible gap persists in understanding the complex tapestry of hijra social and economic experiences. The existing research pointed out the diverse aspects of marginalization and discrimination, which focused on limited access to education, poverty rates, scarcity of employment, limitation of health care support, and other social rights. More academic research needs to focus on third

gender socioeconomic experiences what challenges hijra's livelihood greatly and what types of initiative hijra would like to see as significant to improve their socioeconomic circumstances. This study addresses and analyses the social and economic experiences of hijra and what they see as essential to improving their socioeconomic status in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1.2 Aim of the study

This study explores the socioeconomic experience of hijra individuals in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to deepen the understanding of challenges, oppression to maintain their livelihood, and what they see as essential to improving their socioeconomic status. The significance of this study is to prioritize the socioeconomic experience, perspective, and voices of third-gender to shift towards creating stratified knowledge that could help to inform policy alteration, guiding non-binary people to more equitable and inclusive policies with prospective effect on their bread and butter through social integration. It is needed to ensure that their fundamental rights and dignity are quoted in the law and reflected in their everyday life. In this study, the pronouns 'she/he', 'his/her', 'they/them/their', and 'himself/herself' are used interchangeably to identify a hijra individual.

1.3 Chapter outline of study

The thesis maintains a conventional structure. Chapter One covers the introduction, problem statement, and research aim. Chapter two covers the literature review, which contains a brief history of global non-binary individuals, a discussion about the history of third gender (hijra), and the difficulties and discrimination they face based on existing literature. Chapter three provides a theoretical framework that covers intersectionality and assists in exploring social inequality in the vulnerable community. Chapter four covers the methodology, first, discussing research questions; second, research interviews and the data collection process; and then data of participants. Data has been described, and an analysis has been developed following ethical research guidelines. Chapter five explores findings from codes and themes based on interview data, and chapters six and seven cover the discussion and conclusion parts, respectively. In conclusion, research limitations and future research areas are also included.

2. Literature review

2.1. Brief history of non-binary identities

I want to discuss a brief history of scientific writing regarding non-binary genders. In modern times, non-binary Gender has the meaning of a new notion; its current form has been a popular topic since 2010. To realize its history and tradition, one should expand the definition and identify discourses and spaces where non-binary individuals' experiences have been scripted anonymously or by different names. The history of nonbinary Gender is being written based on existing scientific literature written by renowned gender scholars and activists.

Though non-binary Gender is not a new phenomenon, it emerged and gained popularity in early 2010. Feinberg (1996) illustrates the history of diversity in Gender in different traditions, from cross-dressing Joan of Arc to Native American societies with more than two acknowledged age groups and intersex deities in Greek and Roman mythology to individuals like Billy Tipton who lived in gender roles other than the sex assigned at birth. Research by Feinberg demonstrates the extensive history of non-binary Gender and, more significantly, the normalization of beyond two gender categories in non-binary gender regimes. The logical flow demonstrates the importance of organizations in shaping gender norms by the argument that the development of class societies and Christianity causes the current oppression of the non-binary Gender.

Research by Wilcins (2004) describes that the term "Transgender" was used to differentiate between binary trans persons who desire to transition (transsexuals) fully and those who cross the binary in other ways (Transgender). Further, Kate Bornstein (1994) discussed the term 'Gender Outlaw', which refers to individuals who challenge the rigid binary concept of Gender and believe that expression, identity, and sexual orientation are defined by biology where masculine women, feminine men, intersex people, cross-dressing individuals, and non-binary genders are also included.

Expressions and experiences of gender diversity have become crucial to academic discussion in the 21st century. A pioneering study by Girshick (2008), 'Transgender voices: beyond men and women,' regarding the diversity of gender expression and experience in the nonbinary community, especially transgender, included more than one hundred interviews of transgender,

transsexual, intersex, and queer individuals. The book explores the issues prevalent in nonbinary gender writing, particularly concerning genderqueer contributors. It highlights pronouns, social incomprehensibility, and the power these individuals derive from gender transgression, highlighting their enjoyment of inconsistent behaviour.

2.2 Hijra definition & history

2.2.1 Why the third-gender is called ‘Hijra’ in the context of Bangladesh

Before the legal recognition of third gender by the government of Bangladesh in 2013 (Akter et al., 2024), hijra, transgender, and other non-binary persons or communities were culturally known as hijra. Bangladesh's government officially recognized all non-binary persons and communities as 'third gender.' As a result, they can choose the 'third-gender' option in every government and non-governmental document as a non-binary individual along with binary categories (male and female).

While the Bangladesh government has officially recognized 'hijra' as the third gender, Bangladeshi society still uses the term 'Hijra' to identify persons or communities that are not in the gender binary category (Akter et al., 2024). Culturally, the Hijra term has gained popularity in Bangladesh compared to the term 'third-gender' by the government of Bangladesh.

2.2.2 Who are ‘Hijra’ and their history

The term Hijra denotes a part of a gender non-conforming group or individual who is not identified as binary gender classification. On the other hand, confident men who undergo castration and are thought to be sexually incapable are considered Hijra (Akter et al., 2024). With its origin, the term 'Hijra' has been translated into English as "Hermaphrodite" or "Eunuch. Hijra individuals commonly use pronouns like "neither men nor women" to describe themselves.

Although the Hijra is a historic identity, it has expanded and evolved to cover a range of gender-nonconforming individuals (intersex people, transvestites, eunuchs) who also identify as transgender or transsexual men (Shuvo, 2018). Nevertheless, the concept of third-gender identity

is heterogeneous even when we confine ourselves to a South Asian context. Examples from India show that gender categories are more fluid and context-specific (Dutta et al., 2023). A third-gender identity that resists sex categories has even been popularized with a specific name in North India: Kinnar (Dutta et al., 2023). Likewise, in Bangladesh, the formation of a Hijra identity - predominately individuals who are assigned male at birth and perceive themselves as women - emerges out of a dense weave that fabricates cultural practices with kinship ties through Guru-chela (mentor-mentee) relationships.

The identity of Hijras has its roots in Hinduism and developed throughout the Delhi Sultanate (1226–1526) and Mughal Empire (1526–1707) (Razdan, 2024). Today, many hijras reside in the community and are directed by gurus. In the early British period in the Indian subcontinent, hijras received protection and benefits (food, money, and land) from some Indian states by joining the hijra community. However, British legislation later removed these privileges, claiming that the land was not inherited through blood relations (Habib, 2013). The efforts of the British to criminalize these practices were unsuccessful due to societal tolerance and the limited income opportunities for Hijras.

In 1871, hijras were classified as dangerous outlaws under the Criminal Tribes Act, particularly those involved in kidnapping, castration, and cross-dressing for public performances (Chatterjee, 2022). The punishment for such activities was imprisonment and fines. In Bangladesh, in the post-British period, hijras earned their livelihood by blessing children and performing at weddings. They survived on the fringes of society as their traditional roles were not valued. During Pakistan's rule, the government provided allowances for hijras in their old age, which continued after Bangladesh gained independence but was later discontinued (Singh et al., 2020). Dutta et al. (2023) denote that the spread of medical science led to the denial of hijras' culture and gender identity, often seen as a sexual and mental disability by scholars and medical professionals.

2.3 The social and economic situation

Though legally recognized as the third gender in 2013, the people of Dhaka's Hijra community still struggle to survive against deep-seated societal stigmas and systemic discrimination. They take unique positions in a society shaped not just by their gender identity but also by how it intersects with several other social locations - class, caste, access to education, and geographic location.

2.3.1 Housing issue

The Hijra community, officially identified as a third gender in several countries within South Asia, experiences extensive discrimination and social disadvantage that greatly exacerbates its chances of securing safe, regular shelter homes. The literature review in this section examines and synthesizes contemporary writing on Hijra housing conditions, with a specific emphasis on Dhaka, Bangladesh.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), homelessness is a universal health and housing problem (WHO, 2018). The United Nations currently elaborates that the experience of homelessness is more than just sleeping in the streets or public places; it also includes living in unsafe or poor housing or sharing a living place unwillingly with others who have no place to go (United Nations, 2023; Poskin et al., 2024).

Hijra individuals are consistently shown to have homelessness and housing insecurity due to not having rent from landlords (Aziz & Azhar, 2019). Hijra in Dhaka are often forced to flee their families and communities, as demonstrated by Khan et al. (2020), where hijras face an absence of social integration, like access to housing. Hijra often live in dangerous spots, including parks and train stations, because they had to escape their households as children. This is reflective of the broader South Asian context, where Hijras are typically forced to live in slums or community spaces owing to familial rejection and housing market discrimination (Reddy, 2005). Many live in towns or train stations because they believe it is safer than living with their families, who usually subject them to suffering and maltreatment (Aziz & Azhar, 2019). According to Hossain (2017), the poverty, racism, and human rights violations rooted within their lives, along with the lack of acknowledgement of their own gender and sexual identities, create issues for Hijra day-to-day.

Furthermore, A further fundamental barrier pointed out in the literature is discrimination by landlords, which prevents Hijra from accessing rental accommodation. They face discrimination in the form of landlords and real estate agents refusing to rent them homes on account of their gender identity, consequently throwing these individuals even deeper into housing precariousness. This discrimination is based on a long-standing history of societal stigmatization and prejudice towards Hijra, called impurity or moral decay (Nanda, 1990). This is also compounded by the fact that there are no explicit legal protections against housing discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, which means Hijras have little to no avenues for relief.

2.3.2 Impoverishment and Economic Exclusion

In Bangladesh, the Hijra community depends for its livelihood primarily on informal economic activities or practices termed here as 'Badhai' and 'Hijragiri,' which involve solicitation of blessings or mugging travellers (Shuvo, 2018) and performance at social events. Nanda (1999) claims that these culturally valid but tradition-oriented roles further perpetuate an economy of poverty and disenfranchisement for Hijra. In addition, begging, both peer and in collective form, is an essential means of survival for Hijras, indicating poor accessibility to the formal economy (Al-Mamun et al., 2022).

This dependence on informal, frequently stigmatized methods of income generation demonstrated the structural disadvantages in employment access faced by Hijras. Some Hijras are skilled in tailoring or have done household work (as witnessed by experiences detailed later). Still, societal discrimination and stigma make it difficult for them to find steady income-generating professions that also grant respect. These precarious forms of traditional Hijra occupation elucidate the tensions between cultural norms, economic necessity, and social exclusion. Even if these practices help validate a sense of community and affirm identity, they also further disproportionate misconceptions about Hijras and limit them from socioeconomic clearance.

2.3.3 Discrimination against hijras for cultural involvements

South Asian countries have diverse cultural traditions, but communities like Hijra, for example, experience a lack of mainstream cultural inclusion. Al-Mamun et al. (2022) highlight a gap between celebrating or appreciating one's own cultural and lived experiences in other minority communities where, expanding on the absence of Hijras in several cultural moments like weddings, birthdays, and festivals. This exclusion, as a result of their non-binary gender identification, traps them in social isolation and confines the relevance of being an 'outsider' within their cultural identity landscape.

Although this cultural exclusion is only enhanced in the case of Hijras, it reflects similar experiences in many other marginalized communities like Kinnars throughout South Asia. The experiences of Dalits, religious minorities, and Indigenous communities suggest that systemic discrimination acts as a second layer to exclusion – one that affects culturally vulnerable populations. This suggests that the commodification of South Asian cultural heritage generally exists within a social hierarchy in which dominant groups can make culture into capital and marginalized communities remain on the fringe. Moreover, the prohibition of participation in cultural events further denies them rights to sociality and artistic expression, making their visibility less prominent and continuing to marginalize Hijras.

2.3.4 Healthcare disparities

In Bangladesh, a heteronormative society poses challenges to the health access of transgender and Hijra individuals. Both groups face discrimination and judgment within healthcare settings, reflecting society's limited recognition of non-binary gender identities (Alam & Marston, 2023). Health care stigmatizing causes many Hijras to avoid it, which makes them more vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and other health problems (Sifat, 2020). In addition, when hijras suffer from Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), they fear disclosing it to their physicians. Hijra has not only STIs but also limited access to the hospital due to their gender identity (khan et al., 2009). Al-Mamun et al. (2022) claim that sometimes hijras can afford to pay the doctor's fees from their daily collection. However, doctors and other authorities misbehave with hijras and express uninterest in serving them.

During the coronavirus pandemic in Bangladesh, the hijra community initially faced challenges with vaccination campaigns, lacking specific immunization measures. The inequitable healthcare

system was highlighted in national newspapers, with many hijra individuals avoiding registration for immunization due to prior negative experiences with the healthcare system (Jahin, 2021). Jahan (2021b) asserts that even those who registered encountered immunization challenges and delays resulting from their gender identities not being updated in the national identity card database, despite the official recognition of hijra individuals as a "third gender" in 2013.

According to a 2019 survey conducted by Bandhu Social Welfare Society, the Daily Star (2021) records that the study revealed alarming challenges faced by third-gender individuals seeking health services in Bangladesh. 90% reported experiencing mental and sexual harassment during their visits, with 88 % stating that their sexual and reproductive health needs were often neglected. Furthermore, 82 per cent mentioned being denied access to women's wards in hospitals, as their presence made women uncomfortable. On the other hand, in men's wards, they encountered sexual harassment. 73% expressed a lack of access to public health services (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Despite the provision of reproductive healthcare services at 128 drop-in centres managed by the National AIDS/STI Programme, data indicated that only 39.8 per cent of third-gender individuals were covered by the program's various services.

2.3.5 Elimination from the family & social facilities

Although the family is a primary institution where one finds support and security, it can also be an incendiary place of rejection for the Hijra people in Bangladesh. The familial ostracism inherent in virulent transphobia that condemns non-binary gender identity sets them up for a spiral of marginalization, which infiltrates their spheres with obstacles such as far-reaching education, housing, and even simple dignity.

Current literature highlights the vulnerability of Hijras to familial rejection at an early age (Al-Mamun et al., 2022). Non-conformity to traditional gender norms and behaviours results in expulsion and discrimination by the family (Chakrapani, 2010). This takes various forms, from verbal and physical violence to being thrown out of the family home; families may also put social pressure on Hijras through threats or a desire for their reputation not to be tarnished (Chowdhury, 2020).

Familial rejection is not only emotionally devastating but also impedes access to education and society. Hijra students are frequently bullied in schools, face high levels of ostracism, and, as a

result, often do not continue beyond elementary-level education (Aziz & Azhar, 2020). In addition, they may show 'feminine gestures' of "gender expression," which can be considered to hinder the learning and development/readiness of academic skills.

This alienation and rejection in both homes, as well as education, is trickled down to the larger society when they find it hard to fit into social customs, leading Hijras to suffer discrimination, marginalization and exploitation throughout their lives. Chowdhury (2020) focuses on Hijras's susceptibility to harassment and degradation by others and within their own living spaces. Denial of human living rights as shelter adds to their continued marginalization (Josim, 2012).

To be more specific, the existing literature on hijra in Dhaka convincingly demonstrates that various elements (gender, class, caste, religion) work together for social exclusion. Studies have highlighted Hijra's difficulties acquiring housing, education, employment, and healthcare. Moreover, evidence from the literature review suggests significant gaps in our knowledge, including a limited understanding of how discrimination experienced by hijras influences their vulnerability over the long term, what strategies are used to cope with this form of vulnerability, and whether existing policies have been beneficial. We sought to fill these gaps by exploring the socioeconomic experiences of hijra and what they see as essential to improving their socioeconomic status, centering them (voices) on informing more inclusive.

3. Theory

3.1 Intersectionality: Understanding the oppression and privileges

The 'Intersectionality' theory can guide us to analyze how non-binary communities or individuals focus on the interconnectedness of the various classifications such as race, gender, and class. When these identities intersect, we can realize a deep understanding of non-binary people's oppression. *Intersectionality* is the critical framework that helps to investigate or study the overlapping privileges and discriminations. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw established the term 'Intersectionality,' and she/he mentioned that the interlocking systems of power affect those who are vulnerable and marginalized groups or communities in society (Cooper, 2015).

In addition, Intersectionality, an analytical concept introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) much later than feminism, is a new departure in understanding gender. Although long-standing feminist theories may have been guilty of conceptualizing gender in foundational ways (i.e., man/woman; male/female) and also framing it as the primary oppression construction for women, Intersectionality challenges us to see that multiple interlocking social categories exist at once affecting how black women or any other group perceives themselves. According to the intersectionality theory, gender is not genetically different from other social categories, such as race, class, caste, religion, and sexuality, that shape systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991).

While Hijras as a community are discriminated against due to their gender identity in general, the experience of an individual of higher or lower economic class would be very different since poverty reduces access to education, employment, and healthcare. Also, a Hijra belonging to an oppressed caste, such as a Dalit or religious minority, may experience another form of violence purification, highlighting how one kind of oppression connects with the other.

Furthermore, Hijras struggle to define their place in a society where gender identity and expression remain significantly limited by strictly enforced norms. Failure to conform has resulted in discrimination, seclusion, and hatred. Intersectionality reveals that these problems can get worse when it comes to gender identity intersecting with other social categorizations such as class and caste. For instance, a Hijra from an economically less privileged background will have to overcome many more hurdles in terms of not just acceptance but also social mobility that are the result of combined manifestations that extend over transphobia and classism.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Question

In the previous chapter, literature reviews illustrated more about nonbinary history, hijra identity, health and economic disparities and other accessing difficulties as a human being.

As literature reviews have shown, housing, education, employment, healthcare, and other areas have posed many challenges for Hijras. Research question one explores what the hijra's social and

economic experiences challenge to maintain their livelihood, and research question two covers what measures the hijra see as significant in improving their social and financial situation.

RQ 1: What are Hijra's socioeconomic challenges in maintaining livelihood?

RQ 2: What kind of measures would hijras see as necessary to improve their socioeconomic status?

4.2. Research Interview & Process of Data Collection

Interviews were conducted to collect the data for this thesis. The interview approach is employed to get insights into respondents' experiences with their societal, economic, and cultural difficulties. The distinction is significant, as although interviews are one of the few methods for acquiring knowledge about people's experiences, the information obtained during an interview does not represent the experience. Contemporary interview methodologies emphasize that participants should not be regarded as just repositories of knowledge that the researcher can access through questioning. Rather, the knowledge acquired during an interview results from a collaborative process between the respondent and the interviewer within the interview setting (Hyvärinen, 2017).

Qualitative research encompasses various methodologies to examine phenomena within authentic, real-world contexts. The narrative process systematically gathers data from individuals or groups, comprehensively understanding the phenomena under investigation (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). Moser and Korstjens (2018) sum up three data collection methods: respondent observation is a path of data collection which involves observing an individual or group; another data collection technique is interviews where respondents are asked questions in person, over the phone or online platforms by the interviewer. Lastly, a focus group assists in gathering data with a small group of persons to discuss based on a specific topic.

ESHOI: The full form is 'echo socheton hoi', which is in English 'let's raise your consciousness'. This is a non-profit organisation in Bangladesh.

There are several ways to conduct semi-structured interviews, such as in-person, video, or phone interviews. According to Adeoye-Olatunde and Olenik (2021), in-person interviews are the most preferable for semi-structured interviews. However, I conducted interviews via WhatsApp audio call due to travelling issues from Finland to Bangladesh. Each interview duration is not exactly the exact time because of the respondents' responses. Overall, each interview lasts from 30 minutes to 1 hour. I recorded conversations using mobile phones separately. I have contacted a non-profit organization 'Eshoi.org', which has worked with the Hijra community for the last 8 years.

That organisation contacted Hijra Guruma and asked permission to connect with me. They helped me to arrange interviews. My study area is Rayer Bazar, Dhaka. Interviews were conducted in the Bengali Language, and then I transcribed only their answers in the Bengali language. After that, I translated important responses into English for analysis purposes.

After data collection, verbatim transcription was done to transcribe the interview data from Bengali to English. I transcribed audio records into the Bengali language without software and manually created codes according to the themes. In the beginning, 24 codes were used in the data to create relevant themes, and some similar codes were merged with others. So, in the end, a total of 15 codes were in the data.

Initially, the plan was to interview six people, including two hijras Guruma. Finally, I was able to conduct a total of four interviews (3 hijras and one hijra Guruma) because two persons did not continue the conversation. The respondent's age is between 20 to early 40. All participants live in a hijra community where almost 50 hijras live together under the supervision of Guruma. They came to the capital city of Bangladesh from the rural areas to maintain their livelihood. Some of them completed primary education. However, some had no opportunity to go to school.

The below table includes information on respondents' pseudonyms, ages and gender identities.

Table 1: Respondents details

Pseudonym	Age	Gender identity
Jui	Mid 20's	Hijra
Nila	Early 30's	Hijra
Rima	Mid 30's	Hijra
Robi (Guruma)	Early 40's	Hijra

Finally, four individual hijras were selected for the interviews. Before the interview, a questionnaire was prepared with the recommendation of the thesis supervisor. Through the interview, researchers asked questions gently to learn more about the various topics. During the interview, the hijra community leader (Guruma) added some significant information apart from the question. In some cases, they discussed some things that were unnecessary and irrelevant to the research questions. Based on that, I am not considering unrelated discussions while translating.

Interviews are carried out with hijras and their leader (Guruma) to ensure that the obtained data is sufficiently enriched to provide ample information to address the primary purpose of this study. As a non-government organization, 'Eshoi.org' has provided medical treatments and other daily life facilities to the hijra community.

4.3 Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis (TA) is followed in this thesis for data interpretation and Analysis. Thematic Analysis is used to identify, interpret, and analyze the contents. To evaluate and analyze the data, TA is used to categorize the most relevant themes. TA assists in creating themes and codes from the qualitative research data. Codes are the little units that grab valuable data features to make strong bonds with research questions (Clarke et al.; V., 2017).

TA can be applied to examine both large and small data sets. It is helpful in various research scenarios, ranging from case studies with only 1 or 2 respondents (Cedervall & Åberg, 2010) to extensive interview studies with more than 60 respondents (Mooney-Somers et al., 2008). Additionally, TA can be applied to investigate both homogenous and diverse groups. Almost all data types can be examined, ranging from commonly used qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups to newer approaches such as qualitative surveys and narrative completion (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

For this study, all the respondent's responses are transcribed as 'verbatim transcription' to consist of the overall expression and in-depth understanding of responses. Since there is only limited data from four participants, I have organized and sorted data manually based on themes and codes. To further enhance the reader's experience, many direct and brief quotes are included in this study (Braun & Clarke, 2008).

4.4 Limitations

During the data collection, many challenges arose. Since Bangladesh is the study area, meeting with specific research participants and visiting Bangladesh was problematic for several reasons, such as financial cost and time management. As a result, I had to collect data from Tampere, Finland. Further, there were data challenges for the respondents, such as we could not afford internet costs to go on video calls, so we conducted audio interviews instead. Sourcing respondents is tricky — this ended up with only four respondents, as the interview was conducted online via WhatsApp audio call, not face-to-face. The main challenge was scheduling time with the targeted respondents, as they all had their activities and lives, making coordinating suitable times challenging.

4.5 Research ethics

Research ethics is essential for any research. When any research involves human interaction, especially with the vulnerable community, fundamental ethics need to be maintained to treat those marginalized people in conformity with their core humanity's ideals and values (Oliver, 2010).

As the nonbinary community is a vulnerable group and can be considered a marginalized community, interviews covered with Hijra are about their personal experiences and more sensitive issues in their personal life. Considering research ethics thoroughly during the discussion with respondents, analysis and interviews, as well as needing to think about what to include in the final research, is significant.

During the interviews, all the participants are informed regarding the research objectives and aim of the study before starting the interview. I ensure no one knows their name and personal identity, which will be confidential. So, their authentic name and sensitive things will be anonymized to maintain the ethical guidelines. I also promised that these interviews would be conducted only for the completion of my master's degree at Tampere University; after that, I will delete every recording resource.

To improve the quality of writing, this study utilized an AI-based language editing tool called Grammarly (Fitria, 2021). Grammarly helped me out so much during the writing and revision stages, pooling my grammar issues, which I had missed while editing, and making sure that everything was readable. Likewise, AI tools ChatGPT and Gemini were used in my thesis to understand properly some critical terms and generate ideas to clarify concepts.

In the drafting process, I went through each section of my thesis in great detail using Grammarly to help identify rudimentary grammatical errors and proofreading mistakes. Also, the structural advice of this tool was taken into consideration to make sure my writing flowed better and was more structured. A final thorough audit was performed to clean up any stray typographical or punctuation errors, further perfecting the quality of the research. Finally, Grammarly exhibited utility in improving the clarity, precision and readability of the thesis, translating into the better organized, professional final output (Fitria, 2021).

5 Findings

Table two shows the codes and themes which are manually created based on interview data. The data are organized and categorized into fifteen codes and three themes.

Table 2 :

Codes	Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social identity factor (gender, caste, religion, class, etc) ● Self-identification ● Family rejection or acceptance ● Joining the Hijra community ● Access to school ● Accessing social rights, employment, etc. 	<p>Experiences of not being accepted and becoming abandoned by families.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily/weekly activity ● Ways of income ● The support system of the community ● Relationships inside and outside of the community ● Techniques of social interaction ● Access to voting 	<p>Realities of maintaining livelihood and overall situation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changes in society and personal life ● Future dream or goal ● Hijra's role in improving community 	<p>Recent improvements & circumstances and future dream</p>

5.1 Experiences of not being accepted and becoming abandoned by families

In the 'experiences of not being accepted and becoming abandoned by families' theme, the respondents described their experiences about not being accepted and abandoned by families. Findings show the reasons for family rejection and how third-gender individuals encounter issues in families and societies. In addition, how and when do they join the hijra community after getting rejected by their family?

5.1.1 Early life experience of hijra

To respond about the early stage of life, robi stated that,

'From six or seven years old, I could always play and gossip with girls, and I used to do feminine activities rather than masculine. I was not interested in playing with boys. My mother moved with me from one place to another, and I tried to find girls in new places so that I could talk and play with them. When they were around eleven or twelve, I found they were getting married except me.'

In childhood, the respondent preferred to spend most of the time with girls by playing, gossiping and other activities than boys. As the participant mentioned, the disinterest in playing with boys also shows their desire for the feminine rather than the masculine perspective.

Though it is not clearly stated, it is easily understandable that the participant's mother has changed living places rapidly to stifle the appearance and expression of gender identity, which did not conform. Such kinds of behaviour mirror social discrimination and stigma in contrast to third-gender in Bangladesh, where they are very often ostracized from their families, and they do not have any contact with mainstream society.

Although social factors are trying to prevent the participant from shaping deeper relationships with females when moving from one place to another, they continued searching for new places where the respondent could adjust perfectly. Such circumstances can echo the theory of navigation capital (Yosso, 2005), which states that vulnerable people are adorned with strategies and skills to survive in a hostile atmosphere. Then, the participant would remain capable and driven to seek social aid, trying to know how many girls are in the new locations.

Undoubtedly, the participant's identity shaping was likely triggered by seeing his/her friends get married. Early marriage improvement declined mainly in Bangladesh and South or Southeast Asia (Streatfield et al., 2015; Mensch et al., 2005). In Bangladesh, the majority of girls want to get married late, but the 'social norm' restricts the scope of delay; the cultural obligation of premature marriage still influences the overall marriage position (Streatfield et al., 2015; Amin & Huq, 2008, p.17). The respondent's experience would possibly enlighten the social marginalization that the third-gender group encounters, especially the formation of family and marriage-related activities. Furthermore, this might be not easy to associate as third-gender, a marginalized group that provides different routes to affirm identity and belonging.

Below, the respondent illustrated their childhood experience. According to Jui:

'From my childhood, I used to walk, talk, and wear dresses with a feminine attitude; my neighbour and schoolmate bullied me. Even my mother was bullied by the neighbourhood because of me.'

During childhood, the respondent enjoyed feminine activities and behaviour in their stride, such as wearing apparel and talking. Such things happen in early childhood before the beginning of puberty. Although they are recognized as masculine at birth, the children acknowledge their gender identity. However, their infringement of conventional social norms, which is related to gender, is recognized with the harassment and bullying from surroundings and schoolmates that third genders appear to encounter all over Bangladesh.

From the perspective of intersectionality, this discrimination can be elaborated by addressing other social elements, such as familial relationships and age, in togetherness with gender identity. During childhood, third-gender individuals were subjected to different forms of ostracisation and harassment by society's people as norm breakers. Furthermore, the bullying of the respondent's mother indicates discrimination and stigma in contrast to families of third-gender people, which frequently results both in social disconnectedness and economic rigorousness.

Nila mentioned his/her identity, early life experience, and oppression from the family.

'I am neither male nor female. I'm a hijra person. In our native village, parents have sufficient respect and goodwill. No one respected me, and as a result, I

realized that because of my identity, my family members encountered trouble in the village; I left school in class three because of bullying and harassment issues by my schoolmates. I left my home and village when I was twelve years old.'

The participant identified himself/herself as hijra, which signifies an evident rejection of the conventional gender binary system and acceptance of third gender identity. It is visible nowadays that they have started to declare their gender identity publicly, and society also welcomes it with animosity and cold hostility. The respondent also illustrates that parents used to have sufficient goodwill and respect in the village. However, because of the presence of a third gender in the family, parents encountered stigmatization.

This stigma is profoundly rooted in religious and cultural grounds which permit heteronormativity and trust in two genders, which can lead to numerous third-gender people onto social marginalization. From the respondent's statement, it is explicit that, despite high social status in the family, the family is ostracized due to the presence of the third-gender individual. Such case level portrays gender identity related to intersectional experiences accumulation with the social hierarchy and family to engender specific marginalization and alienation.

In the early stages of life, the respondent decided to leave school, which indicates evidence of exclusion and discrimination against the third gender. According to Toomey et al. (2018), education systems indicate broader societal prejudice and can treat individuals who do not adhere to contemporary gender norms in humiliating, discriminatory and ostracizing manners. These harmful effects can perpetuate and affect a kid's learning achievement, well-being and employability in the following periods.

The ultimate departure of the participant from his/her family and community at twelve years old illustrates his/her resilience to form a new environment. Their self-preservation reveals that they realize their identity does not need to be disgraced, but they deserve respect and recognition due to fundamental things. The respondent elaborated on how other family members had faced issues in traditional society due to my gender nonconformity.

Respondent nila stated that he/she encountered significant barriers in accessing education due to her gender identity and social marginalization.

'I have studied till grade three. I dreamed of learning more; however, I had to leave my school for some reason, such as neighbouring oppression, teachers, and students' inappropriate comments. Many people, even my schoolmate, called me half lady, maigga, and hijra, which disappointed me.'

The respondent's forced exit from the school demonstrates the bad manners of the teachers, students, and neighbours; some irrelevant comments come from schoolmates, such as 'maigga', 'half lady', and 'hijra', which express intrinsic discrimination and harassment. The gender rules and presentation of social norms abet its discrimination. It is a very critical situation when some particular disparaging words like 'maigga', which is a slur in the Bengali language that is often used to insult third-gender individuals, evidencing the intersectional process of their experience and mentioning further the society culture bind specific shape of discrimination.

The participant intends to study more, which suggests that individuals should not stop their education or allow social obstacles to halt them. Yosso (2005) said that navigational capital refers to the abilities or practices that are used outwardly to mitigate oppressive structures. However, the reality was that they had to leave school due to excessive discrimination, which also illustrates the systematic barrier encountered by third-gender individuals in accessing the fundamental needs of education for everyone.

The respondents from the unprivileged groups or families could have encountered significant economic obstacles or prohibited familial and social assistance to the public to create a more exceptional educational space for everyone. In addition, someone from a minor caste or religion could complex the circle of exclusion.

The story is narrated in the understanding of one participant, which exists in more comprehensive discussion regarding non-binary individuals and transgender and the reported rates of severe patterns of harassment, bullying and discrimination (Toomey et al., 2018). Such incidents often may create worse academic results like low test scores, low examination grades, high absence rates from school or make a strong volt to stop you from various scopes. The intersectionality approach shows how their social and gender identities add to marginalization and educational obstacles. Handling these multiple problems means going beyond the evacuation

of gender-related discrimination onto a more specific approach to experiencing and reconfiguring within functions with more intersecting power imbalances which marginalize third-gender individuals.

This is a general instance of a situation where the participants are encountering troubles in surviving the way they live due to intriguing social discrimination and obstacles in the third-gender community in Dhaka, Bangladesh. These multi-level challenge meetings are not only for gender-related discrimination but also for universal interventions along with systematic oppression that disfavour third-gender communities. It helps to make a non-discriminative environment for school, busting the obstacles of arrogance and expanding excellent assistance for non-binary students to develop education.

5.1.2 Hijra got rejection from family and joining to Hijra community

Robi tried to elaborate on the oppression faced by their father.

'When my father identified that I'm neither male nor female, he oppressed me and my mother; after that, he told us to leave the house. My mother left the house and went to my uncle's house.'

The respondent stated, 'When my father understood that I was neither boy nor girl, he tortured and ostracized me and my mother from the family', which indicates gender non-conformity is an undiminished taboo in the society of Bangladesh. Such kinds of stains, which are formed from the heteronormative notion and patriarchal values, as consequences of sexual assault, verbal abuse and retribution characters against anyone who dares to query perceived gender roles.

In such cases, it is visible that the respondent had to leave the house, and we find examples of familial politics in oppressed groups. Although many families do not acknowledge their third-gender children, some of them try to assist them at the cost of being ostracized by society. Generally, this illustrates how all the families are distinct within themselves, and all of these powerful connection dynamics should not deter people from the agency they exert in replying to such rigorousness.

The respondent's mother left the house with her child. Her/his mother went to the brother's house to survive, which signifies that her own family became a critical place to live for third-gender individuals in Bangladeshi society. Weston (1991) stated on 'chosen families' that the life of LGBTQ+ individuals became critical in many cases who have been separated from their biological families.

Rima demonstrated how she/he became valueless and barrier for family,

"I used to hear my brothers and sisters being bothered outside because of my presence in the family; no one married my sister. My brother behaved rudely. Even my father never loved me and asked me to leave my family. My mother had no option to do anything for me."

Such a comment from a participant realizes the shameful thing felt by other family members because of having third-gender individuals in families. According to traditional gender norms and heteronormative rules, such stigma and discrimination isolate their family and gender non-conformity individuals being forced to live distinctly or worse. Furthermore, the brothers and sisters of the participants were subject to critical issues and harassment when seeking partners because other people thought it disgraceful that someone had identified as a third-gender individual in their family.

The respondent's father demanded to leave the family, and his/her mother shows himself/herself as powerless to insist on less control over third-gender individuals within the contemporary family structure. The intersection between gender identity and patriarchal tradition within the family makes a double bind for third-gender people, which makes them select between familial togetherness and significant selves.

In previous research, it was illustrated that family abandonment and shift reported by the participants were a very general phenomenon from the perspective of the Bangladeshi third gender (Nanda, 1990). such kind of situation leads them to the alarming consequences and the social desertion of non-binary individuals because they have no choice other than to turn back to their third-gender community for assistance.

Robi also stated how his/her father spoiled their business and made them hopeless.

'When I started to sell vegetables in our local market, some people informed my father, and then he tortured me and told me not to sell the vegetables in the local market because the whole village would humiliate his goodwill.'

The respondent's effort to sell vegetables in a local market shows how far they will go in seeking economic freedom, challenging traditional forms of begging, or performing at ceremonies (Nanda, 1990). However, as long as the respondent's father was cornered by societal stigma and his fear of people trampling on his goodwill, it still signifies something more profound: the drastic discrimination Hijras would encounter who stray from established norms.

The participant's attempt to sell vegetables in village markets illustrates how far she/he will go in finding economic independence, which challenges the traditional performance in festivals, ceremonies or contemporary forms of begging (Nanda, 1990). However, as long as the participant's father was trapped by the societal stigma and afraid of goodwill trampling, it signifies a profound situation, the extreme stigma and discrimination third-gender would face who stray from recognized norms.

Such stigma and discrimination are further aggravated when the father's political position is vital in the village. In addition, it limits and defines the participant's agency to an even terrible extent. The intersection of political power and gender identity within society and family shows how third genders are at multiplex margins.

Participants explained his/her teenagers' experiences as well as social interaction with each other, which led his/her to join the hijra community in their difficult situations. Rima explained:

"Once I was 14-15 years old, then I understood myself as a hijra and had to go far away from my family at the age of 19 years. My family abandoned me due to my gender identity, and I was in deep trouble at the time without knowing what had happened. In our village, a hijra (a third-gender person) sometimes comes to collect money and leaves their number to contact me if I need assistance. One day, I felt very depressed at home and left home to join the hijra community."

Hijra individuals often identify themselves at an early age, and based on their experience, gender identity is hardly experienced later in life. However, the expulsion from the family at a young age demonstrates the rejection of the social discrimination and stigmatization which can be marked against third-gender individuals in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which guided them to be expelled from their own homes and forsaken by the mainstream society.

The respondent's decision to leave the family and seek security and protection in a third-gender community, getting some assistance from an existing social network, was included in a safe and secure community despite expulsion from the family. The Hijra community helps them create a robust support system and deep bond with each other that guides them to adjust to social exclusion. Every member of their community is considered a family, and they provide strong support as an alternative family and serve the necessary practical skills.

Despite the family's expulsion pain and uncertain and unsafe future, many of them tried to make connections actively with the hijra community that could correlate with their non-binary identity. For human well-being, social assistance and community emotions are the most crucial elements when it comes to dealing with stigmatization and discrimination. Furthermore, through the intersectionality method, it can be shown that the participant's own experiences are affected by different social elements. Hence, examining the third-gender individual experiences shows looking at the interaction of different identities.

5.2 Realities of maintaining Livelihood and overall situation

This theme covers the circumstances of maintaining a livelihood, such as their daily working experience, how they are supportive inside and outside of the community, and how they are deprived of governmental benefits and social rights.

5.2.1 Working experience & consequence

Robi illustrated his/her experience of how she/he has done informal work to maintain his/her livelihood; however, she/he encountered physical harassment.

'When I sold vegetables in our local market, one day, a person who is the administrative officer of a veterinary hospital talked with a smile and bought products; then, he asked me to go to his house for household work. I cleaned the kitchen staff and house for 30 taka (less than 30 cents). Every day, I went to work and got the same amount of taka for every day of work. One day, he touched me by saying 'cute' and tried to form a physical relationship with me. I thought he had given me the scope for work and getting money by working at his home; as a result, I could not prevent him.'

The participant's engagement in vegetable selling at their village market shows one of the few informal economic possibilities for non-binary people in several cases due to common discrimination and stigma. Their resourcefulness in seeking other means of livelihood illustrates resilience and agency regardless of constructive barriers.

In the beginning, the discussion with the administrative personnel represents a possible way for household work to be done and calls for attention to irrelevant situations that show incommensurate from third-gender individuals. The minimum salary of 30 takas (below 30 cents) per day shows how underestimated their work is and how they could be misused as discriminated and stigmatized individuals.

The third-gender individual encountered sexual harassment because of power imbalances where sex between strangers is at its peak. The administrative personnel holds up the marginalization of the participant, who depends on their assigned task as leverage over them concerning the power of the social and economic situation. Third-gender people encounter a high prevalence of sexual molestation and ferocity in the work environment.

The participant's story also demonstrates the scarcity of security and reputable jobs for the third-gender community. Due to the unstructured conditions under their work and the scarcity of mechanisms to save them, they can take the privilege of protecting them. This highlights the significance of selected policy interventions catering to active, gainful job opportunities and the needs of vulnerable people; otherwise, they will fail due to exploitative procedures and discrimination.

This respondent's experience demonstrates the multiple natures and complex situation of third-gender's daily experiences and financial realities in many selected areas of Bangladesh. It is visible to see that their gender identity, as well as other social factors, exploits and has limited economic choices. Such knowledge is significant in designing more efficient and inclusive policies around vulnerable people's lives, well-being, and livelihood.

According to Rima, she/he had discussed how she/he earns money in an informal way to maintain daily expenses.

"We collect money from the shop to shop in every week. We also go to the people's houses to do baby dances and baby blessings in return for earning some money."

The third-gender groups in Bangladesh collect funds from various businesses and houses. Such practice is based on ancient culture and religious tradition in which the third is considered to have the authority to give blessings and curses (Nanda, 1990). However, the overall story illustrates the social exclusion and broader discrimination that prevent the expansion of economic areas.

An intersectional lens assists us in realizing why and how the participant draws from the so-called informal activity 'Badhai,' which is not only cultural practice but also informed by gender identity. Furthermore, they belong to economically and socially marginalized chapters of society. Formal employment is not a common alternative due to the stigma and discrimination encountered by non-binary individuals; most of them turn back to informal activities that can be isolated or dangerous. Though based on culture and tradition, it can be advised as a form of labour patriarchal task where the industry commodifies this ritual performance.

Nevertheless, it is significant to note that participants' overall experiences do not specifically illustrate other members of the third-gender community. The intersectional lens helps to see that consideration of how one's experience of social and economic vulnerability and access to livelihood are deeply tied up with one's education level, geographic location, and social networks. Though some third-gender individuals may have opportunities in the mainstream workforce, most of them encounter exploitation and discrimination, which demonstrates the need for meeting non-inclusive economic opportunities.

Robi shared his/her experience of how she/he got an informal job offer, which led them to a physical relationship.

'After going to my uncle's house in Chittagong, one day, I met with an industrialist on a walking street in Chittagong who has multiple businesses. We talked, and then he offered me cleaning work at his house. I had worked there for many months, and we fell in love with each other. We had a physical relationship together. After some months, I left that place and joined another place to work.'

The respondent's communication with the industrialist in Chittagong shows how sudden incidents and social networks are the central things for a third-gender individual life. Nanda (1990) suggested that informal social connection and togetherness could be purposeful for achieving access to financial opportunities, especially when such communities are generally discriminated against and excluded from the formal workforce in society. Though the respondent may also have other desires, their preliminary approval of housekeeping work illustrates that even those utmost opportunities are restricted by social stigma. In addition, it represents the functional inequalities which priced third-gender individuals into uncertain work and informal activities.

However, the participant's sexual desire and romantic relationship with the industrialist embody the clue of complexity in social communication. Though the participant had only the option of making a relationship to escape the monetary issues at that time, it shows the power structure and administrative habits of the Supreme Party. From the industrialist end, because of ample power in society over the respondents who have to attach in a relationship because of their terrible financial situation. Furthermore, the respondents had a scope for economic survival and formed a romantic relationship; others might face more strategic challenges because of various intersecting factors.

Another respondent, Jui, described how she/he earned money and expressed that she/he is not getting proper employment opportunities despite having skills.

'I used to collect money from the shop to shop. Sometimes, we go to a wedding program to sing and dance to earn money. I know about household work and tailoring, but I do not get any employment opportunities.'

The participant depends on community third-gender informal occupations such as dancing at weddings and collecting money from shop to shop, which illustrates the broader scale of job opportunity scarcity due to mainstream societal marginalization and discrimination. Though such occupations help them to survive in the community, there is no income stability in everyday life. However, most people consider them exploitative and task against the stereotypes that continue them from more distinguished and renewable paths of creating ends meet.

The respondent mentioned having some skills in tailoring and housekeeping but could not get work opportunities, which indicates the discrimination of the structural, formal labour market. These community members are prevented from achieving job opportunities based on only gender identity, leading them to a harmful circle of economic and poverty instability. These findings affirm previous research that illustrates the pervading exclusion of third-gender in obtaining access to the mainstream workforce.

Furthermore, the respondent's reliance on traditional informal occupations as a survival purpose was also demonstrative of stereotypes which exist in the community and led to the prevention of their integration into mainstream societies. It is a double bind for them because such survival tactics provide to reproduce the stigma which forbids their development mobility.

The respondent demonstrates the narrative of the critical spectrum of barriers which third-gender individuals face in Dhaka, Bangladesh. How they recognize themselves shapes their economic and social life, placed side-by-side with community scopes and biases. These challenges and struggles must be met through a specific focus on fighting gender-specific discrimination and structural obstacles to jobs, education and economic work scopes.

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The respondent demonstrates the narrative of the critical spectrum of barriers which third-gender individuals face in Dhaka, Bangladesh. How they recognize themselves shapes their economic and social life, placed side-by-side with community scopes and biases. These challenges and struggles must be met through a specific focus on fighting gender-specific discrimination and structural obstacles to jobs, education and economic work scopes.

Nila mentioned the daily tasks in specific areas also, she/he had to earn a particular amount of money to maintain daily needs.

'I used to collect money daily based on assigned areas; I had to collect around 200 or 300 takes daily to maintain our livelihood.'

The participants worked in specific places and were selected by Guruma to collect money on a daily basis. Many hijra individuals have to work in selected places, so the distribution of informal work activities among third-gender individuals is common. Nanda (1990) discussed that collecting money from businesses and households in return for entertainment and blessings is known as Badhai. On the one hand, the informal activity of begging helps them to survive in society, but such things are exploitative, and it discloses non-binary individuals to harassment; on

the other hand, their informal activity, including sexual work, generally reinforces stereotypes that keep them from entering more respected income sources.

This highlights their economic instability as one participant mentioned they have to collect specific amounts of money to maintain their livelihood, which shows the shortage of formal employment and the lack of income sources. Such a situation appears not only due to lack of employment but also due to stigma and discrimination of gender non-conformity. Their gender settles them in impoverishment; their gender identity prevents huge occupational job opportunities, which should be open to everyone.

Robi encountered oppression and threats by other third-gender community people. she/he quoted:

'Since I was not interested in working hijras' traditional informal work, many hijras from another community oppressed me and threatened me to leave Dhaka City; otherwise, they would harm me.'

The respondent refused to join in traditional work such as begging, dancing at festivals, ceremonies and other informal activities, undermining the broadly held traditional and cultural attitudes regarding proper ways for third-gender people to make a proper living (Nanda, 1990). This challenge to the standard behaviour of the third-gender community can jeopardize its strong normative powerhouse, leaving those who are diverse expulsion from within.

The respondent also highlighted threats and oppression encountered by the other members of the community, which shows internal discrimination and stigma. Indeed, it is essential to understand that such stigma and discrimination is not only an outlier phenomenon but is also visible within their communities. The internationality analysis suggests that the third-gender community practices power dynamics determined by being a senior citizen with an ample amount of property or who practices such kind of controversial tradition. Such elements create various forms and degrees of oppression and privilege (Reddy, 2010).

Furthermore, such experience of the participant also signifies a more structural marginalization against all third-gender people. Their option not to welcome conventional roles may appear alarming because it challenges the general binary gender category and heteronormative

assurance. Transgender and non-conforming gender individuals experience social violence and marginalization when their appearances do not adapt to societal assurance (Sevelius, 2018).

This narrative of the participants shows the complicatedness of discrimination, which is a feature of the understanding of third-gender individuals in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The intersectional approach shows that third-gender individuals live with impedance to power dynamics and conventional gender roles among those who leave no alteration to avoid marginalization. Hence, it is clear that the interventions in specific cases should not only point to discrimination on the broader society but also assist in eradicating the power inequalities and stigma in marginalized communities.

5.2.2 Supportive mentality and connection with the hijra individual

Jui stated that Guruma and the Hijra community were supportive during her tough days, which showed the bonding of the Hijra community.

"My guruma was incredibly supportive when I was facing financial hardship and unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Struggling to afford food and rent, I sought help from the city corporation to no avail. It was my guruma who provided me with the lifeline I needed during that challenging period."

The respondent shows how social identities and any relationships get merged during the crisis of COVID-19 in their community. This pandemic made the situation worse and more arduous, and Guruma's assistance for every individual in tough times boosted their mindset and united them.

The participant illustrates that the guru-chela (Mentor-Disciple) provides insights into the operation of third-gender communities regarding social interaction and relationships. Hijra community's kinship support system shows their strong bonding based on their culture and tradition, representing a significant form of social security, specifically exclusion from the top society and deprivation from economic position (Nanda, 1990). Financial assistance, support for food and shelter, emotional attachment, guidance from the guru and identity affirmation within the community are also necessary.

The financial assistance the participant sought from the Guruma ma in the difficult time of COVID-19 illustrates how social and traditional safety nets may not reach marginalized groups like hijras. It is part of the more important pattern of systematic favouritism, which excludes hijras from the means to lead daily lives.

Through the intersectional perspective, it demonstrates that the participant is not only vulnerable due to their gender identity but also encounters multiple situations of vulnerability deprived of social status, class and structure crises. The covid-19 exacerbated such vulnerabilities significantly because many non-binary individuals had access to temporary work for their daily needs, and lockdowns in place complemented by social space measures led to the terminated corrosion of all raw materials they existed on.

In the Hijra community, guruma is responsible for leading and protecting its members, using community resources to assist them during the conflict. This reminds us of the significance of appreciating and recognizing the social networks and capital in vulnerable communities that often serve as a first-line extenuation of the socio-economic impact. However, we must acknowledge that this participant's experience is not similar to all other community members. Intersectionality shows us that the experience of vulnerability and marginalization access to sources varies across distinct groups, besides other factors like caste, income, education status or geographic location. Consequently, while the assistance from the community leader (guruma) emphasizes community robustness and consistency, it also demonstrates an emergency need for more comprehensive policies sensitive to various problems encountered by non-binary communities.

When I discussed with hijra guruma (Robi), I found some interesting information about his/her income and role in the community. According to Robi:

"I had no intention of going shop to shop to collect money. I had a big ambition to do business and contribute to the hijra community. I was beautiful to look at, so I attended a fashion show in Dhaka and was awarded five lacs taka. After that, I started a clothing business in Gulisthan, Dhaka, with my partner. In society, we earned more money and decided to work with other hijras and oppressed people."

The rejection of begging work, which is known as Hijra work choice by the participant, shows conscious denial of societally imposed stereotypes and aspiration for financial freedom (Nanda, 1990). However, there is a widespread opinion that third-gender people rely only on begging or sex work to maintain their livelihood. The respondent quoted 'huge ambition to do business', which demonstrates entrepreneurship and agency, which are features of many jobless people but are usually bound by prejudiced patterns and narrow formal job possibilities.

Participating in fashion shows and winning a reward with cash exemplify how hijra individuals also have sufficient talents. This questions the essence of third-gender identity and re-underscores acknowledging them as individual ambitions and capabilities. Hence, it illustrates that the detected scarcity of independence among third-gender people can sabotage financial inclusion while disregarding possibilities to show and get realized may active them with proper rights, more specifically in business like entertainment, fashion and other related areas, where this vulnerable group have formed privacy (Reddy, 2005);

Furthermore, there is another instance of how the participant started a small-scale clothing business in Gulistan, Dhaka, and created freedom from the establishment. Such a program ubiquitously assists them in finding work opportunities and counters the social outlook of existing earning modes by dear ones in the Third-gender community.

The respondent expressed willingness to work with other oppressed community members and people; it has been seen as a social justice and community uplift. This is what Collings suggested as a 'collective agency', in which vulnerable and marginalized people act collectively, dealing with similar problems and the existence of an equitable community (Collins, 2000). A big success in the clothing industry has made them more curious and enthusiastic about empowering themselves and starting on a large-scale platform to advocate for both the third-gender community and other oppressed people from mainstream society.

However, the respondent's story embodies the challenges and struggles that vulnerable individuals continue to encounter to obtain social and economic stability. Even after being a successful business entrepreneur, they are stigmatized and discriminated against in distinct walks of life. In addition, it shows the significance of continued advocacy and policy remaking that targets functional obstacles to deprivation and forbids them from integration.

One respondent discussed friendship with a man and then how their friendship tied into a marriage relationship. According to Robi:

'When I started working at Hamdard laboratories in Chittagong, one person followed me every day, and we became friends. After some days, he proposed to me and later wanted to marry me. I told him I was not a woman and unable to give birth. He listened and agreed on everything, and now we are living together as partners.'

The relationship between the participant and an unknown person indicates how third-gender people also lend themselves to relationships, which could potentially lead to partnership. The respondent expressed and elaborated on the biological facts to the person before involving in a relationship. They both agreed to grow their friendship into a sexual relationship eventually.

Nonetheless, the preliminary reluctance on the part of the participant to express and acknowledge gender identity shows how people who are born male-bodied and recognized as also members of the third-gender community have been discriminated against and stigmatized from benign, openly ostracized. The societal superstition and misconception with which such groups are often stereotyped are also ultimately reflected in the shape of ferocity (Nanda, 1990).

The partner's acceptance of the respondent's third-gender identity and a particular ability to bear offspring initially rejects the heteronormative prototype of the married person. The respondent's statement disputes the traditional notion that gender roles and fruit ability define the aspect of the romantic relationship.

The victim elaborated on his/her social position and struggled to maintain his/her livelihood. However, they had to stop working because of the oppression of his/her father. According to Robi:

'When I returned to my native village, I started a restaurant business with my mother; my mother cooked food, and I sold food. Our restaurant became popular in some months, and we earned sufficient money. One day, my father found out that we started a business at the local market. Forcefully, he stopped our business, and

we became unemployed again. No one talked with my father because he has political power in our village.'

The respondents' desire to start a restaurant business with their mother illustrates how enthusiastic and determined they are to tackle the economic marginalization from the perspective of Bangladeshi society. Where many hijra individuals depend on begging and other informal activities, they have been running restaurant businesses in the local market and become successful in earning more money, which challenges the stereotype of Hijra. So, They have the potential to do something productive to maintain their livelihood.

Nonetheless, the participant's father shut down the restaurant business forcefully because it was not bearable for him to see that his non-binary child and divorced wife engaged themselves in a business which would demolish his goodwill and respect in the village. They lost their established business in the local market and encountered economic marginalization.

Furthermore, the father's strong political position in the village prevents many people from supporting the participant and his/her mother, which reflects the root and deep level marginalization and discrimination. In the society of Bangladesh, men dominate women and influence other members of the family, whereas non-binary gender have no choices and power. When the mistreatment of radicals from patriarchal power and social structures bond with gender-related discrimination, it shapes complex oppression which prevents agency and autonomy.

Hijras's experience can only be described as universal discrimination and exclusion from job opportunities. The general social stigma and discrimination they face can still hold them back from economic opportunities, even when entrepreneurial skills and initiative are evident.

Moreover, Hijras's experience can only be elaborated as worldwide discrimination and exclusion from the job possibilities. They generally encounter social stigma and discrimination due to their economic scopes, even when their business and administrative skills are evident. Structural discrimination troubles those who are primarily vulnerable families in an alternative way that it processes to preserve their social multi-level poverty and exclusion.

The silence of village people about what the participant's father had done also expresses how much discriminative activities are underwritten by the participation of the community. This indicates the significance of intervention beyond altering a person's attitudes and pointing to the macro-level social system against third-gender individuals.

Jui illustrated societal taboos and how he/she faced social obstacles, inequalities, stigma & discrimination. According to his/her statement:

'In society, there is a taboo. If someone starts their day by seeing us, their journey will not be fruitful; I went to the hospital and encountered sexual harassment. If we need any medicine to buy or discuss anything about diseases, we feel free to go to the pharmacy instead of the hospital. I have experience in tailoring and tried several times for a job, but no one is selecting me.'

In society, there is a cultural and religious belief prevalent that sometimes they view themselves as unfortunate and inauspicious because the stereotype discrimination is deeply rooted towards the third gender in Bangladesh. Such stigmatization and discrimination result in them being discriminated against, from physical abuse to mental instability. Negative attitudes not only make mental situations worsen but also mitigate avenues for such a community.

The respondent's statement shows that the trust and safety they realize in the healthcare organization are not feasible; therefore, the participant chose to seek health-related advice from a pharmacy rather than a hospital. Intersectionality provides the privileges of understanding the experiences not only because of their non-binary identity but also because of social factors such as education level and economic class, which can prohibit access to the healthcare system.

Though some of them have previous job experiences and skills such as tailoring, they were unable to confirm employment in the workforce, which demonstrates structural discrimination. The respondent's discrimination happens not just based on gender identity but also the engagement of social deliberation due to the unfit situation of the third gender in a specific job. Furthermore, according to Badgett et al. (2013), a large scale of occupational distinction and discrimination encountered by third-gender groups led them to poverty and economic marginalization.

5.2.3 How hijra are deprived of governmental benefits and rights

Both Robi and Jui mentioned similar statements about why they were unable to receive allocated funds from the government. They are also victims of the administrative system of some government and non-government institutions. According to them:

"the Bangladesh government allocates a lot of money for us, but we don't get even a single taka because the minister, member of parliament (MP), and union chairman all take our allocated money. In Mirpur Samaj Kalyan, Dhaka South City Corporation, Metrorail tried to get a job from everywhere but failed. Seven lac taka had asked for a bribe. Working in elections for the people of the area, marching, they said they would work for us, but they didn't work; they didn't even give one take."

Both respondents claimed that, Despite the allocation of vast amounts of funds from the Bangladesh Government, we, third-gender community, are getting very few benefits and funding due to the multi-level (member of parliament, chairman, minister, village member) corruption. As a result, it illustrates the structural inequality in Bangladesh's political authority and administrative system. The misappropriation of financial funds refuses monetary support and intensifies economic weakness.

The respondent's desire to work at many places like Dhaka South City Corporation, Metrorail, and Mirpur Samaj Kalyan shows the ultimate labour market discrimination against third-gender people. In addition, sometimes, they are asked for bribes, which is just another level of exploitative practice against the vulnerable community.

Both respondents participated in political activities like elections and marching in town, which shows that they also wanted to be a part of mainstream society. In addition, local politicians also connect with them and give assurance to deliver support and fulfil demands for the third-gender community. However, they realized that after the election activity, no one tried to make a connection again with them.

The respondent's experience shows a compelling illustration of how social obstacles form discrimination among third-gender individuals in Dhaka, Bangladesh, hindering their

socio-economic circumstances via the interlocking structure of oppression. It demonstrates the importance of systemic reforms that wipe out corruption from everywhere and enable transparent funds allocation and equal employment scopes for everyone. Moreover, it is also required that social and political attitudes will go far to change and make sure third-gender people are no longer marginalized.

Everyone quoted that they never participated in national elections due to the unfairness and unsafe situations. Everyone responds:

"They have a national Identity card as a citizen of Bangladesh, but no one has participated in the national election because they feel unsafe enough to vote. "

Every respondent agreed evidently that they have not voted in any elections in Bangladesh due to the lack of security and the unsafe situation in such days. They feel 'unsafe enough to vote' means a painful clarification to express everything about their desires and circumstances. The respondents encounter physical harassment and blame for robbery, which reveals their gender identity issues and discrimination.

According to Sevelius (2018), structural violence and discrimination against non-binary gender individuals across life attacks will follow them for potential political comprehension. Distrust in organizations and institutions and fear of violence keep them excluded from civic procedures, nourishing a cruel circle which supports their marginality.

This also disputes the self-assuredness of whether enhancing valid rights is deficient in guaranteeing that marginalized communities take part ubiquitously within a society. Here, a national ID card shows their legal status as citizens in Bangladesh, but it does not provide legal safety, dignity, and access to human rights and benefits. Therefore, a combined movement that maintains the social, economic and legal forms of discrimination against third-gender communities.

5.3 Recent improvements & circumstances

This theme contains not only their future dream but also some initiatives they have taken that make their life better than the previous period. However, in some cases, they are unable to start their business or execute plans due to the lack of funds and support.

5.3.1 Future dream and aspiration of third gender individual

To discuss his/her future dreams and vision, Robi mentioned an organization that has worked for some years for the third-gender community and other hopeless people. According to Robi:

"Gradually, we started an organization named 'Socheton hijra Adhikar jubo songho' where we started to encourage the hijra community and other young people to acquire sufficient skills such as computer training, tailors training, and health consciousness in our society. I aspire to work for human rights; we don't need to know who is hijra, who is male or female. For me, humans are the ultimate truth. I would like to start a shelter home for elderly persons. In addition, hijras need to increase their eligibility, change society's view, and arrange seminars or discussions in schools, colleges, and universities about hijras; as a result, we can change people's attitudes."

The respondent, Robi, established an organization, 'Socheton hijra Adhikar jubo songho' (Conscious Hijra Rights Association), justifying the participant's initiative in proactively palliating the third-gender community's social and economic status. Such organizations are essential and efficient in driving ample job opportunities and supporting vulnerable groups.

This organization supports practical work such as computer training, tailoring, and making people aware of health issues. As a result, many third-gender individuals experience themselves with short and long-term skills. For instance, for short-term economics, training skills can be focused on communities and health consciousness for everyone in the long term. Crenshaw (1989) stated that under the actions claim on intersectionality regarding the interconnection of marginalization such as social, economic or health inequalities.

Furthermore, it is evident that the respondent aspires to provide support and emphasizes dignity to everyone without thinking about class, race, religion, or gender, which illustrates the holistic and deep level of social justice. This perspective comes across with a broader human rights structure that desires to create respect and entitlements for everyone equally (United Nations, 1948). The request by the participant for education and other things about third-gender issues in academic organizations is a cunning way of fighting social prejudice and promoting experiences.

The respondent also highlighted that humans are the 'ultimate truth'. I believe there will be no class and gender classification in our future initiatives. Every oppressed and hopeless human can be a part of our organization. In addition, everyone will be treated as a valued and respected human being, not just as male or female, with no category between rich and poor. Such kind of dream is not only coming from the third-gender individual but also a perfect and ideal for many people in the third-gender groups who have compassion and try to eradicate marginalization.

It also reflects their empathy and inclusiveness, as they intend to start a shelter home for an ageing population. Their initiative targets ageing individuals not only from third-gender communities but also anyone from the whole society, including those isolated from society and economic insecurity due to their marginalized situation (Nanda, 1990).

According to Jui, she/he dreams of working for the hopeless and homeless people in society. She/he quoted that:

'Since the Bangladesh government recognized us as a third gender, we would like to raise awareness for our rights; we need to have importance as a human being. My dream is to work with the oppressed, homeless, hopeless, and discriminated people.'

The target of the participants is raising consciousness about the rights of third-gender; the Bangladesh government recognized hijra communities as third-gender in 2013, which is a sophisticated view in the involvement just seeing validity. Though valid recognition for the third-gender community may be iconic, it signifies the greater meaning of societal approval or access to a similar scope. The participant's concentration on advocacy emphasizes that much more work needs to be done to disassemble social taboos and superstitions, as it can bring changes from social practices to operational legal rights.

Furthermore, the participant mentioned supporting the 'homeless, oppressed, hopeless and discriminated people', which suggested they may be highly interested in higher aims of life in social justice outside of the community. This focus is only based on the profound understanding that both discrimination and marginalization are engaged together at the beginning, and significant social alteration needs solidarity in the different communities on whose bodies' burdensomeness scripts its complacent. According to Crenshaw (1989), Balance with the foundation of intersectionality, which is increasingly correlated with feelings and existing actions, must be triggered to conquer a different institution.

Nila plans to share his/her skills and knowledge with other community members to train and improve their lives. According to his/her:

'I know catering, beauty parlour, and painting work, so I plan to train other hijras in the future so that they can also gather some skills to improve their lives.'

We realized the beauty parlour, catering and painting skills assigned to this participant not as a skilful, talented individual but as a historical period made by the 'community cultural wealth' (Yosso, 2005). These skills work as a lived experience. Non-binary individuals can be valuable assets in any organization by getting such training and practices. As a result, they can open more economic opportunities in their community.

Moreover, the respondent plans to guide other individuals from their community to become skilful in any area, representing a broader interest in creating mass power. These people are shifting their expertise and knowledge into possibilities for others in the community, mainly those with less access to formal education and employment due to their marginalization.

Furthermore, the respondent focused on broader skills in beauty parlour, catering, and painting, demonstrating the participant's consciousness of the multi-level nature of financial opportunities. This realizes the broader skills and diverse interests among third-gender individuals. Since they have started to empower their community members with popular and employable skills, they should leave their informal activities begging and sexual work. Overall, their initiative can develop a different portrayal of the third gender in greater society.

6. Discussion

The findings of this research illustrate the socioeconomic experiences and how deep-rooted forms of discrimination, financial exclusion, and social and cultural stigma outstandingly affect their livelihood and overall existence. The life stories narrated by the respondents spontaneously reflect a narration of ultimate marginalization, struggle and challenges not only just rising from the gender identity crisis but also attachment to the different social elements such as caste, class, race, and religion. Nanda (1990) discussed that such kinds of consequences were also relevant to other existing studies on third-gender communities in India that marginalization of these sufferer groups in almost every sphere due to their gender identity issues.

Furthermore, every individual in the third-gender community had no homogenous experience in their life circle. Some participants had been ostracised and encountered rejection experiences in society or family due to the power imbalances at every level. Though this offers a possible income way based solely on begging and other informal activities, it inscribes third-gender individuals into selective stereotypes. It ends the opportunity for other sustainable assistance, showing socioeconomic ambiguity among the third-gender groups. In addition, the experiences of discrimination and superstition in education and job opportunities combined with prohibited access to health services illustrate institutionalized barriers that prevent them from getting the advantages of socioeconomically balanced membership.

The research findings present a favourable pattern toward the way third-gender people go along with their communities. Though earlier literature has exhaustively registered the informal economic situations, this study shows a positive transition into formal workplace participation. It is a noteworthy initiative to form a non-profit organization to serve third-gender people and others who are vulnerable and marginalized. As a result, many people who are vulnerable and sufferers may get assistance to survive in society. Such an initiative supports the community remarkably because it helps the minor community to improve their access to socioeconomic status.

Moreover, this study's findings also demonstrate third-gender people's dedication and eagerness to change their livelihood despite encountering struggles and challenges. Few of them have already started their initiative to develop their financial situation; the respondent, robi, started a non-profit organization to make more skilful members of the third-gender community, which shows their desire to support others. In the literature review, it is evident that third-gender

individuals had no access to formal employment. However, many people from their community are not involved in informal activities nowadays because of their dedication and the efforts of non-profit organizations. After taking a computer training course, two third-graders got job opportunities in the district commissioner's office in Rajshahi, Bangladesh. One is a computer operator, and the other works as an office assistant (The Prothom alo, 2021). This signifies their hardworking mentality and dedication to changing their traditional informal activity like begging and sex trade.

Moreover, a third-gender individual who started a career as a news reader in a private television in Bangladesh. Though this individual encountered bullying, harassment and attempted suicide, ultimately survival capabilities and his/her arduous efforts make them more robust to struggle in life (bbc.com, 2021). Therefore, efficient training and dedication to study may support them in building a better career instead of their informal activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many members of the third-gender community were unable to work due to outbreaks. As a result, they faced housing, food and income issues. Food delivery organization food panda has started to appoint twenty third-gender individuals to deliver food in Dhaka and Chittagong so that they may have job opportunities to fight against the pandemic crisis and make progress in livelihood (jagonews24.com, 2021).

The significance of these findings for both policy and practice is essential. The significance of the intervention beyond valid acknowledgement illustrates the insusceptible systemic expulsion and social unfairness causing non-binary individuals their marginalization. Both plans and policies must be intersectional, responding to the duet form demands and distinguishable life involvement mostly in the community. It is also visible that inspiration and motivation for basic capabilities strengthen the ability and viability of the minor group themselves to challenge discrimination and stigma, raise hands for fundamental rights, and provide sustainable ways to socioeconomic inclusion.

Despite the ample limitations of this research, this study provides an essential and significant understanding of the socioeconomic challenges to maintain hijra livelihood, and hijra has already taken steps to improve their socioeconomic status in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Limitations include small data size and remote interviews over the phone for this study. Future research can consider the sufficient amount of data samples in different geographic areas and cultural diversity. In addition, longitudinal research is needed to examine the long-term results of unfairness and expulsion on their experience.

7. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated the complex and socioeconomic experiences, as well as what measures the hijra see as significant in improving their social and financial situation in Dhaka, Bangladesh. By exploring the socioeconomic challenges and struggles they encounter, such as family rejection, economic marginalization, and less access to education and healthcare, this research emphasizes the complex realities of this vulnerable minority group. In addition, their initiative and avidness to improve their life circle led them to a better livelihood. Despite the valid recognition as third-gender, the actual realities of these minor groups have mostly stayed the same in their whole participation in society, not only socially, culturally or economically.

Research question one focused on socioeconomic challenges to maintain livelihood, and findings show that hijra encountered harassment, bullying, ostracization from family, neighbors, and even schoolmates. As a result, they feel isolated and decide to leave school and family; after that, they ultimately join to the hijra community to survive rest of their life. Furthermore, in the workplace or time, they also face physical and sexual harassment, but sometimes they do not react because of work and money. Moreover, hijra were also deprived of governmental benefits and other social rights, which made their livelihood more challenging. However, it is visible that somewhat supportive mentality in tough times makes them confident enough to live in the community.

This paper also indicates the expulsion and abandonment from the family and mainstream society due to their gender identity and feminine behaviour, which makes them vulnerable and marginalized. There are various forms of discrimination and stigma emerged in society due to the lack of education, shortage of employment, ostracization from family or housing crisis. Thus, Every element contributes to the structural discrimination.

Moreover, research question two provides more exciting insights about the measures essential to improving socioeconomic status. One individual has already started an organization to support and enhance their social and economic situation; they are providing computer training, tailoring training, health support, and another consciousness seminar to help build technical skills.

The findings of this study highlight the need for more equitable and inclusive government and non-governmental policies and various programs. Both government and non-governmental organizations should challenge the societal stereotypes and norms that eternalize the discrimination and stigma against this marginalized community. The findings also showed that third-gender individual has already taken some steps to improve their social and economic circumstances.

However, this study also highlights third-gender resilience and compassion in settling down numerous barriers despite their expulsion from society and family. They have been finding secure places in third-gender communities and making friends in the community. They have taken steps to build an organization to support other members in achieving institutional and vocational training and fighting against marginalization. Therefore, If everyone in society raises their voice and works with them in every sector, third-gender individuals may have the opportunity to feel included in mainstream culture.

The government and non-governmental organizations should raise awareness of the hijra in schools, colleges, universities, and other significant parts of society.

7.1 Limitations of study

The main limitation of this research is the sample size of data, which may limit the generalizability of the results to all non-binary communities in Bangladesh. Though third-gender communities people are living all over Bangladesh, interviews were conducted only from a selected place in Dhaka, Bangladesh. A total of four interviews were conducted for this qualitative study. Furthermore, the study is focused only on hijra communities among total third gender groups (transgender and other non-binary identities), which limits the range of non-binary communities. Future research can be qualitative and quantitative measures, among more essential, diverse sample sizes, which would strengthen our core knowledge of the complex adversities encountered by third-gender individuals in Bangladesh.

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9. Appendix

9.1 Interview Questions

1. Background information

Tell me a little about yourself:

- Who are you and where are you from?
- Tell us something about your family history: where were you born, did you go to school, did you have educational opportunities?
- Where do you currently live, how long have you been there and with whom?
- Who do you consider to be the closest or most important person in your life?
- If you live in a third-gender community, what kind of community is it and what is its role or meaning to you? How important is this third-gender community in your life and why?

2. Daily life:

- Tell us something about your daily life: what kind of work do you do daily or weekly?
- Do you work or earn money in some other way?
- What are the most important things and persons in your daily life?
- Since you live in a third-gender community, does that affect your daily life? Do you get support from your third-gender community or do you give support to others?
- Do you face any problems in daily life or do you have difficulties that make your life difficult or harm your life?

3. Community and Society

- How do you feel about how other people in the area see you or your community as a person?
- Do you consider yourself a member of the larger society? Do you think that you belong to the whole society?
- If you want to study or you need a job, do you think it is possible? What could be the obstacle?
- Do you consider yourself and others in your community equal?
- Do you have equal rights with other people in your area or Bangladesh?

- If you need help, for example, want to go to a doctor, can you get a doctor's service? Or if you need essentials like medicine, can you get it or can someone help you?
- Do you consider yourself a citizen of Bangladesh? You, for example, Did you vote?

4. Hope for the future

- If you want to change something for the people here, what change do you want to make?
- If you could change anything in your personal life in your community, what would it be?
- Have you dreamed of a different future or a different kind of Bangladesh? What is your dream?