

TITLE

CHANGING GENDER ROLES: BANGLADESHI MALE  
MIGRANT WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

## Abstract

This study concerns Bangladeshi male migrant workers in Malaysia and explores how they are adopting and adapting with the changing gender roles in Malaysia and is there any changes of thought regarding household tasks which is extremely regarded as women's work in Bangladesh. How do these male migrant workers adjust with this new situation and whether they face any psychological problem to carry out feminine works is the main focus of the study. Total 400 Bangladeshi male migrant workers were interviewed to know their attitudes towards gender roles in the family as well as household tasks at home. Face-to-face interviews have been conducted following a structured questionnaire along with few in-depth case studies. The result shows that: (a) although all respondents are doing their household tasks in Malaysia but most of them are not willing to do the same at home in Bangladesh; (b) male dominance is engraved in their mind which induce them to think that women are less intelligent, less capable...etc. comparing to men; (c) masculine characteristic play an important role in the decision of the choice of job, they have their own definition of masculine job and feminine job; (d) there were attitudinal differences amongst workers working in different sectors on gender roles .

## Introduction

A labor-abundant country, Bangladesh has sent over an estimated 6.7 million migrant workers to more than 140 countries across the globe over a period of more than three decades since the mid-1970s. The countries of Middle East and Northern Africa have been the major destinations for these migrant workers. In the recent past, there have been large flows of Bangladeshi migrant workers to southeast Asia-particularly in Malaysia and Singapore (Nath & Mamun, 2010). Much of international migration from Bangladesh—an estimated 74.5%—has been to the Middle East, especially to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Ahmed 1998; Shah 1999) . However, since the 1990s Bangladeshis have also become a notable part of the international labor migrant pool in a number of Southeast Asian and East Asian countries (Kibria, 2004).

Even before the country's independence in 1971, people from what was then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) were already migrating to other countries in search of jobs (Osmani, 1986). Large-scale migration began in 1976, when the cash-rich Middle Eastern countries undertook massive development projects following the oil price hike in 1973. The crisis in the Persian Gulf during the period 1990-1991 prompted a shift in focus to South-East and East Asia (Ahmed, 1998). Fortuitously at that time, Malaysia was already suffering from acute labor voids - more so than other countries in the region (ILO, 1998). Consequently, in 1992, Malaysia entered into an agreement with Bangladesh for the systematic transfer of labor on a large scale. Hence, the Bangladesh-to-Malaysia labor movement was augmented from that year onwards. The importation in 1986 of 500 Bangladeshis to service the plantation sector on a trial basis was a precursor to the mass labor movement. In 1994, Malaysia entered into another agreement with Bangladesh for the annual importation of 50,000 workers, mostly for the construction industry (Ahmed, 1998), although the aftershock of the Asian Financial Crisis damaged the programme. In 1997 Malaysia deported 100,000 Bangladeshi Workers and in 2001 announced restrictions on the importation of foreign labor (Netto 2001).

Labor Department of Ministry of Human Resources of Peninsular Malaysia states that till 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 officially there are 1,803,260 migrants workers are working in different sectors in Malaysia. The following table shows information about legal migrant workers in Malaysia from different countries.

### Migrant Workers in Malaysia (2010)

Country	Total Number of Migrant Workers
Indonesia	917,932
Bangladesh	307,366
Nepal	175,810
Myanmar	140,260
India	113,797
Vietnam	74,842
Filipina	18,640
Pakistan	22,989
Thailand	7,102
Cambodia	12,091
China	8,894
Sri Lanka	3,414
Laos	57
Uzbekistan	4
Kazakhstan	1
Others	61
Total	1,803,260

Source: Labor Department, Ministry of Human Resources of Peninsular Malaysia.

Despite the legal and administrative channels to employment in Malaysia, irregular migrants take high risks to be in irregular status for a variety of reasons. Most illegal migrant workers from Bangladesh come via Thailand to Malaysia, and are mainly concentrated in the Northern region of the country. These workers are very vulnerable, and often badly paid. Unfortunately, what is known about the legal workers is not much more promising. They come on a two year contract, all have paid fees as high as 5,000-

9,000 Malaysian Ringgit (RM). Although there are a few females in certain sectors like the textile industry, most of the migrants are male.

Almost all early migrants traveled abroad on their private initiative (Osmani, 1986). In the mid-1970s, the Government of Bangladesh set up an institutional framework, the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) under the Ministry of Labor, to regularize the procedures for labor export. From that time onwards, all foreign employment was required to be cleared by BMET while private recruitment agents were required to have a license to avoid fraudulent deals. Likewise in the beginning, labor movement to Malaysia was left entirely in the hands of the private sector. In 1995, following allegations of exorbitant fees and inefficiencies, a Government-to-Government procedure was introduced between the newly formed Malaysian Task Force and Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Ltd (Abdul-Aziz, 2001).

In the traditional viewpoint, migrants are both pushed by lack of opportunities at home places and pulled by the hope of economic gain. Underlying the movement is a search for a better life. Migration can help to achieve this by associating people more closely with available economic opportunities, employment and services (Stark, 1991).

It is estimated that one-third of the total working age population of Bangladesh is either unemployed or underemployed (GoB, 1998). Migration has kept the unemployment rate virtually unchanged since the 1980s, although the growth rate of the labor force is almost twice that of the population growth. Mahmud (1998) and Afsar (2000) emphasize that the continuous outflow of people of working-age and the accompanying inflow of remittances has played a major role in keeping the unemployment rate stable. Migration, therefore, eased the pressure of alternative employment creation on successive governments.

According to Tasneem Siddiqui (2003) some rural poor people also migrate internationally. Little data are available on the proportion of international migrants that is poor. Some studies suggest that international migration entails huge costs. Those who migrate have some resources at their families' disposal and/or have access to social networks for generating further resources to finance migration. However, bankers and migrants who have dealt with the issue in the Middle East noted that the poor also migrate. They do so by acquiring work visas through relatives, friends and neighbors. In these cases, migrants do not have to purchase the visa and the employer occasionally pays for the air fare. 60% of work visas for employment are procured by migrants already abroad. Under these circumstances, poor people are also likely to have engaged in migration as a livelihood choice. More research is needed on the socio-economic characteristics of migrants (Siddiqui, 2003).

This study will investigate the factors which are responsible for the migration of Bangladeshi migrant workers to Malaysia.

Bangladeshi society is based on rather traditional norms of what a man or woman should do with typical gender roles. Gender roles are associated with gender norms of how females and males are supposed to behave within a culture (D. Balk, 1997).

The status of women in Bangladeshi society is deeply rooted in patriarchy. It reflects the systematic subordination and inequality of women. It is dominated by a patrilineal and patriarchal kinship system, which enforces the social and economic dependence of women on men and ascribes the lower status to women. Women in Bangladesh comprise the majority of the poor and experience deprivation and vulnerability due to their lower status.

The gender division of labor treats all women as potential wives-mothers i.e., dependent on men precisely because they are biologically females. And the priority originated more from biological differences rather than human similarities and legitimization of the differences between men and women. A rigid division of labor by gender, based on the nature of work is found in the domestic area. Cooking, washing, cleaning and childcare activities are almost exclusively performed by women without any assistance from the male members. With regard to such activities as daily shopping and repairing, which are traditionally assumed to be men's work in Bangladesh (Tamanna, 2003). Wives on the other hand, while acknowledging their husbands' greater involvement, claimed to be significantly involved in these activities too. Thus the male person plays a dominating role everywhere in society. They maintain the gender norms of the society. They are not only socially but also psychologically accustomed with these roles. But when there arise any adverse situation where gender role reversal is required then what happens to with the men is the main focus of the study. Because when the men migrate they leave behind their family or wife. So there are no women to do the household work in the country in which they have migrated to. How will these male migrants adjust with this new situation and whether they face a contradiction in terms of what they believe and what they do. Either they are employed in feminine work or have to do their household work by themselves will be the main focus of the study.

Thus this research will investigate what happens when role differentiations are there due to migration. Gender roles are deeply rooted in the minds of men and women through the socialization process, which is extremely powerful in this sub-continent and males are very much habituated with this typical situation. However this research will explore how migrant workers cope with this behavior of role differentiation.

## **Methodology**

This study is based on the case of the survey method and an analysis of semi-structured in-depth interviews with Bangladeshi migrant workers working in different sectors in Malaysia. Supplementing the information from the in-depth interviews is an analysis of secondary information from the High Commission of Bangladesh in Malaysia, Ministry of Human Resource, Peninsular Malaysia, Immigration Department of Peninsular Malaysia and other sources regarding the regulation of recruitment and labor migration process by the Government of Bangladesh and Malaysia as well. 400 Bangladeshi male migrant workers were selected for the research. A non-probability sampling technique was used for the purpose of data collection owing mainly to the lack of accurate information on the universe. Because the residences of migrants are scattered all over Singapore and they are very temporary in nature, probability sampling was virtually impossible. Respondents were selected from 4 sectors (Cleaning Sector, Construction sector, Manufacturing Sector and Restaurant Sector) in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Regions. Four male enumerators were hired to collect data from each sector. They interviewed migrant workers at their workplace in working hour and interview duration was about 1(one) hour per person. Interviews were conducted from January to March, 2010. After a pilot study in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor regions, a questionnaire with both structured and unstructured questions was constructed for the interviews. It was used for face-to-face in-depth interviews, and also for individuals to complete. The questionnaires were available in English and the Bengali language. The questionnaire was divided into several sections. Different section covered different aspects of the migrant workers. There were six sections in the final questionnaire. To maintain the quality of the data, all completed questionnaire were checked for completeness and consistency of

responses. A revisit was required to rectify any mistakes that were detected. Tally counts of the responses to the open-ended questions were made for all open-ended responses. Variables with different units of measurement were edited for uniformity of codes. Findings were coded and analyzed using the SPSS programme.

## **Socio-demographic Profile of Bangladeshi Migrant Workers**

### **Age structure**

From the data it has been observed that most of the migrant workers are young. About 176 migrants (44%) of the total sample are within 20 to 30 years of age. However, this is not surprising because migrant workers everywhere tend to be young and several studies have found that young persons are more prone to migrate for overseas employment (Karim, Abdullah and Bakar, 1999; Rudinick, 1996; Lie, 1994; Rahman, 2000 in (Rahman & Fee, 2005). Compared to the young workers the numbers of middle aged migrant workers are the second largest number of respondents. 161 (40.3%) of the total sample size are from the age group 31 to 40 years. Most of the respondents from this age group are staying for a longer time than the workers who are below 31 years old. There are also 63 respondents amongst 400 whose age are more than 41. This middle aged group is doing very hard work in Malaysia. This indicates the increasing unemployment rate in Bangladesh which forces people to migrate to other countries to earn a better income.

Table 1: Age Structure of the Migrant Workers

Age Label	Frequency	Percentage
20 years to 30 years	176	44.0
31 years to 40 years	161	40.3
41 years to above	63	15.8
Total	400	100.0

### **Education Background**

According to the statistics report of Bangladesh adult literacy rate in Bangladesh is 51.6% in 2004, amongst them 57.2% are male and 42.8% are female. In 2007 the adult literacy rate in Bangladesh has been increased into 53.5% (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Educational background is an important indicator of the status of a migrant worker. Normally those with a better educational background are not interested to do physical hard work, but the present study was conducted amongst migrant workers who are engaged in sectors where educational background does not play an important role. The data shows that 50.5% of the respondents have completed their primary education, while only 48% has certificate for completion of secondary education. Only 6 migrant workers amongst the 400 respondents have passed their college degree and according to them they were trapped by the agency that promised them a better job than the present one. They are not interested to do this job but they have no alternatives. This shows that there is a relationship between the educational level of the respondents and their job expectations.

Table 2: Education Background of the Migrant Workers

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary Level	202	50.5
Secondary Level	192	48.0
College Level	6	1.5
Total	400	100.0

### Religious affiliation

According to Bangladesh Bureau of statistics in 2004 there are 89.52% Muslims, 9.58% Hindu, 0.46% Buddhist, 0.27% Christian and 0.14% other religion in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Bureau of statistics, 2004). Emigration opportunities have remained open to all in Bangladesh regardless of religious affiliation. Hindu and Muslim migrants in Singapore work together, live together and even eat together. It would be difficult to discern their religious affiliation through mere observation (Rahman & Fee, 2005). The fact is the same for the Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia also. 393 (98.3%) respondents are Muslims and 1.8% (7) respondents are Hindus in the present research. Religion does not make any difference in their life in Malaysia.

Table 3: Religious Affiliation of the Migrant Workers

Types of Religion	Frequency	Percent
Muslim	393	98.3
Hindu	7	1.8
Total	400	100.0

## **Marital Status**

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Report 2004 states that there were 41.8% unmarried, 57% married, 0.97% widow and 0.19% divorced/separated men in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2004). From the present study we get more unmarried migrant workers in Malaysia. There are 365 (91.3%) unmarried respondents and only 8.8% married respondents. That means those who are already married are not willing to migrate leaving their family behind. Besides that when they are married and form a nuclear family, it is very difficult for a nuclear family to raise a huge amount of money for migration. While those who are unmarried predominantly stay in a joint or extended family, it is easier for them to raise money for migration. This could be the reason for why most of the migrant workers are unmarried in the present study.

Table 4: Marital Status of the Migrant Workers

	Frequency	Percentage
Married	35	8.8
Unmarried	365	91.3
Total	400	100

## **Results and Analysis**

The word “patriarchy” was around before the current resurgence of the women’s movement and women’s studies courses, the concept has been recreated in the past two decades to analyze the origins and conditions of men’s oppression of women (Kamarae, 1992). Originally used to describe the power of the father as head of household, the term ‘patriarchy’ has been used within post 1960s feminism to refer to the systematic organization of male supremacy and female subordination (Kamarae, 1992; Stacey, 1993;

Aina, 1998; etc.). The term has been defined as a system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions. Feminists have argued that in any of the historical forms that patriarchal society takes, whether it is feudal, capitalist or socialist, a sex gender system and a system of economic discrimination operate simultaneously. It is observed in the literature that the establishment and practice of male dominance over women and children, is a historic process formed by men and women, with the patriarchal family serving as a basic unit of organization. A patriarchy is considered the head of the household and within the family he controls productive resources, labour force, and reproductive capacities based on the notions of superiority and inferiority and legitimized by differences in gender and generation (Asiyanbola, 2005).

By custom, a patriarchal, patrilineal, and patrilocal social system exists in Bangladesh. The life of a woman in Bangladesh is therefore dominated by this social system. Such a system upholds a rigid division of labor that controls women's mobility, roles and responsibility, and sexuality. Traditionally, a woman in Bangladesh derives her status from her family. Her role includes the maintenance of her family as a social institution and as an economic entity. Women traditionally are in charge of household affairs and are not encouraged to move outside the immediate neighborhood unaccompanied. Thus, most women's economic and social lives revolve around the home, children, and family. The society is patriarchal in nearly every area of life, although some women have achieved significant positions of political power at the national level. For ordinary women, movement is confined, education is stressed less than it is for men, and authority is reserved for a woman's father, older brother, and husband. Men are expected to be the

heads of their households and to work outside the home. Men often do the majority of the shopping, since that requires interaction in crowded markets (Banglapedia, 2003).

Respondents of the present study also mentioned the same situation as above about the Bangladeshi society. According to them no one did domestic work when they were at home before migration. They did not cook or helped in cooking, did not wash cloths if there were women to wash it, did not sweep the floor or mop the floor. All these work are regarded as women's work in their society. But after migration they have to do all these feminine works as there are no women here in Malaysia who will do it for them. So they have to do all these work for their own living and surprisingly enough they are doing very well. All migrant workers cook for themselves everyday because early in the morning they have to go out for work and used to eat before they start work. Sometimes they cook collectively or sometimes individually. It depends on the relationship amongst housemates. After cooking they wash their utensils and maintain them. Once or twice a week during their break or holidays they wash their cloths and sometimes iron them. For cleaning and manufacturing workers they have their uniforms which they have to wear everyday during duty hour. On the other hand for construction and restaurant workers they don't have any uniform. They can wear anything in the job place. But they all have to wash their own cloths.

Whatever it is all these things which is normally women's work in Bangladesh are being done by men in Malaysia. From the earlier discussion we already know about the male dominant nature and gender division of labor in Bangladesh society. So now the question is how these migrant workers are adapting with these feminine works and what their feelings are? Although they are doing all household work themselves but still they think it as women's work. They say that as there are no women in Malaysia so they are doing all

these otherwise these should always be done by women. Men should not do all these household works. 43.8% of them felt domestic work is difficult and 56.3% think that domestic works are very difficult. They agreed that it's very hard for them to do cooking, cleaning, washing etc. To them women are trained for these works so it's very easy for them and women's hands are specially made for doing household work. Men are not made for these.

Table 5: What do you think about Household works?

	Frequency	Percent
Difficult	175	43.8
Very Difficult	225	56.3
Total	400	100

After going back to Bangladesh most of them are not interested to help women to do domestic work but few will help them while they are free. Data shows opinions of migrant workers from different sectors. As Construction work seems to be more masculine work so they have different opinion from them who are working in more feminine sectors. Although the difference is not extreme but it's clear that all of them are derived from a strong patriarchal societal background which compel them to think that domestic work is only for women. They think that there is a division of work for everyone. Each should do their part. Women should do work at home and men should work outside for earning money. 9 respondents from construction sector, 14 respondents from cleaning sector, 18 respondents from manufacturing sector and 15 respondents from restaurant sector are willing to help women to do household work after going back to Bangladesh. Majority of them (86%) are against of doing household task.

Table 6; Job Type \* Are they interested to do these household task after going back to BD  
Cross tabulation

			Are they interested to do these household task after going back to BD		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	9	91	100
		% within Job Type	9.0%	91.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	14	86	100
		% within Job Type	14.0%	86.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	18	82	100
		% within Job Type	18.0%	82.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	15	85	100
		% within Job Type	15.0%	85.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	56	344	400
		% within Job Type	14.0%	86.0%	100.0%

It is argued that the roles of men in the family are closely linked to the attributes of masculinity (Silvia, 1999). Studies on masculinity, mostly from the developed countries have revealed about five important conclusions (Short, 1996): that masculinity is not a biological category as much as a social construct subject to change, revision and multiple representations; that masculinity is not fixed, it is a relational, constantly shifting attribute defined in relation to the feminine; that masculinity is a site of interconnection and tension with other sources of social differentiation; that masculinity is both lived and imagined desires; and that masculinity is not only socially constructed and reconstructed, it is spatially grounded (Asiyanbola, 2005).

In the present research male migrant workers were asked some questions regarding women's intelligence, ability and strength. And the answer represents the view men have of women who are from a strong patriarchal background. Statistics shows opinions of migrant workers from different sectors. Only 7% respondents from construction sector

agree that responsibilities of a father and mother in the family are equal. They are trying to explain that the father of the family has more responsibilities than a mother in the family. Father always plays the key role to make major decisions in the family while mother is involved in household work. Although respondents from other 3 sectors have higher percentage on this issue but if we observe the total percentage then we can see 84.8% respondents amongst 400 do not support that responsibilities of a father and a mother in the family are equal.

Table 7: Job Type \* Responsibilities of a father and mother is equal Cross tabulation

			Responsibilities of a father and mother is equal		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	25	75	100
		% within Job Type	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	7	93	100
		% within Job Type	7.0%	93.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	9	91	100
		% within Job Type	9.0%	91.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	20	80	100
		% within Job Type	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		61	339	400
	% within Job Type		15.3%	84.8%	100.0%

When respondents were asked specifically about the responsibility of a father and mother in the family then the respondents from construction sector answered totally different from the respondents from other three sectors. While 86% respondents from construction sector are agreeing on the issue that men should earn money and women should take care of the family, then only 39% respondents from cleaning sectors, 51% respondents from manufacturing sectors and 47% respondents from restaurant sectors are supporting the issue. In this section we can see that construction workers are showing their masculinity as they are working in a more masculine sector comparing to other sectors which they think as feminine sector.

Table 8: Job Type \* Men should earn money and Women should take care of the family  
Cross tabulation

			Man should earn money and Women should take care of the family		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	39	61	100
		% within Job Type	39.0%	61.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	86	14	100
		% within Job Type	86.0%	14.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	51	49	100
		% within Job Type	51.0%	49.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	47	53	100
		% within Job Type	47.0%	53.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	223	177	400
		% within Job Type	55.8%	44.3%	100.0%

When respondents asked question about expectation from son and daughter then the answer from the respondents were more or less same. The researcher thinks that in this aspect respondents did not show their masculinity or femininity, besides that they thought about their future. It is normal tradition in Bangladesh that in their old age father always depend on the sons rather than daughters. So in the family son get more preferences although the situation is changing slowly. The data also show that now-a-days parents' expectations from daughters are similar to sons. Amongst 400 respondents 50.3% says that they have different expectations from son and daughter while 49.8% respondents have similar expectations from son and daughter.

Table 9:Job Type \* Expectation from Son and Daughter are different Cross tabulation

			Expectation from Son and Daughter are different		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	41	59	100
		% within Job Type	41.0%	59.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	32	68	100
		% within Job Type	32.0%	68.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	53	47	100
		% within Job Type	53.0%	47.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	75	25	100
		% within Job Type	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	201	199	400
		% within Job Type	50.3%	49.8%	100.0%

Respondents were asked questions on Ability of men and women. Those who work in the construction sector think that women are not equal to men in their mental and physical strength. 81% respondents from construction sector says that men and women are not equal in ability while 43% respondents from cleaning sector, 45% respondents from manufacturing sector and 42% respondents from restaurant sector think that Men and women are equal in ability.

Table 10:Job Type \* Are Men and Women equal in Ability Cross tabulation

			Are Men and Women equal in Ability?		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	43	57	100
		% within Job Type	43.0%	57.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	19	81	100
		% within Job Type	19.0%	81.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	45	55	100
		% within Job Type	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	42	58	100
		% within Job Type	42.0%	58.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	149	251	400
		% within Job Type	37.3%	62.8%	100.0%

When respondents were asked whether men and women has same level of intelligence, then 31% respondents amongst 400 supported that men and women are equal in intelligence. The rest 69% respondents think that men are more intelligent than women. Respondents from construction sector mostly disagree on that issue. 90% of them think that women are less intelligent than men in different aspects.

Table 11: Job Type \* Are Men and women equal in Intelligence Cross tabulation

			Are Men and women equal in Intelligence?		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	33	67	100
		% within Job Type	33.0%	67.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	10	90	100
		% within Job Type	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	37	63	100
		% within Job Type	37.0%	63.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	44	56	100
		% within Job Type	44.0%	56.0%	100.0%
Total	Count		124	276	400
	% within Job Type		31.0%	69.0%	100.0%

Amongst 400 respondents 34.3% support that both men and women should contribute to household work and 65.8% did not agree on that. Response from the construction workers was more negative than any other sectors. Only 9% respondents from construction sector agreed to help women to do household work while 41% respondents from cleaning sector, 24% respondents from manufacturing sector and 63% respondents from restaurant sector said yes to help women to do household work at home. Restaurant workers were more flexible in that issue. Researcher thinks that as they work in the feminine sector so they can understand the importance of household work and are willing to help women on doing household work.

Table 12: Job Type \* Both Men and Women should Contribute to household Work Cross tabulation

			Both Men and Women should Contribute to household Work		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	41	59	100
		% within Job Type	41.0%	59.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	9	91	100
		% within Job Type	9.0%	91.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	24	76	100
		% within Job Type	24.0%	76.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	63	37	100
		% within Job Type	63.0%	37.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	137	263	400
		% within Job Type	34.3%	65.8%	100.0%

83% respondents amongst 400 respondents think that women should not do job outside. They want them to engage in household work only. According to them women should not involve in public domain, they are not safe outside of the house. Although respondents from cleaning, manufacturing and restaurant sector are not so rigid on that issue but those who work in the construction sector are very strict in their opinion. According to them if it's necessary then they will work harder but it's not necessary to allow women to do job outside.

Table 13: Job Type \* Women Should Work Outside of the Home Cross tabulation

			Women Should Work Outside of the Home		Total
			Yes	No	
Job Type	Cleaning Sector	Count	22	78	100
		% within Job Type	22.0%	78.0%	100.0%
	Construction Sector	Count	8	92	100
		% within Job Type	8.0%	92.0%	100.0%
	Manufacturing Sector	Count	17	83	100
		% within Job Type	17.0%	83.0%	100.0%
	Restaurant Sector	Count	21	79	100
		% within Job Type	21.0%	79.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	68	332	400
		% within Job Type	17.0%	83.0%	100.0%

## **Conclusion**

Present study showed traditional patriarchal character of male Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia. A patriarchal ideology typically was observed in the majority of the respondent's attitudes. The result reveals that although all the respondents are doing household works in Malaysia but still they think that as women's work. They strongly believe in gender division of labor which is implanted in Bangladeshi society. 83% respondents do not agree that women should work in the public domain. According to them women should stay at home. Although there are some exceptions but most of the migrant workers are not willing to help women to do household work in their free time. They feel that if they do feminine work then it will reduce their dominancy on the family. As they are the head of the family they should have control over the family. Efroymson, Biswas & Ruma (2007) also says that in Bangladesh, as elsewhere, men are considered to be the head of the family and its most important member, since it is most often men who earn the income for the houses, feeds, and clothes the family. Men also have a far easier time than women in seeking paid employment. Work is typically divided along gender lines, with men being responsible for "outside" work and women for housework and child care. In Bangladeshi families, income earning is usually the responsibility of males, while the remaining family members- usually women and children - are economically dependent. Women have no choice but to live in this dependent condition, due to their relatively lower educational levels and fewer marketable skills, the resultant lack of available employment opportunities, and a lack of social acceptance of women earning a living (Efroymson, Biswas & Ruma, 2007). Survey data also shows that respondents think women are less capable and less intelligent than them. Only 37.3% respondents think that women has the ability equal to men when 31% respondents think that women

has the same intelligence level as men have. They have the perception that women by born know how to do domestic work which are not considered as skills or talents. Women inherit all those as a young girl from other older women of the family. This type of attitude towards women always belittles women's status in the family, society, and the nation. The present study selected respondents from four different sectors (Construction sector, manufacturing sector, cleaning sector and restaurant sector). If we compare these job types with typical gender division of labor of Bangladeshi societies then we see that construction sector is regarded as the men's work, manufacturing sectors are fit for both men and women while cleaning and restaurant sector are totally regarded as women's work. Survey data also shows the difference amongst the migrant workers working in different sectors. Those who work in the construction sector are more masculine than those who work in the other 3 sectors. Survey data shows that when respondents were asked that women should work in the public domain or not-then only 8% respondents were agreed on that while responses from other three sectors are quite high than the construction sector. We can see the same result when respondents were asked that both men and women should contribute to household work. Only 9% respondents from construction sector supported that issue while 41% respondents from cleaning sector, 24% respondents from manufacturing sector and 63% respondents from restaurant sector told that they should help women to do household work. The researcher wants to state that selection of job also depends on the character of the people. When people are masculine in character then they will do more masculine job while those who are more feminine in character will choose feminine type of job. Respondents from the present study also did the same. It has been observed that respondents from cleaning, manufacturing and restaurant sector are not willing to do work in the construction sector. They gave the reason that it's very hard to work there in the sun and workloads are

comparatively high there. Although salary is high in the construction sector comparing to other 3 sectors but still respondents want to do easy job in a comfortable place. On the other hand those who work in the construction sector underestimate cleaning, manufacturing and restaurant sector as women's work. None of them are willing to change their job. It has been observed that respondents who work in the construction sector are doing their job for a long time. They have started their job as a construction worker and are not willing to change their job although they have to work very hard there. They think that as a man they should do more masculine job as it reflects their manliness. Although respondents from construction sector are doing masculine job at their work place but when they are coming back at home then they have to do the domestic works themselves. They do cooking, cleaning dishes, sweeping floor and wash their cloths. The respondents are playing dual role at the same time. In the public domain he is doing masculine work and in the domestic domain he is engaged with more feminine work. But it does not make any sense for him because it can't change his typical patriarchal dominant mentality towards women. Data shows that although respondents are doing domestic work but they don't think it as their work. Situation has bound them to do women's work. But there are very few respondents who accept that domestic work is easy. They say that it's very hard to take care of the house and they are willing to help women to do household work after going back to Bangladesh.

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