Construction of hegemonic masculinity in stateless condition: A study on the Rohingya Men in Bangladesh

Mohammad Atique Rahman, PhD[1]

"Every person born in any of the territories included within the Union, of parents both of whom are, or they had been alive at the commencement of this Constitution would have been, citizens of the Union."

— The Constitution of the Union of Burma (1947, p. 2)[2]

Abstract:

The construction of hegemonic masculinity among the displaced males in stateless condition can rest on various dynamics ranging from experiences of persecutions in their country of origin in past to the present uncertain conditions in refugee camps. The male Rohingya displaced people in Bangladesh largely represent the classical case of representing violent scars that the community had faced in Myanmar and also their loss of status and position in stateless community in Bangladesh after displacement. The article argues that Rohingya men in stateless condition are in everyday negotiation for creating masculine attitude to reinforce their loss status in displaced condition which has negative impacts on Rohingya women as they are exposed to domestic violence, sexual harassment, dowry related polygamy and child marriage. This situation has further aggravated due the outbreak of Covid-19 which restricts humanitarian and aid services in the camp areas. Access to local labour market is restricted for the male Rohingyas which can be seen as driving factor to reinforcing male's power among the Rohingya male to offer the hard labour for a longer period of time in return to low wages as compared to host communities.

Introduction:

This article's fundamental premise is that the Rohingya men in the stateless condition in refugee camps in Bangladesh have been negotiating and reconstructing hegemonic masculinity which they have gained through their experiences of male dominated society and gender-based persecution upon themselves committed by the Myanmar's government and security forces in pre-displacement phase. The first Constitution of the Union of Burma[3] recognised every person within the territory as its citizen. Subsequently, Myanmar has scrapped the Rohingya Muslim minority's citizenship rights, predominantly living in Arakan State, and forced them into refugee-like conditions from their ancestral lands. Statelessness is not a choice. Discriminatory citizenship

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[1] Assistant Professor, Dept. of International Relations, University of Dhaka. Email: atique@du.ac.bd.

[2] See: *The Constitution of the Union of Burma*, 24 September 1947, effective 4 January 1948. Cited inhttps://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/79573/85699/F1436085708/MMR79573.pdf.

[3] The official English name was changed by the country's government from the "Union of Burma" to the "Union of Myanmar" in 1989, and still later to the "Republic of the Union of Myanmar".

policy, oppressive laws, large-scale violence committed by the state security forces and majority community often create minorities, displaced persons, refugees and stateless persons. The Rohingya refugee community bears all the marks of this state-led violence and oppressive acts upon them. In 2017, Bangladesh had to open its border and provide shelter to the largest influx of Rohingya people who had to flee from their country Myanmar. More than 700,000 Rohingyas cross over to Bangladesh[4] who took shelter in Bangladesh, officially known as the forcibly displaced persons from Myanmar, are now living in 27 refugee camps in Teknaf and Ukhiya Upazilla of Cox's Bazar.

This article explores the emergence of hegemonic masculinity in stateless conditions and discursive interactions between and among male agencies for practising and reinforcing such behaviours in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. The pertinent questions are: how do refugee men cope with the stateless situation and what happens to the notion of existing masculinity in situation of marginalisation and protracted refugee condition. Protracted stateless situation combined with loss of social status and livelihoods establish a context for the construction of gender identity for men. Gender relation thus turns into a discursive and sense making process where social status, power hierarchy and everyday violence are negotiated and struggled over. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), protracted refugee situations are those in which at least 25,000 refugees from the same country have been living in exile for more than five consecutive years[5]. Refugee people in this situation are stranded in host country without having very limited hope to return to their country of origin and not been granted permanent residence to stay in another country. At present, approximately three out of four refugees under the mandate of UNHCR are in protracted situations. Their lives may not be at risks but their basic rights and essential socio-economic, and psychological needs and citizenship rights are constantly denied in exile conditions. In host country they are viewed as problem to the local economy, environment, lands and law and order situations. Their freedom of movement, access to job market, health care and education are often restricted by the host country.

The Rohingya stateless men in refugee camps have been in the process of shaping and reshaping hegemonic masculinity. This study thus intends to do a critical discourse analysis to explore how these men being stateless constructed gendered masculinity after facing forcibly displacement from their home country. In this context, this study explores the socio-economic and political contexts of the Rohingya society, especially the existing patriarchal structure of this

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[4] https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/rohingya-refugees-bangladesh-facts
[5] Protracted Refugee Situations, https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/prm/policyissues/issues/protracted/index.htm#:~:text=What%20is%20a%20protracted%20refugee,in%20a%20given%20asylum%20country.

community. This patriarchal structure has been reinforced by Myanmar's state' policies and male-dominated repressive apparatus against the stateless Rohingya since the abolition of Rohingya citizenship status. Based on the fieldwork (in-dept interviews and observations) this study will explore how Rohingya men constructed masculinity in relation to the patriarchal structure that exist in their families and communities, as well as access to labour markets, and marriage, domestic violence, relations with the local restrictive host communities and local crimes. This article is divided into three sections, including introduction and conclusion. Section one contextualizes the discursive hegemonic masculinity among the stateless community in the world. Section two explores the stateless conditions of the Rohingya community and builds cases for male hegemon in this community. Section three presents evidence-based findings about the emergence of hegemonic masculinity in stateless condition in Bangladesh.

Methodology of the Study:

The study adopts field-based research in Rohingya refugee camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilla of Bangladesh. The field research has been conducted in different phases since 2019. The author visited the refugee camps in these areas in several occasions and conducted one-to-one interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the Rohingya community, Bengali host community and civil society members. The study adopts discourse analytical approach in the larger context of studying the discursive practice of the Rohingya men in refugee camps in Bangladesh. The critical discourse analytical framework is used to understand the hegemonic discursive practices of Rohingya men under the larger socio-economic and political contexts of Myanmar (the country of origin) and Bangladesh (the host country). To do this, the critical political discourse analysis method has been used to understand the construction of hegemonic masculinity. According to Van Dijk, critical-political discourse analysis mainly focuses on the reproduction of political power, and power domination through political discursive interactions, including various forms of resistance or counter-power exercise against the discursive dominance[6]. CDA, in this context, provides an opportunity to analyse the formation of text/discourse and to analyse how institutional and discoursal practices happen within which the texts are embedded[7]. This framework is used to see how discourses are structured, created, and re-created according to power among different agencies in the refugee community. It suggests that Rohingya men are socially and politically embodied in stateless conditions pursue their masculinity discourse.

Contextualizing discursive hegemonic masculinity in stateless community:

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[6] Dijk, A.V. (1995), Aims of Critical Discourse Analysis. Japanese Discourse, 1, 17-27.
http://discourses.org/OldArticles/Aims%20of%20Critical%20Discourse%20Analysis.pdf.
[7] Fairclough, N. (1995), *Critical discourse analysis*. London: Longman.

To address emergence of hegemonic masculinity in stateless community, the article situates within the discursive perspective which is influenced by the spatial factors. In this context, this article argues that how places shape and reshape discursive hegemonic practices among the stateless community. The stateless males living in new land are facing erosion of their status and position within their families and community are seeking new hegemons in stateless condition. That is sometime manifested through a process of violence against women, radicalisation and confrontation in relation with their community and host community in new land. The study by Huizinga and Hoven explores the construction of masculinity among the Syrian refugee in Netherlands[8]. They convincingly argue that localities and places have greater influence on making of masculinity in social relations. The discursive masculinity this emerge within new stateless identity of male in relation with their new economic, social, political and cultural identities. Kleist focuses on the life trajectory and societal change of stateless men and explores how the transition to work, class and gender relations influence masculinity discourses as way to gain their power position within the community[9]. Hegemonic discursive masculinity generally defines the maintenance of social power by male through persuasion and other means (Speer, 2001)[10]. The seminal work by Gramsci identifies hegemony is a process of invoke power by consent rather than coercion[11]. In this context, the powerful entity maintains their dominance by defining and legitimating a certain definition of the situation and context[12]. This definition is specifically useful in the context of studying hegemonic masculinity in stateless condition as the stateless men in refugee community intend to pursue male dominance and patriarchal structure by using non-violent and violent means. Wetherell and Edley argue that discursive masculinity is kind of strategy to negotiate male position within existing social context[13]. They further argue that such masculine behaviour is evident in everyday lives of men[14]. According to Connell men's masculinity is centrally

[8] Hegemonic masculinities after forced migration: Exploring relational performances of Syrian refugee men in The Netherlands
Huizinga, Rick and Hoven, Bettina (2020), Hegemonic masculinities after forced migration: Exploring relational performances of Syrian refugee men in The Netherlands, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 28 (8): 1151-1173, https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2020.1784102.
[9] Kleist, Nauja. 2010. "Negotiating Respectable Masculinity: Gender and Recognition in the Somali Diaspora." *African Diaspora* 3 (2): 185–206. doi:https://doi.org/10.1163/187254610X526913.
[10] Speer, Susan (2001), Reconsidering the Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: Discursive Psychology, Conversation Analysis and Participants' Orientations, *Feminism & Psychology*. 11(1):107-135. DOI:10.1177/0959353501011001006
[11] Gramsci, A. (1996). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, Q. Hoare & G. N. Smith, Trans. New York: International Publishers
[12] Op. cit.
[13] Wetherell, Margaret and Edley, Nigel (1999). Negotiating Hegemonic Masculinity: Imaginary Positions and Psycho-Discursive Practices. *Feminism & Psychology*, *9*(3): 335–356. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353599009003012
[14] Ibid.

connected to the subordination of women by not only marginalising their position but also fostering repression against them[15]. Thus, Connel's conceptualization of masculinity focuses on the relations between men and women for the formation of gender identities[16]. This approach is useful to understand broader socio-economic contexts of gender relations and how it regulates men's lives. Masculinity as discursive practice in which men become producers and products of discourse languages. Connel further suggests that most men and women do not personally embody masculinity but they support it, often regulated by it and use it to judge other men's conduct[17]. This is a sense making process which maintain male dominance i.e., largely taken for granted. It is a complex process which does not necessarily create 'macho men' rather men as bread winners, protectors of family and wife and property, and leaders of the community. However, the forced displacement tends to disrupt or reinforce established constructions of masculinity developed in the country of origin which is a centrepiece of argument of this article. Kleist argues on the basis of the experience of Somali refugees in Copenhagen and London that the forced displacement and stateless condition have caused huge changed in gender relations[18]. The stateless condition creates downward social mobility and loss of social status in exile for many Somali men. The stateless situation thus difficult for the Somali men to cope with who belonged to high social position within their community before the displacement. For their hegemonic survival Somali men went into various activities to re-establish and negotiate for their masculinity. In this context, discursive hegemonic masculinity is performative and situational in the stateless condition. However, Donaldson and Howson argue that displaced men usually bring firm beliefs and well-established practices of manhood and gender relations from their country of origin[19]. In new land they engage with activities about what is to be a man in new country. In this stateless condition situates them an occasion to adopt various strategies to redefine their personal and social relations with women within their families and community. This article argues that stateless Rohingya men tend to renegotiate the hegemonic masculine identification, practices and discursive interaction in their current living in refugee camps in Bangladesh which are embedded in the old gender relations prevalent in pre-displacement conditions.

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[15] Connell, Raewyn W. 1998. "Masculinities and Globalization." *Men and Masculinities* 1 (1): 3–23. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X98001001001.
[16] Op. Cit.
[17] Wetherell, Margaret and Edley, Nigel (1999).
[18] Kleist, Nauja (2010), Negotiating Respectable Masculinity: Gender and Recognition in the Somali Diaspora." *African Diaspora* 3 (2): 185–206. doi:https://doi.org/10.1163/187254610X526913.
[19] Donaldson, Mike, and Richard, Howson (2009), Men, Migration and Hegemonic Masculinity. *Migrant Man: Critical Studies of Masculinities and the Migration Experience*, edited by Mike Donaldson, Raymond Hibbins, Richard Howson and Bob Pease, 210–217. New York: Routledge.

The next section in this context presents historical narrative about the experience of Rohingya community about hegemonic masculinity by the Myanmar's government and security forces over the last several decades and how it perpetuates the construction of male dominance in discursive process in pre and post displacement situations. The concept of hypermasculinity in war and peace literature prevails at the expense of the "feminised other" and "mutually constitutive and mutually reinforcing relationship between war and masculinity" that creates the enabling conditions for violence, genocide, and war.[20] Women in the targeted ethnic community facing state-sponsored violence and torture are in double jeopardy if the state has also developed a hypermasculine political and social system. In other words, hyper-masculine can be framed as hegemonic masculinity, which refers to creating norms and institutions to perpetuate male dominance over women and, in some context, also over men. Masculinity, in this regard, has to be understood from a broader perspective, which is more than binaries between men and women. Scholars even differentiate between two types of men in International Relations (IR) literature - Clausewitzian "man" and Kantian "man" – the first one representing the masculine warmongers and the second one representing more feminine and peace-loving men.[21] The stereotypical ideation of femininity vs masculinity juxtaposes two alternative traits: the first one denotes protection, war, and killing, and the second one implies peacefulness and life-giving.[22] Wartime violence and hegemonic masculinity aim to demolish any racial, ethnic, or gender-based subordinate group. Miranda Alison refers to certain traits of hegemonic masculinity – competence, physical strength, being protective of women, etc. that facilitate a certain level of aggression and normalise violence among men during wartime.[23] The root of militarism and war culture is embedded in the interest of a particular elite group comprising mostly men,[24] the gender element is very distinct here. The Rohingya Muslim ethnic community in Myanmar has faced many faces of discrimination, torture, and violence. The United Nations termed these violent acts as a textbook example of genocide. Such hyper-masculine forms of gender-based violence constitute policy discrimination, manifest forms of violence i.e., sexual harassment, abuse, rape, torture, abduction, killing of intimate partners and children, statelessness, and refugee-like conditions afterward.

Hegemonic Masculinity against the Stateless Rohingyas: Historical Narratives

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[20] Hutchings, Kimberly (2008), Making sense of masculinity and war, *Men and Masculinities*, 10 (4): 389-404.

[21] Hutchings, op. cit.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Alison, op. cit., p. 76.

[24] Ibid.

This section argues that the existing socio, economic and political conditions of a country patronise the masculine narratives and provides space and tools for practicing them which leads to a hyper-masculine society that is extremely violent and brutal. Myanmar over the decades has been adopted a prototype of the hyper-masculine state i.e., institutionalising and norm-setting which permeates the sinews of the society with male dominance over women. Creating the 'other' woman as a target of persecution and torture through state patronisation is an act of a hyper-masculine state; and Myanmar is a brute example of this. It is argued here that the violence against the Rohingya women has been largely committed by Myanmar's security force "*Tatmadaw*" which controls the state power overtly for more than seven decades in various forms. The militarisation of state power in Myanmar also can be linked to hyper-masculinity. In Myanmar, the military-dominated regime developed an authoritarian and repressive society which created the context for statelessness of the Rohingyas. The denial of the Rohingya citizenship, their fundamental rights, and even their existence crisis are an integral part of Myanmar's repressive state policy. Rohingyas, being stateless within their state faced the worst forms of violence.

In Myanmar, the supremacy/dominance of the military who remained in state power since the mid-1950s in various forms (direct, indirect, and hybrid) has deliberately organised violence against the Rohingyas. With the systematic and systemic denial by the state of the Rohingyas, the state created space for discrimination and violence against them. This aggravated when the Myanmar military adopted a hyper-masculine form of political and social structures, which generally refers to physical aggression, brutality in actions, torture, abuse, and violation of citizenship and human rights, and erosion of the rule of law, tolerance, and harmony within the society. It premises itself on the social hierarchies based on number, wealth, and power. It is manifested in the physical and psychological realms of projecting power over the 'other'. Critically for it to sustain, hyper-masculinity always creates a context for tension, violence, and hierarchical power structure within the society. The military in Myanmar is the self-imposed politically and the socially powerful entity which institutionalized the use of force. They created norms, power structure, majority-minority-ethnic complexities in Myanmar, as manifestations of their dominance and legitimisation of the use of brutal force within their society.

The military in Myanmar has created a binary society based on the Buddhist majority and other ethnic identities. The idea and the contours of hyper-masculinity played a decisive role in creating the context for gender-based violence upon the Rohingyas. It is pertinent to note here

that feminist literature[25] has argued that majority and minority communities often use women to create a binary of identity in society. 'Our women' versus them runs through the nationalist narratives. Women as carriers of community identities become emblems of purity as well pollution of a people. The nature of sexual violence, rape, and causing physical harm to women of particular ethnic communities thus assume an aggravated significance for the perpetrator as well the victim community as a wartime and violence strategy. Betty Reardon identifies this issue in war and militarism as a system or cycle of violence that perpetuates women's oppression.[26] The hypermasculine image of soldiers and warfare also promotes the preservation of women's traditional roles as civilians and victims of warfare.[27] On the other hand, saving their women from this kind of violence also forces men of an ethnic community to engage in violence. And since the violence against women, including rape of women of a particular ethnic community, is seen as a victory upon those who failed to protect their women, they face the worst form of hyper-masculine violence in conflict. It is therefore no surprise that the institution of hyper-masculinity targets the women of the 'other' community, to victimize both women and men of the 'other'. The ultimate objective is to annihilate the 'other' community.

The Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic group from the Rakhine state in Myanmar, may be considered among the most persecuted and vulnerable refugee communities globally. After the independence of Burma, the first constitution of the Union of Burma intended to build a pluralistic and democratic country recognising every person within the territory as its citizen. However, the military takeover of the state power of Myanmar led the country in the opposite direction. The military in power subsequently denied the existence of the presence of other ethnic communities in Myanmar. Among the other ethnic communities, the Rohingya community faced the worst form of state led persecution and discrimination. Myanmar has scrapped the Rohingya Muslim minority's citizenship rights, predominantly living in the Arakan State, and forced them into refugee-like conditions from their ancestral lands. They are not recognised as one of the country's 135 official ethnic groups and they have been denied citizenship. Over the decades, this Muslim non-people, without any legal or other protection, have been the victims of wanton discrimination and violence at the hands of both the virulently anti-Muslim Rakhines, a Buddhist ethnic group, and agents of the central government. In Myanmar, Bamar is the dominant ethnic community that

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[25] See More: *Of A Nation Born: Bangladesh Papers on Sexual Violence*, edited with Hameeda Hossain, Zubaan, New Delhi, 2016**; and** *Women and Militancy: South Asian Complexities*, edited (with Imtiaz Ahmed), Dhaka: University Press Limited. 2011.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Laura Sjoberg, "Gendering the empire's soldiers. Gender ideologies, the US military, and the 'War on Terror'." Gender, war, and militarism: Feminist perspectives (2010): 209-218.

wants to unify Myanmar based on singular ethnoreligious cultural identity by ignoring other ethnic minorities' rights and identity.

In this process, Rohingyas were targeted in recent times as a means to achieve their goal. Anti-Rohingya sentiment and narratives are created and spread by the state officials and military leaders after the military coup in Myanmar, which were gradually accepted silently by the Buddhist fundamentalists. They believe that Rohingya have no right to be in the country. As Ibrahim has noted, Rohingyas are labelled as Bengali and should go back to Bangladesh.[28] This labelling is one of the dynamics behind the gruesome violence and genocide against the Rohingya community in Myanmar. The civil-military leadership in Myanmar is scapegoating Rohingya as a problem to the integration of the Burma community in Myanmar. Unfortunately, this scapegoating is widely accepted and practiced by Myanmar people, including the mainstream Buddhist community. After 1962, the military leadership created a new narrative that only the Buddhist Burmans are the true loyal citizens of Myanmar. Hence the Muslim Rohingyas are considered disloyal and alien in this country. Burmese nationalists use all sorts of issues, including skin colour, facial appearance, language, and religion of the Rohingya community, as a process of othering in Myanmar. The creation and perpetuation of hate speech against the Rohingyas are so invasive in Myanmar that the leading politicians also joined the aggressive nationalist in Myanmar. Myanmar's envoy in Hong Kong once remarked that the Rohingyas are ugly as ogres and do not share the fair and soft skin of other Burmese ethnic groups[29] Aung Win, a local politician and chairman of a state investigation in Myanmar, while denying gender-based violence against the Rohingyas stated, that "the Rohingyas are very dirty … [They] have a very low standard of living and poor hygiene."[30] The state official's statement is reflective of the hostile attitude of the state authorities towards the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

The storyline of Rohingya persecution is dated back to the late 1950s. The Rohingyas in Myanmar have been denied their fundamental rights and human rights since the mid-1950s. The decade of 1970s witnessed several invasions on the Rohingyas by the Myanmar state till 2017. This process has turned them into a state of statelessness and one of the world's most persecuted people. They are subjected to a state-sponsored 'slow-burning genocide' carried out by the

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[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Tharoor I, Why does this Buddhist-majority nation hate these Muslims so much? *The Washington Post*, 2015.

[30] Nikhil Kumar, *Reprisals, Rape, and Children Burned Alive: Burma's Rohingya Speak of Genocidal Terror*, December 12, 2016, available at: https://time.com/4596937/burma-myanmar-rohingya-bangladesh-refugees-crimes-against-humanity/, accessed on 10 November 2020.

Myanmar government's civilian-military/ military rule over the past several decades.[31] The state-sanctioned violence against the Rohingya community asymmetrically affected the women and children as discriminatory policies and practices such as population control regulations, gender-based violence, hard labour, educational inequality, and so on have handicapped the Rohingyas for generations.[32] The process of destroying Rohingya identity in Myanmar started in the 1960s during the period of General Ne Win when anti-Rohingya advisors and Rakhine nationalist groups successfully lobbied to erase the Rohingya from the demographic map of citizenship with the enactment of the 1982 Citizenship Act.[33] The consequences of that piece of legislation were widespread. It legitimised the non-citizen or 'stateless' status of the Rohingyas and concurrently made the ethnic group susceptible to forced labour, forced eviction, discriminatory taxation, and restrictions on basic needs such as food, employment, education, and healthcare that the Rohingyas had to endure in the following years.

The issue of ethnic identity and citizenship of the Rohingya ethnic community in Myanmar has been debated for several years. The underlying problem is that Rohingya is not included among the officially recognised 135 ethnic groups of the country[34]. During the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) government of President Thein Sein (2011–2016), which former military leaders dominated, the government officially used the term Bengali. When the National League for Democracy (NLD) came to power in 2016, initially it decided to avoid using either Rohingya or Bengali. The State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi said on 22 May 2016 that using either "Rohingya" or "Bengali" was not helpful in her government's attempt to find a solution to the conflict in the Rakhine State[35]. A senior foreign ministry official under direction from Suu Kyi asked the US embassy in Yangon not to use the word "Rohingya" after Buddhist nationalists protested outside the embassy for using the "R" word when expressing condolences for victims of a boat sinking incident[36]. Aung San Suu Kyi also said, "The Rakhine Buddhists object to the term 'Rohingya' just as much as Muslims object to the term 'Bengali' because they have all kinds

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[31] Maung Zarni, and Alice Cowley. "The slow-burning genocide of Myanmar's Rohingya." *Pac. Rim L. & Poly J*. 23 (2014): 683.

[32] Engy Abdelkader, "Myanmar's democracy struggle: the impact of communal violence upon Rohingya women and youth." *Pac. Rim L. & Poly J*. 23 (2014): 511.

[33] Ahsan Ullah, A. K. M. "Rohingya crisis in Myanmar: Seeking justice for the "stateless"." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, vol. 32, no. 3 (2016): 285-301.

[34] Nehginpao Kipgen, "Conflict in Rakhine state in Myanmar: Rohingya Muslims' Conundrum." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 33, Issue 2, 2013, pp.298-310.

[35] Richard C. Paddock, "Aung San Suu Kyi Asks U.S. Not to Refer to 'Rohingya'," *The New York Times*, 6 May 2016.

[36] "US defies Myanmar government request to stop using term Rohingya," *The Guardian*, 11 May 2016.

of political and emotional implications, which are unacceptable to the opposite party"[37]. Suu Kyi and her NLD government proposed to use "the Muslim community in Rakhine State", which they thought was a more acceptable term.

In 1982 Myanmar government adopted the Citizenship Law. The 1982 Citizenship Law has three categories of citizens. These are: citizen or full citizen, associate citizen, and naturalised citizen. Under the Citizenship Law, citizens are the descendants of residents who lived in Burma before 1823 or were born to parents both of whom were citizens. Associate citizens are those people who acquired citizenship through the 1948 Citizenship Act. And naturalised citizens are those who lived in the country before the country's independence in 1948 and applied for citizenship after 1982[38]. Since "Rohingya" is not recognised by the 1982 Citizenship Act, it is not listed among the 135 national races of the country, and therefore, the people are denied citizenship rights and privileges that other ethnic groups enjoy. The erosion of the ethnic identity of the Rohingyas in Myanmar makes them different from other ethnic minorities' identities, which are recognised through citizenship. While other ethnic minorities are fighting for greater autonomy under a federal system, the Rohingyas are struggling to be recognised as an ethnic group and for acquiring citizenship. The 1982 Citizenship Act allows Myanmar's government to adopt the official narrative that the Rohingyas are not the citizens of Myanmar. Such an official narrative has been ingrained in Myanmar's society over the years. The majority Buddhist community in Myanmar has also adopted this official narrative against the Rohingyas. These narrative claims that Rohingyas living in the Rakhine State for generations is controversial. The military regime also chose "ethnicity" as a means of ethnic assimilation. It took measures to force other minorities to assimilate into the Burmese identity. The Rohingya community lacks both political and social strengths to motivate leaders of Myanmar to recognise their identity. Without any politically constructive dialogue with the Rohingyas, the Myanmar military junta had launched military attacks upon the Rohingya civilian population. They perpetrated widespread violations of human and civil rights and ethnic cleansing against them.

Emergence of hegemonic masculinity among the Rohingya Men in stateless condition in Bangladesh:

The Rohingya men alongside with women have faced different facets of violence and oppression before the displacement from Myanmar. This was also caused loss of their jobs, economic solvency

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[37] Lun Min Mang, "State-counselor urges avoidance of words 'Rohingya' and 'Bengali'," *Myanmar Times*, 23 May 2016. Cited in https://www.mmtimes.com/national-news/yangon/20438-statecounsellor-urges-avoidance-of-words-rohingya-and-bengali.html. Accessed on 1 June 2018.
[38] Nehginpao Kipgen, "Conflict in Rakhine state in Myanmar: Rohingya Muslims' *Conundrum*," *op. cit*. pp. 298-310.

and loss of social status. However, in stateless conditions they began to restore their experience of manhood and patriarchal notions of masculinity in order to cope with the new situations. This is further manifested through an uncertainty about future, protracted refugee conditions, lack of employment and social, geographical contexts of the camp areas. Connel (2005) in this context argues that the masculinity of stateless men is a part of hierarchical social structure in their country of origin which is not only interactions between masculinities and femininities but defined through relations of oppression between men as well. Section II presents a vivid picture of repressions and torture against the Rohingya as an outcome of their stateless condition. Both Rohingya women and men have faced brutal face of oppression. Now in stateless condition there are elements of emerging discursive masculinity among the Rohingya men. The findings suggest that in reaction to the repressive situation in stateless condition the Rohingya community adopt many strategies and actions which have strengthened patriarchal structure within the community. At present over 1 million Rohingyas are living in the largest refugee camps of the world in Bangladesh. It is considered as the largest and the fastest movement of people in recent history. According to UNHCR, the current Rohingya refugee population is 925,380 who are living in 34 camps. Along with these two 34 new makeshift camps built after the 2017 refugee influx, around 35 thousand Rohingyas are living in two UNHCR administered refugee camps in Nayapara and Kutupalong in Cox's Bazar. These two camps were set up to host them in 1992. With 40,000 people per square kilometer, the camps are one of the most crowded places in the world.[39] Among the 900,000 Rohingya refugees fifty five percent are children or of minor age[40]. Around 36,673 orphaned children are now living in the 12 Rohingya camps under the Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilla of Cox's Bazar. Among the orphans, 12.5% are still without any shelter[41]. Various demographic studies show that about half of the Rohingyas are women and girl children who regularly face restriction of movement due to the lack of adequate light at night, fear of assault, abductions and trafficking, access to relief and treatment, cooking facilities, access to sanitation. Also, rough terrain makes it difficult for the persons with special needs and elderly people,

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[39] World Vision, Rohingya refugee crisis: Facts, FAQs, and how to help, available at:
https://www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/rohingya-refugees-bangladesh-facts , accessed on 20 April, 2021.
[40] Joint Agency Research Report (2018). Rohingya Refugee Response Gender Analysis: Recognizing and responding to gender inequalities, available at:
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/rr-rohingya-refugee-response-gender-analysis-010818-en.pd, accessed on 20 April 2021.
[41] Dhaka Tribune (2017). 36,673 orphaned children living in Rohingya camps, available at:
https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/2017/11/09/36673-orphaned-children-living-rohingya-camps, accessed on 10 April 2021.

including males and females, to move around. The UNHCR described the Rohingya refugee crisis as "the most urgent refugee emergency in the world" in 2017[42].

Men control over Women Reproductive Right:

The legacy of frequent pregnancy is evident among the Rohingya men in stateless situation. The respondents of the Rohingya stateless community now living in Bangladesh informed that in Myanmar, the government imposed two child policy. They were punished by the authority if they took children more than two. However, they adopted child as many as possible mainly for two reasons. One is to increase their community members. And the second one it to ensure the safety of their women and girl for being abused or victim of rape. The frequent pregnancy among the Rohingyas unleashed the very unsafe and male dominated society where the women's reproductive health was largely ignored. Rohingya women living in shelter camps in Bangladesh have faced frequent pregnancy due to the lack of education and awareness of family planning among their male partners. The legacy of frequent pregnancy in Myanmar also prevalent in this community. Also, the existing patriarchal system among them prevent women to participate in the decision making related to their family planning. As result nearly 35,000 new births are registered in the Rohingya camps every year. In this context, there are additional 150,000 new members have been added to the Rohingya community since 2017[43].

Sexual harassment

Rohingya women in the camps are also experiencing eve teasing, abuse and sexual harassment. One of the Rohingya female respondents opined that at the early period of their arrival in Bangladesh shelter camps, they did not face teasing and harassment. However, gradually they have been subjected to sexual harassment. Inadequate lighting in the camp areas restricts their movement after the sunset. Due to the fear of abduction and physical assault they do not go out to toilet at night. Also, the access to relief aid is difficult for them as they have to compete with the male Rohingyas in the camp areas.

Domestic Violence

Women in the camps complained of domestic violence. For many the torture of the in-laws is often unbearable, the situation is worsened because of early marriages. In the camps, domestic violence and polygamy is quite rampant. Dowry is common among the Rohingyas. Women allege that, many of them have faced violence after marriage because of the inability of their families to

[42] The Daily Star, World's most urgent refugee crisis: UNHCR, 25 September, 2017. URL:
https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/mayanmar-rohingya-refugee-worlds-most-urgent-crisis-1467262
[43] Govt worried as Rohingya population grows fast in Bangladesh camps
Mustafizur Rahman | Published: 00:07, Apr 11,2022 | Updated: 05:15, Apr 11,2022

give dowry. For instance, in the case of Rehunma (pseudo name),[44] she was married off at the age of seventeen had a good married life during the early years of her marriage. Her husband was very caring and loving. But her mother-in-law and her husband's first wife tortured her both mentally and physically for the payment of the dowry. Gulbahar (pseudo name)[45] belonged to a well-off family; but she was married to an economically depressed family. Her only surviving son suffered from constant headaches and dizziness, this required frequent medical care and medical expenses. Her husband neither worked nor took care of the family. Whenever she would ask for money from her husband to meet the medical expenses of her son, he would beat her up mercilessly.

The Rohingya male in shelter camps faced restriction on the movement. However, the situation remains the same after the pandemic[46]. They are not allowed to work, move and go to the local bazar and shopping areas. The male refugee population had nothing to do all day long. They were sitting idle all day and played cards and gossiped among themselves[47]. During this period domestic violence increased in an alarming rate in the camps. The men became highly aggressive and mentally imbalanced. They got violent on slightest pretexts. One of the participants mentioned that a Rohingya woman was almost beaten to death by her husband just because she was delayed in delivering food to him.

Dowry, Polygamy and Child Marriage:

The Rohingya men see dowry as an essential part of male dominance within their community. They have been practiced taking dowry from the bride's family in the past in Myanmar and continued this same trend in the camps in Bangladesh. Because of their continuation of this practice, the women in the camps are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence, abuse, mental torture and polygamy. Dowry encourages male refugees to marriage more than one woman in different camp sites. It has become a driving force for polygamy and child marriage among the Rohingyas. During the KII interview one male respondent has opined that dowry is almost accepted in his community and the bride's families are willing to pay cash, furniture, vehicles and ornaments as dowry[48]. However, it is embedded in the social structure it causes major problems. As for example, inability of the poor families to pay for their daughters encourages male refugee to go for polygamy elsewhere. It also fosters child marriage. The families whenever find a person willing to marry their daughter in cheap dowry they are ready to accept the marriage proposal without concerning the age of their daughters. The practice of dowry reinforces men's control

[44] Rehana, Camp: 7, Balukhali, Cox's Bazar, 2022.
[45] Gulbahar, Camp:13, Balukhali, Cox's Bazar, 2022.
[46] KII interview, Camp: 11, Balukhali, Cox's Bazar, 2022.
[47] Ibid.
[48] KII interview, Camp: 10, Balukhali, Cox's Bazar, 2022.

over the Rohingya women at the household economy as women are more dependent to their male partners and become vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Dowry for women is a non-refundable and non-profitable investment in families which binds them in slavery conditions and inhibit them to get divorce in the case of domestic violence. One of the KII respondents has opined that her husband left her and his four children to get married to another girl because her father was not able to pay his demand as dowry. This woman is not living without her husband in camp area[49].

She further narrated that the male Rohingya refugees have no work to do, so either they engage in illegal activities like petty crime, stalking women, or try to get married in another camp to take dowry. Many Rohingya men have more than one wife in the camps. Although child marriage was strictly prohibited in camps but after the pandemic, it has increased dramatically. They avoided camp in-charge surveillance and arranged marriage discretely. Sometimes they go to the in-charge office to submit fake birth certificates where they increase the girl's age[50]. However, there has been a growing consciousness among the Rohingya women about their rights as women and human beings. The KII informant from the Rohingya community talked at length about the ills of polygamy and how it was impacting women's lives in the camps. They strongly felt it was wrong for men to get married in the presence of a wife.

No Income, No Wellbeing:

The construction of hegemonic masculinity among the Rohingya male can be seen through their role as bread earners as well as exclusion from the local labour market in Cox's Bazaar. The lack of access to the local labour market somehow declines their status in their community. Therefore, they try to show the male powers to seek local day labour jobs. While conducting Focus Group Discission among the host community in Ukhiya Upazilla in June 2022, the local villagers informed us that Rohingya men try to seek day labour jobs in a very cheap wage. They seek 300 to 400 taka per day wage as a day labourer in local areas. These male Rohingyas can work for 10 to 12 hours. They are hard-working, ferocious and ruthless[51]. They can do any type of hard labour works including, wood cutting, weight lifting, ploughing lands, and transport workers. Their eagerness to get access to the local market has already created strain condition between the host and refugee communities. The host communities in Cox's Bazaar gradually see their access to job markets as the Rohingya males offer more cheap labours for the locality. There is no denying that the Bangladesh state and its people and more specifically the local people of Cox's Bazar (now known

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[49] Ibid.
[50] KII interview, Camp, 09, Balukhali, Cox's Bazar, 2022.
[51] FGD Participants, Ukhiya, June 2022.

as the host community) had set an example of humanity and solidarity towards the Rohingya displaced people by hosting more than one million of them in 2017. However, over the years their attitudes and perception have changed significantly. At present, they do not hesitate to demonstrate their frustration and hostility towards the Rohingyas quite openly. Refugee influx in a community can bring conflicts between refugee and host community. Building shelter camps leads to land cultivation, which in turn results in the exploitation of resources like grazing land, trees, firewood, food, and water. These are just a few of the equation's results. In regions where these resources are scarce, hosts are more likely to believe that they are losing out their community resources which often leads to hostility toward the refugee population which is evident in many refugee host countries like Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya[52].

To examine the contentious relations between the refugee and host communities, Mogire (2011) identified six factors contributing to the conflict that gives rise to the security discussion between refugees and the host community. First of all, refugees and the locals who are hosting them compete for resources like land, water, and firewood. The relationship between these two groups may even get better when there are ample resources available. A second point of contention between refugees and the communities that have welcomed them is the environmental harm brought on by refugees, such as tree cutting and pollution. Thirdly, fierce competition for opportunities and resources is one of the main factors that lead to conflict; when refugees choose a side in the country hosting them and become involved in the civil war or other internal conflict of that country. The fifth source is the local population's perception of injustice in relation to the assistance that refugees receive from various international organizations[53]. Locals perceive injustice because they believe they are equally deserving of receiving similar assistance. The final point of contention is a result of misperceptions about one another's cultures held by both the local populace and visitors.

The Rohingya males current camp lives in Bangladesh can be characterized as limited spaces for jobs, income and engage in productive activities. The Rohingya male in camp areas has no job to do. They were mostly farmers in Myanmar. They did not have formal education in Myanmar. Therefore, they did not get access to the formal and government jobs. So, farming and shop keeping business were their main earning sources. Now in camp life, in the absence of proper living spaces, let alone arable land, the Rohingyas male are forced to live on national and international aid. Since they are mostly illiterate in formal education, jobs are mostly of informal

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[52] Jacobsen, K. (2002). Livelihoods in conflict: the pursuit of livelihoods by refugees and the impact on the human security of host communities. *International migration*, 40(5), 95-123.

[53] Mogire, Edward. 2011. *Victims as Security Threats. Global Security in a Changing World*. London: Routledge.

nature. Some of the youths are engaged in educational activities, such as volunteering in international organisations or taking upon themselves the responsibility to teach young children the alphabets and basic education in camp schools. Some of the middle-aged men have engaged in shopkeeping, while the *madrassa*-educated men have taken up *imamati* (the responsibility of leading the prayer in a mosque) in local masjids. The Rohingya male conceive their current situation as no hope in future type situation. As the do not have any income opportunities at present they cannot work to bring wellbeing of their families. At present, the camp area is overcrowded due to the arrival of new faces in the last five years. At least each family now has two new babies. This has increased the population of the camp area and put tremendous pressure on the humanitarian services. On the other hand, due to the pandemic many NGOs have closed their activities. Consequently, the lack of funds and services creates difficult conditions for the refugee families to arrange for their livelihoods. Therefore, they wanted to work to earn extra money. They went to local host villages to work as day labourers, which was not liked by the members of the local host community. However, they were of the opinion that the host communities were their best friends; without them they would not survive in this country. But now they also need to work to ease out their living conditions, but this is straining the relations between the two communities.

Conclusion

This article intends to explore how the masculine nature of Rohingya men is reinforced and manifested in protracted stateless condition in Bangladesh. The findings demonstrate that masculine behaviours are reinforced in the context of disruption and uncertainty of Rohingya people due to war, violence and genocide committed against them in Myanmar. This has further instigated due to Covid-19 restrictions, lack of access to local labour market, contentious relations with the host communities and declining humanitarian services. Acute congestion, extreme poverty, and little possibilities to produce money all led to a brutal life in the camps. Rohingya camps are not an exception. It forces male to the margins of society, where they must strive for survival. Because aggressive and ruthless. They participate in every endeavour that might improve their social status and position in the families that often make them violent in nature. The Rohingya women were confined to public spaces in Myanmar for many reasons. Now that they have to move out to get access to relief and humanitarian support in refugee camps, the Rohingya males sometime view it as against their social norms. This can be considered as one kind of patriarchy which is the daily companion of the camp. The lack of unawareness, education, poverty, long captivity in the circle of exploitation, and patriarchal attitudes towards women have given birth to a masculine attitude among the Rohingya males.