

April 2020

#Me Too in Bangladesh: Can You Change?

Shampa Iftakhar
Daffodil International University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws>



Part of the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Iftakhar, Shampa (2020). #Me Too in Bangladesh: Can You Change?. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 21(2), 126-142.

Available at: <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol21/iss2/11>

This item is available as part of Virtual Commons, the open-access institutional repository of Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

This journal and its contents may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Authors share joint copyright with the JIWS. ©2022 Journal of International Women's Studies.

#Me Too in Bangladesh: Can You Change?

By Shampa Iftakhar¹

Introduction

With the global rise of the #Me Too movement and hashtag, sexual harassment has become a buzzword. The term “sexual harassment” was initially used to refer to a workplace phenomenon (Farley 1978, Mackinnon 1989). However, since the pioneering work on the issue, it has become clear that sexual harassment is inclusive of public space, educational institutions, and the home. It has been defined as “unwanted sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature” by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1980). Two types of harassment are identified: the first is a “quid pro quo” and the second, a hostile work environment. Though both of these refer to workplace sexual harassment, these are different in nature. The first one occurs when a supervisor demands sex, sexual favors or sexual contact from a subordinate or from a job applicant. It is inclusive of employment related decisions such as a favorable recommendation letter or promotion. A quid pro quo can occur if there is a threat of negative work consequences for refusing to confer sexual favors. For example, the target of harassment might lose a job or be relegated to unfavorable work. In such situations, targets are punished for stepping outside of patriarchal norms regarding the gendered division of labor, job benefits, titled positions, and so on. Thus, the quid pro quo is a form of sexual harassment that is regarded by some misogynists as the price women must pay for stepping into male dominated workplace worlds. This “price” includes humiliating and inappropriate verbal language and/or actual physical violations of women.

It is well-known by many that #Me Too was initiated by Tarana Burke in 2017, an African American woman who herself had been the victim of sexual violence becoming a widespread platform overnight to share previously unreleased stories of pain, insults, and injustices caused by sexual harassment both within the workplace and beyond. #Me Too hit Bangladesh in 2018 when survivors began to express their own experiences to show the solidarity with the worldwide, viral #Me Too movement. Despite the growing success in women's empowerment, Bangladesh fails to ensure safety for women and girls, and they are prone to sexual assault and harassment almost everywhere, including within their own homes, workplaces, public transport, educational institutions, and holy places.

This article focuses on an overview of sexual harassment in Bangladesh followed by #Me Too survivors' stories, analyzing them from multiple theoretical perspectives including patriarchy, women as a second sex, child sexual abuse, and male-domination specifically in the work-setting. An additional objective of the paper is to explore how Bangladeshi socio-cultural norms deeply rooted in a patriarchal mindset, condone malicious practices that jeopardize women. The findings indicate that even though #Me Too shone only a temporary light in Bangladesh, it nonetheless

¹ Shampa Iftakhar is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Daffodil International University. She obtained BA (Hons) and MA from Jahangirnagar University. Her research areas cover fourth wave feminism with a special focus on the #MeToo movement in Bangladesh, violence, human rights, rape-culture, the Rohingya Issue, politics, religion and diaspora literature. Her publications include nine articles published in different journals. She can be contacted via her email address shampa.eng@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd

served to raise awareness of the problem, and focused attention on rethinking and revising both existing law and education. Thus, the Bangladeshi version of the movement joined in global solidarity and sisterhood.

Sexual Harassment in Bangladesh

As with girls and women worldwide, in public and private spaces, Bangladeshis experience high levels of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence from men. This ranges from unwanted “chatting up, name-calling, sexualized assaults and threats, various kinds of control and coercion, to physical and sexual assaults, rape and murder” (Johnstone & Boyle 2018, p.118). Studies indicate that sexual harassment promotes and sustains gender inequality as well as workplace discrimination (Martin 2003; Lopez, Hodson and Roscigno 2009). Bangladesh is no exception. A recent survey conducted by Karmojibi Nari (2019) asserts that 12.4% of ready-made garment workers report sexual harassment in the workplace. Ain o Salish Kendra (2019), a Legal Aid & Human Rights Organization in Bangladesh, reports that in 2018 from January to December, 97 women out of 116 surveyed, were assaulted by stalkers throughout Bangladesh. Moreover, many incidents remain unreported in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, sexual assault is pervasive, and it is all too common for justice to be evaded. It is practically impossible for the alleged person to go to trial, since sexual harassment is regarded as “trivial”—including abusive sexual language, dirty jokes, unwanted gesture, and the like. Unwanted but sexually motivated touches or gestures are ignored, accepted as “normal” (Democracy Watch, 2014). Though the Ministry of Women and Children (2011) in its Nation Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children 2013-2025, has included twelve behaviors defining sexual harassment, these have not been included in the law of Bangladesh.

The law of Bangladesh provides completely ambiguous, misleading and inappropriate view of sexual harassment. Sexual assault is defined as “touching the sexual organ or other organs of a woman or a child” or “indecent gestures” (The Prevention of Women and Children Repression, 2000). The Prevention of Women and Children Repression (Act XVIII of 1995) is a special law which came into force on 17 July 1995. It intended to deal with violence against women and children. Then in 2000, this law was modified and expanded. In the second section of this Act punishments for different offences against women and children are mentioned. Clause no 10 of this section gives us a very oblique impression on sexual assault. It states:

- Whoever, to satisfy his sexual urge illegally, touches the sexual organ or other organ of a woman or a child with any organ of his body or with any substance, his act shall be said to be sexual oppression and he shall be punished with imprisonment for either description which may extend to ten years but not less than two years of rigorous imprisonment and also with fine.
- Whoever, to satisfy his sexual urge illegally, assaults a woman sexually or makes any indecent gesture, his act shall be deemed to be sexual oppression and he shall be punished with imprisonment for either description which may extend to seven years but not less than two years of rigorous imprisonment and also with fine.

Selection of language used to create a law is critical. Endicott (2002), states that the language used by lawmakers must provide for the authoritative resolution of the problem it addresses. These

above two sections are inadequate because they include a problematic, vague and misleading interpretation of “harassment”. In the law, harassment does not include the use slang or inappropriate or even unexpected words that also contribute offending and undermining victims. Thus, if anyone were to be sexually assaulted for offensive jokes and unwanted “appreciation”, then under the existing law, it is almost impossible to offer an “authoritative resolution”. In addition, the term “satisfy his sexual urge” is absolutely limited as it focuses on basic human instincts, which results in pleasure, whereas it is well established that sexual assault is an exercise of power over another individual that creates and perpetuates gender discrimination and inequity, predominantly for women. The goal is to dominate and create feelings of insecurity, hindering empowerment, it is *not* the exercise of sexual pleasure (Mackinnon 1979, Uggren & Blackstone 2004, Wilson & Thompson, 2001).

Another critical issue regarding sexual harassment in Bangladesh is the scarcity of research on in the Bangladeshi context. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), the Legal Aid & Human Rights Organization referred to above, publishes statistics on sexual harassment on a monthly basis by collecting news from various daily newspapers in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, a women’s human rights organization in Bangladesh typically keeps records from the same sources though this organization does not publish those records online.

Stories of #Me Too Survivors in Bangladesh

#Me Too went viral, virtually overnight in 2017. In Bangladesh it surfaced in 2018 via social media, mainly on Facebook and YouTube. This section offers a partial list of some of the bitter experiences of #Me Too survivors in Bangladesh to offer readers insight into cases of women who shared their stories in The Women’s Chapter, a woman–centric online news portal, and on Facebook and YouTube:

- The Women’s Chapter (2018), a first Bangladeshi online news portal for and about women, published the stories of three women Prioty, Simonti and Laiju. When the #Me Too wave highlighted the extent of sexual harassment in the workplace, Bangladeshi-born model Maksuda Akter Prioty, former Miss Ireland, revealed her experience of sexual assault by Rafiqul Islam, a rich merchant, a political personality, and owner of the Rongdhonu Group, one of the largest multinational companies of Bangladesh. Prioty posted her story on Facebook, on 29 October 2018, simultaneously uploading a video to YouTube describing exactly what happened in 2015 when she went to his office to collect payment. In the video, she claims that he forced her out of the chair and onto the table. He groped her all over the body. He grabbed her face and kissed her on her lips. She explained that after she disclosed what happened to her, she was threatened (Prioty, Maksuda Akter 2018). Although she lives in Ireland and is former Miss Ireland, she is a Bangladeshi and she was harassed in Bangladesh.
- Shucheesmita Simonti from Bangladesh, the editor of Women’s Chapter English, who is currently studying in the Netherlands, was sexually assaulted by a “father-figure” several times over a decade ago. She was only 16 years old. As of this writing she is a graduate student in the Netherlands and an editor of the woman-centric online news portal “Women Chapter”. On 30 October 2018 she posted her status on Facebook revealing that she had been abused by a media personality. Pronab Saha who is a well-

known face in Bangladeshi media was in a relationship with her mother. Abusing this family relationship, Saha used to take Simonti to school and pick her up, in his car. She stated in her post, “He was close to my family and harassed me on several occasions by touching me inappropriately. I was completely devastated during my high school years because of him.” (Women Chapter, 2018).

- Musfika Laiju another Bangladeshi woman working for an NGO, shared her story of sexual assault on Facebook. She was assaulted by a famous dramatist in Bangladesh, the late Salim Al din, Professor of Jahangirnagar University. In her post, she stated (Laizu, November 14, 2018) that he kissed her against her will and attempted to rape her 31 years ago, when she was admitted into the Drama and Dramatis Department. Salim-al-Din was the founding Chairman.
- On 7th of November 2018 Asmaul Hosna, another Bangladeshi woman, posted about her own experience of sexual assault by another media personality, Jamil Hossain. Asmaul met Jamil via Facebook and she had conversed with him and met him twice in some training sessions, after which they planned to meet for coffee. When she departed their meeting, Jamil put his hand on her left shoulder and proposed that they walk for a while. She agreed since she considered it a “friendly gesture.” However, later while walking through an adjacent road, Jamil harassed her. He held her tightly, started kissing her lips and touching her body inappropriately.
- Dipanita Sen Roy, another voice of #Me Too, exposed in the Women’s Chapter (2018) how she was assaulted by Anowar Chowdhury Jibon, an actor and psychiatrist when she was studying in his class. She originally posted this on her Facebook account, but later on deactivated it and kept no contact with anyone.
- Tasnuva Anan Shishir, a #Me Too survivor and transwoman, revealed her story at first on her Facebook profile and then in a round table discussion titled “#MeToo Movement in Bangladesh: Possibility and Challenges” at the National Press Club organized by the #Me Too Movement-Bangladesh. Afterwards, her speech was posted on YouTube here (Anan, 2018). Adnin (2018) reported Shishir’s details how she was harassed by her would- be employee who inappropriately talked to her and posed before her nude followed by offensive questions. (Dhaka Tribune, “#Me Too: I asked him”, 2018)
- Shabonti Kanta discussed how she was sexually abused by her nearest family members. She posted this information on her Facebook page, which she then she deactivated.
- Nadira Dilruba, a journalist for the magazine Oporadh Bichitra, also expressed her own experience publicly in a human chain, formed in Dhaka, to show solidarity with #MeToo movement.
- The journalist Alpha Arzu also posted on Facebook charging the Diplomatic Correspondent Rezaul Karim Lotus with harassment.

As with many other countries, #Me Too in Bangladesh is highly individualistic; the survivors are victimized in isolation, and they kept their bitter memories inside and unexposed for years. The movement shared common stories, personal in nature, and successfully drew the attention of the media, activists, professionals, social media users, and students from the beginning. All of the daily newspapers of Bangladesh published the latest updates about #Me Too. The press supported

and appreciated the bold actions of women exposing the heinous acts they had experienced. These acts in themselves are indicative of the rise of a culture of confidence amidst an utterly male-dominated society. Within a short span of time, #Me Too helped to form public opinion, gaining supporters to stop harassment by adopting zero-tolerance. The human-chain, round table discussions and press conference all were held, initiated by #Me Too, to stop sexual harassment. All of the fighters of #Me Too of Bangladesh demonstrated self-confidence, courage, and self-respect to show their solidarity to this globally circulated movement. Through the support and solidarity, #Me Too became a significant platform of women of all walks to life, to raise their voices against harassment, sexism and rape culture through its invitation for everyday people to participate publicly (Mendes K, Ringrose. J & Keller J, 2018).

At the same time, #Me Too in Bangladesh also showcased the persistent male-dominated social structure, where denial of allegations and victim blaming are common responses. Almost all perpetrators denied the complaints against them. Rafiqul Islam boldly denounced all allegations and mentioned them “as false and politically motivated” in his correspondence with bdnews24.com. in 2018 (Bangladeshi-Irish model, 2018)

Theoretical Perspectives: Insights into #MeToo in Bangladesh

Sexual harassment is the consequence of women’s oppression and subordinated position in relation to men (McLaughlin 2018; Berdahl 2007; Quinn 2002; Welsh 1999; Wilson & Thomson 2001; Mackinnon 1979). Bangladeshi traditional society is permeated with patriarchal values and norms of female subordination, subservience, subjugation and segregation (Abeda, 2012). This claim demonstrates the truth of De Beauvoir’s relegation of women as a “second sex” and “subordinate.” (De Beauvoir, 1949). Media representation of women and girls as a “sex objects” (Bates 2014; Ussher 2011; American Psychological Association 2007) goes hand in hand with male denigration of women and girls. Indeed, the media popularizes (Johnstone, L. & Boyle, M. 2018) the tendency to view women as commodities with far reaching impact into the male-dominated work-setting with male supervisory authority over women (Mansfield et al. 1991; Rospenda et.al 1998; Uggen and Blackstone 2004; Stainback et al. 2011). The sexual assaults exposed by #MeToo survivors in Bangladesh underscore the power relationships of sexual harassment: many of the survivors were offered high status in exchange for sexual favors. Musfika Laizu, for example, was told that such favors would help her become a member of the faculty at Jahangirnagar University. Rafiqul Islam promised to “look after” Prioty and offered her significant amounts of money.

Adherence to traditional gender roles is another factor giving rise to sexual harassment (Maass, et al, 2003). In the Bangladeshi context, the social structure itself is highly supportive of male domination and women are believed to be very submissive, soft-spoken, and obedient to male family members by nature. These beliefs echo Walby’s (1990) view: “In this system women’s labour power, women’s reproduction, women’s sexuality, women’s mobility and property and other economic resources—are under patriarchal control” (Walby,1990 p.20). Importantly, most of the #Me Too survivors in Bangladesh are more or less devoid of such stereotypical gender roles. Asmaul Husna set her meeting with Jamil Rahman after studying in the evening, and Musfika went to her teacher’s house to collect a book. Being assertive, they challenge the gender hierarchy, blurring differences between men and women enforced through restrictive norms. Sexual harassment is a way to reinforce those norms (Newman, 2018) and put women back in their places, as defined by the patriarchal order. Thus, it is more likely that women and girls with more

independent and assertive behaviors are the targets of sexual harassment. Their assertiveness coupled with being single indicates that they are not under the protection of men and also availability (Coster de. et al. 1999; Ragins and Scandure 1995). Age also matters profoundly; younger rather than older women face more sexual harassment (Markin, 2012, MacKinnon, 1979; Schat, Frone & Kelloway 2006; Stedham & Mitchell, 1998) since youth denotes less power and greater inexperience and are easier to manipulate. The #Me Too survivors in Bangladesh were young when they were harassed.

The #Me Too movement also highlighted the prevalence of child sexual abuse. Simonti, Shabonti Kanta, and Dipanita Sen Roy were the victims of child sexual abuse. Shabonti Kanta reported her “intra-familial child sexual abuse” (McNeish & Scott 2018; Fischer & McDonald, 1998). Dipanita also experienced extra-familial childhood sexual abuse (Fischer & McDonald, 1998). Her assaulter was the family doctor, to whom she was sent for treatment. Childhood sexual abuse results in both immediate and long-term impacts inclusive of a wide range of physical, behavioral, psychological, and medical disorders (Jaworowski et. al, 2019; Fisher et. Al, 2017; O’Leary et al. 2010). Children understand the nature and impact of sexual abuse as adults rather than in their childhood (Radford et al, 2011). All of the # Me Too survivors who had been abused in childhood in Bangladesh confessed their trauma after being assaulted.

Research Methodology

For this study I followed ‘Typical Case Sampling’, a type of purposive sampling, (Wiersma & Jurs in 2005). I collected my data from December 2018 to first week of May 2019, employing semi-structured interviews that were conducted with three #Me Too survivors, five women activists, and four faculty members. Interviews included some pre-established questions with response selections. Participants were asked to clarify their views on each question and to add their remarks. As well, the research drew from various news reports, Facebook posts, NGO reports² scholarly articles and publications as secondary sources.

Target Population, Selection Criteria, and Participants

The target population for the study was female activists, faculty members—both male and female of different universities—and two women who started the #Me Too movement in Bangladesh. There were some criteria taken into consideration in the selection process. Female activists were chosen based on their contributions over decades, to women’s equality, justice, and empowerment in Bangladesh. Another issue was the availability and prompt responses of potential participants. Faculty members were selected based on their work experiences of policymaking in academia and their knowledge of the provisions to remove sexual harassment and assault from their institutions. Participants from the #Me Too Movement were very responsive and spared their quality time voluntarily. Since the study dealt with the #Me Too movement Bangladesh it was a central research goal to involve participants who were part of that movement.

The participants represented different age group ranging from 25 to 65. The interviews were conducted with four teachers: two men and two women. Of the two women faculty members, one has a J.D. and is an expert on Human Rights for over 24 years and is a valued member of the Proctorial Committee. Another respected respondent, Associate Professor and Department Head, as well as a media personality, has an English Literature Background with 18 years of teaching experience. The male teachers are both in the English Department; one is a Professor and Dean

² Ain o Salish Kendro, Democracy Watch, Karmojibinari, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad

with 34 years of teaching experience and the other has over 18 years of teaching experience, and as of this writing is an Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department.

Study participants are professionals and activists: Five Bangladeshi women activists from Mahila Parishad, aged 40 to 60, participated in this study. One respected respondent, Mahila Parishad, has been working as Movement Secretary of Bangladesh and is also a columnist. Another is an advocate and editor of a magazine and two others are in the teaching profession, one has taught at Government College for almost 23 years and another in a school. Another is in charge of a branch of Mahila Parishad. The remaining three participants, Musfika Laiju, Simonti and Asmaul Hosna, were directly involved with #MeToo. All of them have received higher education from reputed universities. Simonti currently is studying abroad. Both Laiju and Asmaul are the employees of two private organizations. These final three urged me to use their names, while the others preferred anonymity.

As noted above, the interviews followed a semi-structured format of detailed one-on-one interviews of the three #Me Too survivors, the five activists and four teachers. My questions aimed to assimilate the facts and opinions of all participants. The interviews were conducted face to face and by cell phone. Each session took on average 25 to 30 minutes. #Me Too survivors also sent voice memos to add their opinions at times.

This paper offers a critical and comprehensive study of the different news reports on the Bangladeshi #Me Too Movement. In addition, the Facebook status of #Me Too survivors were followed, cited along with comments of different people to show various perspectives such as disbelief, the tendency to victim-blame the rise of a culture of confidence within a conservative social structure with conservative cultural norms. I also examined the YouTube video posted by Proity. What follows below is a discussion of my findings based on responses to the interviews, observations and analyses.

Findings and Discussion

In response to the question, *what are factors responsible for sexual harassment*: a) patriarchy/male dominating society, b) lack of literacy c) wrong and misleading religious beliefs, d) provocative dress and gestures, all participants selected the first responses, following up by explaining that Bangladesh's patriarchal social structure is largely responsible for sexual assault. Despite women's increasing contributions to the national economy, which began with the emergence of the garments industry, the social structure and productive economy are male dominated. A man is considered the unquestionable ruler, the ultimate decision-maker in the domestic sphere and in the job sector. It may seem paradoxical, since Bangladesh has been acclaimed for gender equality by the World Economic Forum in 2017; however, the country retains many structures of patriarchy (Walby 1990) and male dominance, including violence.

Lack of literacy, in particular, lack of sexual education, were considered a factor in sexual harassment by three of the participants. Generally, in Bangladesh, from class one to class six, sexual education and health are completely absent. In class seven, a national textbook chapter titled "Personal Safety During Puberty" offers a synopsis of sexual harassment that is completely from an orthodox male point of view, where "girls" are considered objects as their emotions and suffering are not valued; instead, they are blamed if they experience sexual abuse. Home Science, the textbook for Grade 8, published in 2015 suggested girls should not wear outfits that attracts others. It is also mentioned that if

someone gets sexually harassed, s/he must not react rather try to manage the situation “wisely.” This suggestion confirms the traditional gender roles of a girl who is helpless to seek justice. Interestingly, this chapter has been excluded later on. Respondents asserted that Bangladesh’s patriarchy is dominated by traditional values and religious beliefs that fail to create a supportive environment for sexual and reproductive health education (Rashid, 2010). Reuwijk and Nahar (2013) state that young boys receive sex education by watching pornography, visiting sex-workers, or from the private details of married men to whom they (young boys) are close. Thus, the norms, values, and ideas they create about sexual interaction are out of touch with actual living women, contributing to the sexual harassment of girls. These norms, values, and ideas include gender inequality, patriarchal social structures and the customs of purdah. Although purdah has broad meaning, including gender segregation, within the limits of this paper, I refer mainly to the features of purdah that include clothing, such as veiling, covering the skin and dress that does not reveal body shape.

Four participants stated that incorrect and misleading religious perceptions are another leading cause of sexual harassment. One of the participants referred to the Holy Quran: “Indeed, Allah has created the human in the best of forms” (Quran, 95:4). It is noteworthy that this verse does not place men over women. Thus, it could be easily assumed that both men and women have equal priority in Islam as human beings. Unfortunately, too many misleading religious perceptions are promoted by the mullahs and illiterate rural people. In Bangladesh, patriarchy has been maintained because of the “misinterpretation of religion” (Farah, 2009), which perpetuates violence against women. Hate speech against girls and women, is regularly delivered in the *Waz Mahfil*, a popular and common practice of preaching to rural and suburban Muslim communities. Shah Ahmed Shafi, known as an Islamic hardliner, in his speech on 12 January, 2019 in Chittagong, addressed an audience of men, urging them not to send girls to school or college; to protect girls from illegal activities; and to have “proper” control of womenfolk in order to avoid sexual harassment. In this mahfil, he (Shafi) claimed that at best a man can allow his daughter to study up to fourth or fifth grade, but not more than that. If a man allows his daughters to study more, then they will become “out of control” or they might be “snatched by other men”. (Daily Star, <https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/dont-send-girls-school-college-16864273/11/20>). Shafi used vulgar terms to describe women and compared them to “mouth-watering fruits” (Ibid). There are numerous YouTube videos of Waz Mahfil speeches that contain regressive comments and are direct threats to women. In his sermon, the preacher Razzak Bin Yusuf, urged men to punish girls and women if they leave the home alone (Bangla Lecture, 19 April 2017). Most of the speakers participating in these Islamic Mahfil speeches condemn women for any free movements, and point out that sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and rape are the ultimate consequences and what they rightly deserve. Some mentioned a specific verse from the *Sura Al-Nisa* to assert men’s superiority over women. Here, the Quran (Al Quran 4: 34) says,

Men are the (*quwwamun*) protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend from their means [to support them]. Therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient [to Allah and to their husbands], and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard [e.g. their chastity, their husband's property, etc.]. As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance).

Siddika and Khatun (2014) have demonstrated how the Imam misinterpreted *quwwamun* to assign men the roles of “authority,” “ruler,” or “sovereign”. As well, Ali (2008) argues that *quwwamun* means “women’s saviors and protectors”, not guardians or rulers. Rag’ El-Nimr (2006) charged men to misconstrue the meaning for their personal interest.

On the topic of revealing dress, only one respondent agreed that that in our Bangladeshi context, provocative dress welcomes unwanted sexual harassment. Being a Muslim country, our Muslim women are supposed to maintain purdah. This participants claimed that within our socio-cultural context, it is hardly possible to ignore prevailing gender roles; therefore, western dress, such as sleeveless t-shirts, trendy dresses such as kurti without a dupatta (a blouse or kamiz with long neck) and the like, could easily attract men, even though women might not want their attention.³ The remaining respondents strongly disagree that provocative dress is one of the reasons for sexual harassment in our country. They stated that in our country most women wear traditional attire, matching with our cultural norms and they are still sexually harassed. In addition, young girls are the targets of sexual abuse as well, and they can hardly be judged by their dress. They also added that in our socio-cultural context, child rape is the strongest example which clearly indicates that the dress code is not an issue. The Daily Star (2019) in its editorial titled, “Rape of Women and Children Rising” adds “In the first six months of this year at least 496 children were raped.” Moreover, girls who wear Islamic attire are victimized as well. Nusart Jahan Rafi is an example of such attack. Nusrat was a student at the Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa whose principal was Siraj Ud Doula. Being harassed by her principal, Nusrat reported the sexual abuse in the local thana. Siraj Ud Dola was arrested, but while imprisoned, he forced Nusrat to withdraw her charge against him. Since she refused to do this, she was burnt alive by sixteen people, guided by the perpetrator. Daily newspapers both national and international were flooded with stories of Nusrat’s murder.⁴

In response to the question, *what are the barriers to ensure the success of #Me Too in Bangladesh*, respondents offered multiple selections of the four that were given in the interview. The four choices were: a) exercise of power exercise and lobbying of an influential perpetrator; b) weak laws and a poor judicial system; c) male dominated perceptions of sexual assault; 4) social stigma and victim-blaming. Some respondents selected all of the options. All respondents selected the first barrier. The exercise of power by powerful political perpetrators is an obstacle in seeking justice, in general, in spite of protests by witnesses outside a courtroom where a case is being heard (Akram, 2017). Oidhikar (2018) reports that government-supported activists violated human rights during the period of quota reform ⁵where they sexually harassed women protestors and also threatened to rape them.

Nine of the participants agreed that arbitrary use of political and economic power as well as favoritism, prevent law enforcement from conducting proper investigations. These factors create a toxic environment of fear, so that victims do not instigate lawsuits against perpetrators. They

³ Several studies suggest the some women wear sexy dress to generate their sexual desire for men and to gain sexual attention (Grammer et al. 2004, Montemurro & Gillen 2013, Smolak et al. 2014). Lennon et al (2017) in their study examined how different researches connect dress and sex.

⁴ The Daily Star, (2019, May 29). “A well planned, grisly murder.” Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/nusrat-jahan-rafi-murder-a-well-planned-grisly-murder-1750333> New York Post, (2019, April 19). “Student in Bangladesh burned to death for reporting sexual abuse.” Retrieved from <https://nypost.com/2019/04/19/student-in-bangladesh-burned-to-death-for-reporting-sexual-abuse/>

⁵ Quota Reform movement is mostly known as 2018 Bangladesh Quota Reform where students demanded the reform in the policies regarding in Bangladesh Government Services.

offered the examples of the murders of Sogahi Jahan Tonu and Nusrat Jahan Rafi⁶. These murders outraged the country but remain unresolved. Tonu was murdered after a brutal gang-rape in the Cumilla cantonment area, even though cantonment areas in Bangladesh are supposed to be highly secure places. It is been suspected that her murderers were supported by some influential people. The Daily Star (2019) reports that for her family, justice is elusive, since no progress has occurred three years after this brutal murder.

Three participants agreed that our law and judiciary system is outdated and weak. Being outdated, the laws cannot be harnessed for proper judgment (Akram, 2017). In addition, existing laws of evidence have been reported as “highly discriminatory towards women” (UNDP, 2002). The remaining participants stated that existing law can ensure justice under certain conditions. The first and foremost condition is to abolish the corruption. The twelve participants also remarked that corruption is so deeply rooted that it hinders implementation of existing law. The “Bangladesh Corruption Report” (2018) contends that Bangladesh is frequently cited as one of the most corrupt counties of the world. Corruption has risen to such extent that according to Transparency International Bangladesh now ranks 149 out of 180 countries (TI Corruption Index, 2019).

Six of the participants stated that laws related to sexual harassment are not stringent enough. Respondents repeatedly emphasized the importance of establishing “Gender-Cells”: Six of the participants stated that laws related to sexual harassment are not stringent enough. Respondents repeatedly emphasized the importance of establishing “Gender-Cells” within all government and non-government organizations—offices where sexually harassed individuals can file complaints—and to establish a consistent gender policy in every organization. It is worth mentioning that the Supreme Court of Bangladesh issued guidelines based on a writ petition, defining sexual harassment in 2009. The Dhaka Tribune (2018), reported that a significant number of organizations have deliberately ignored those guidelines.

Social Stigma and victim blaming are common world-wide obstacles preventing victims from voicing injustices leading to proper punishment of perpetrators. Nine of the respondents pointed out that since Bangladesh is a male-dominated society, women and girls are blamed for the offences committed by perpetrators. After the #MeToo wave in Bangladesh, although some supported the activists, many blamed them for false allegations against reputed males in the country. Simonti and her mother were blamed and threatened for posting complaints against Pronab Saha due to her mother’s connection with that man. Her mother was counter-charged, blamed for using her daughter to stain Mr. Saha’s fame. Simonti wrote,

It takes a lot of courage to speak up as a Bangladeshi woman because of victim blaming, slut shaming, resistance and stigmatization the #Me Too survivors have experienced. And this explains why countless women never report being assaulted. On a personal note, it is definitely my privilege of being situated outside Bangladesh that made it easier for me to speak up.

In Bangladesh, women must be introverted, submissive, and dependent. Their power is limited in the social structure and social stigma is often legitimized by village tribunals, known as the “Salish” where the socially powerful and aged male body claims to solve disputes. Sometimes rural women face humiliation, even though they have experienced sexual assault or face intimate partner violence. A very common practice in such situations is to issue a *fatwa*, (which denotes the

⁶ The women and children repression prevention tribunal in Feni sentenced death punishment on 24 October 2019. But this death penalty has not been carried out.

idea of some rules “legitimized by religious edicts”) against women who are identified as sexual transgressors (Dina, 2011). Being exposed to such legitimized violence against women makes the children observers of such an environment accept social stigma against women and girls as a common norm. This study confirms that children who witness violence and the surrounding culture of stigma and victim-blaming leads to norms of acceptance or perpetration of a multitude of violent behaviors (Mctavish et. 2016). Dina (2003) demonstrates showed how outspoken women factory workers are stigmatized since “the ideal woman submits to all manners of misfortune in silence.” Most women, she found, ignore sexual harassment; many accept it as a common norm. After publishing her piece on her experience of harassment, Musfika Laiju was condemned by her classmate. She was painted as an attention-seeker, using eye-catching gestures and violating the purdah dress code. In general, the survivors of #Me Too have failed to garner support for their experiences in Bangladesh. Their stories are rendered invalid. In Bangladesh, victims are stigmatized and humiliated; thus, under such circumstances, these kinds of incidents are kept hidden and private to maintain honor.

In response to the third question in the interview, *can #Me Too stop or lessen sexual harassment*, nine participants were uncertain. They believed #Me Too could lessen sexual assault to a certain extent. Two of the participants, on the other hand, expressed their optimistic view regarding the abolishment of the harassment with the era of #Me Too. Only one participant replied negatively and explained that sexual harassment would remain same in our country or increase more if the state did not support individuals. In addition, Shucheesmita Simonti placed the blame on some of the women activists of our country for the apparent failure of #Me Too in Bangladesh. She claims,

The #Me Too movement is a powerful movement, and it has the potential to lessen sexual violence against women. However, there are countless obstacles in a country like Bangladesh, given that even in the West, the movement continues to face tremendous resistance. One factor I would like to mention is that in context of Bangladesh, one of the challenges I observed is the hypocrisy of some of the so-called liberals. Some individuals are only liberal when being liberal suits their interests. If this is the scenario of the liberals, then it is needless to say that a lot of work is yet to be done to change the mindset of people with conservative and extremely patriarchal beliefs.

In response to the fourth question, *how can #Me Too be successful in Bangladesh*, respondents claimed that #Me Too has failed to attain satisfactory achievement. There have been no significant investigations on the charges. In addition, existing law has not been revised or updated. #Me Too will be successful only if the alleged perpetrators are put under trial. But none of the #Me Too activists have asked for lawsuits. Without legal action, this online movement will not be successful in the long run. Respondents stated that the law must be revised followed by effective implementation if Bangladesh is to become a safe place for women and girls. Equal importance must be given to sexual education in the schools, to mold future citizens who are more respectful and compassionate. Five of the respondents recommended that #Me Too, like any other movement against sexual violence, must push for a judicial system that ensures exemplary punishments commensurate with the crime.

Mobility of movement is another significant issue necessary for radical social change. Such increased mobility is only possible with public awareness, collective action, and discourse against

sexual assault to sexual violence. All participants agreed that such awareness is possible if we develop the mindset to trust the victim and resist the criminals. Dhaka Tribune (2018) reports that male participation is a must. As with all other countries, the activists of #Me Too in Bangladesh faced multiple challenges. However, in spite of them, #Me Too in Bangladesh must be credited as a bold step, but it is only a step.

Conclusion

Although this study has its limitations, such as limited and selective respondents and exclusion of the perpetrators' interviews, it nonetheless opens the opportunity for others to carry on further research on the reformation of education, law, and the faith culture in Bangladesh. In its nature, the #Me Too movement is a discourse of personal painful narratives that showed its full vigor when shared on-line. Shared stories of #Me Too survivors led the world to a global solidarity among survivors and allies, that ultimately echoes norms of global sisterhood (Morgan, 1984). Like any other places, #Me Too in Bangladesh put forward many fundamental issues that must be resolved. It is notoriously difficult to think of radical change overnight in Bangladesh regarding sexual harassment. In Bangladesh, we have a dire need to conduct more comprehensive and collaborative research to suggest policies for ending sexual harassment. #Me Too survivors in Bangladesh deserve praise; the movement gave rise to the social protest, "*Don't stand too close to my body*" (author's own translation), and to resist sexual harassment in the workplace, public spaces, at home and in academia. #Me Too is credited for generating social awareness among the youth generation. It may take few decades, but in Bangladesh, in the view of this author, #Me Too will eventually lead to great success. In her TED talk (2018), Tarana Burke rightly claims that it (#Me Too) is "a movement, not a moment."

References

- Adnin, N. (2018).” #MeToo I asked him about my salary and I was called to his office.” *Dhaka Tribune*. Retrieved from <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/2018/11/18/metoo-i-asked-him-about-my-salary-and-i-was-called-to-his-office>
- Ali, A. (2008) *Rights of Women in Islam*. (3rd ed.) New Delhi, India: C. Hurst and Co. (Publishers) Ltd.
- Ain o salish Kendra. (2019). Violence Against Women – Sexual Harassment: January-December 2018. Dhaka. Retrieved from <http://www.askbd.org/ask/2019/01/14/violence-women-sexual-harassment-january-december-2018/>
- Akram, Md. S. (2017). A Critical Analysis of Access to Justice in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 6(8), 50-58.
- American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualisation of Girls (2007). Report of the APA Task Force on the Sexualisation of Girls. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Anan, T. (November 25, 2018). #metoo তাসনুভা আনান (শিশির) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUXD7yEDrFQ&feature=share>
- Bangladesh Corruption Report. (2018, May 18). Retrieved from <https://www.ganintegrity.com/portal/country-profiles/bangladesh/Transparency International>
- Bangla Lecture. (2018, 19 April). *Erai Jahannami Mohila | Abdur Razzak bin Yousuf*. [Video File] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDhn8g7Rjxs>
- Bates, L. (2014). *Everyday sexism*. London: Simon & Schuster.
- Beauvoir, S. (1949). *The Second Sex*. Newyork: Vintage Books.
- Berdahl, J. L. (2007a). “Harassment Based on Sex: Protecting Social Status in the Context of Gender Hierarchy.” *Academy of Management Review* 32. 641-58
- Burke, T. (2018, November 30). *Me Too is a movement, not a moment*. [Video File]. Retrieved from https://www.ted.com/talks/tarana_burke_me_too_is_a_movement_not_a_moment?language=en
- Coster De S., Estes S. B., & Mueller C. W. (1999). Routine Activities and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. *Work and Occupations* 26, 21–49.
- D, Star, The. (2019, January 30). “TI Corruption Index 2018: Bangladesh slips six notches”. Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/country/bangladesh-ranked-149-in-corruption-index-2018-1694437>
- D, Star, The. (2018, October 23). “Stamp out sexual harassment in the media.” Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/editorial/news/stamp-out-sexual-harassment-the-media-1650523>
- D, Star, The. (2019). “Three Years of Tonu Murder: No Progress Yet in Investigation.” Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/3-years-tonu-murder-no-progress-yet-investigation-1717672>
- D, Star, The. (2019). “Don’t send girls to school, it makes them disobedient.” Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/backpage/news/dont-send-girls-school-college-1686427>
- Davis J.L., & Petretic-Jackson P.A. (2000). The impact of child sexual abuse on adult interpersonal functioning A review and synthesis of the empirical literature. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 5(3), 291-328.

- Dina, M., S. (2003). The Sexual Harassment of Industrial Workers: Strategies for Intervention in the Workplace and Beyond. Dhaka: Center for Policy dialogue. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/252053144_The_Sexual_Harassment_of_Industrial_Workers_Strategies_for_Intervention_in_the_Workplace_and_Beyond
- Dina, M., S. (2011). Transnational Feminism and “Local Realities”: The Imperiled Muslim Woman and the Production of (In)Justice. *Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World*.9,77-96. doi:10.1163/156920811X578548
- Endicott, T. (2016). Law and Language. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.) URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2016/entries/law-language/>
- Fassler I.R., Amodeo M., Griffin M.L., Clay C.M., & Ellis M. A. (2005). Predicting long-term outcomes for women sexually abused in childhood: Contribution of abuse severity versus family environment. *Child Abuse Negl.*9,269-284.
- Farah, D., C. (2009). Theorising Patriarchy. *Asian Journal of Social Science*. 37(4),599-622.
- Farley, L. (1978). Sexual shakedown: The sexual harassment of women on the job. New York: McGraw –Hill.
- Fischer, D. G., & McDonald, W. L. (1998). Characteristics of intrafamilial and extrafamilial child sexual abuse. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 22(9), 915-929.
- Fisher, C., Goldsmith, A., Hurcomb, R. & Soares, C. (2017). *The impact of Child sexual abuse: A rapid evidence assessment*. Retrieved from Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse. <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/cy/key-documents/1534/view/iicsa-impacts-child-sexual-abuse-rapid-evidence-assessment-full-report-english.pdf>
- Fitzgerald, L. F., Sandra L. S., Bailey N., Richards M., Swecker J., Gold, Y., Ormerod, M., & Weitzman, L. (1988). The Incidence and Dimensions of Sexual Harassment in Academia and the Workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 32, 152–75.
- Grammer, K., Renninger, L., & Fischer, B. (2004). Disco clothing, female sexual motivation, and relationship status: Is she dressed to impress? *Journal of Sex Research*,41, 66–74.
- Jaworowski, S.; Golmard, J; Engelberg, M; Prijs, S; Twizer, L; Gropp, C. & Mergui, J. (2019). Case-Control Retrospective Study of Child Sexual Abuse History among Psychiatric Consultations in a General Hospital Emergency Room. *The Israel Medical Association journal*. 21(2),77-81.
- Johnstone, L. & Boyle, M. with Cromby, J., Dillon, J., Harper, D., Kinderman, P., Longden, E., Pilgrim D. & Read, J. (2018). *The Power Threat Meaning Framework: Towards the identification of patterns in emotional distress, unusual experiences and troubled or troubling behaviour, as an alternative to functional psychiatric diagnosis*. Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- Kamajibi Nari. (2019). Monitoring Work and Working Conditions of Women Employed in the Readymade Garment Industries of Bangladesh (2nd). Dhaka: Kamajibi Nari.
- Laizu, M. (Facebook, November 14, 2018). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/musfika.laiju/posts/10156753622787128>
- Lennon, S. J., Adomaitis, A. D., Koo, J., & Johnson, K. K. (2017). Dress and sex: a review of empirical research involving human participants and published in refereed journals. *Fashion and Textile*, 4(14), 1-21.
- Lopez, S.H., Hodson R, Roscigno VJ. (2009). Power, status, and abuse at work: General and sexual harassment compared. *Sociological Quarterly*,50(1),3–27.

- Lynch, A. (2007). Expanding the Definition of Provocative Dress: An Example of Female Flashing Behavior on a College Campus. *Clothing and Textile Research Journal*, 25(2),184-201. doi 10.1177/0887302X06298699
- Maass, A., Cadinu, M., Guarnieri, G., & Grasselli, A. (2003). Sexual Harassment Under Social Identity Threat: The Computer Harassment Paradigm. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(5),853–70.
- MacKinnon, C. (1979). *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Mansfield, K. P., Koch, P.B., Henderson, J., Vicary, J.R.,Cohn, M., & Young W., E. (1991). The Job Climate for Women in Traditionally Male Blue-Collar Occupations. *Sex Roles*, 25(1-2), 63–79.
- Markin, S. R. (2012). Sexual Harassment Indicators: The Socio-Cultural and Cultural Impact of Marital Status, Age, Education, Race, and Sex in Latin America. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, XXI (1),154-172.
- Martin, P.Y. (2003). “Said and Done” Versus “Saying and Doing”: Gender Practices, Practicing Gender at Work, *Gender & Society*, 17(3), 342-366.
- McLaughlin, H. (2018, January 31). Who’s Harassed, and How? *Harvard Business Review Digital Article: Managing #MeToo*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2018/01/whos-harassed-and-how>
- McNeish Di & Scott, S. (2018). *Key Message from the research on intra-familial child sexual abuse*. Retrieved from <https://www.dmss.co.uk/pdfs/Key-Messages-intra-familial-ENG.pdf>.
- McTavish, J.R., MacGregor, C.D, Wathen, N., & MacMilan, H.L. (2016). Children’s exposure to intimate partner violence an overview. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 28(5), 504-518. DOI: 10.1080/09540261.2016.1205001
- Mendes K., Ringrose, J. & Keller J. (2018). #MeToo and the promise and pitfalls of challenging rape culture through digital feminist activism. *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 25(2),236-246.
- Monroe, K.R. (2019). Ending Sexual Harassment: Protecting the Progress of #MeToo. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 40(1),131-147.
- Montemurro, B., & Gillen, M. (2013). How clothes make the woman immoral: Impressions given off by sexualized clothing. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 31,167–181
- Morgan, R. (1984). *Sisterhood is Global*. USA: Anchor Press.
- Newman, J. (2018, March 3). Assertive Women Are More Likely to Be Sexually Harassed at Work. Retrieved from <https://drjennifernewman.com/2018/03/assertive-women-are-more-likely-to-be-sexually-harrassed-at-work/>
- Odikhar (2018). Human Rights Monitoring Report on Bangladesh. Retrieved from http://odhikar.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/human-rights-monitoring-report-November-2018_Eng.pdf
- O’Leary P, Coohy C, & Easton S.D. (2010). The Effect of Severe Child Sexual Abuse and Disclosure on Mental Health During Adulthood. *Journal of Child Sex Abuse*, 19(3),275-289.
- Ontario Human Commission. (2013). Policy on preventing sexual and gender-based harassment. Ontario: Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/book/export/html/10245>
- Prioty, M.A. (October 29, 2018). *Bangladeshi Me too Star Golpo*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PpkTOH13_g

- Quinn, B., A. (2002). Sexual Harassment and Masculinity: The Power and Meaning of 'Girl Watching'. *Gender & Society* 16(3), 386–402
- Radford, L., Corral, S., Bradley, C., Fisher, H., Bassett, C., Howat, N. and Collishaw, S. (2011) *Child Abuse and Neglect in the UK Today*. London: NSPCC.
- Raga' El-Nimr. (2006). Women in Islamic Law. M., Yamani (Ed), *Feminism and Islam: Legal and Literary Perspectives*. (pp.87-102). London: ITHAKCA Press.
- Ragins, B. R., Terri A. S. (1995). Antecedents and Work-Related Correlates of Reported sexual harassment: An empirical investigation of competing hypotheses. *Sex Roles*, 32(7-8),429-455.
- Rashid, S.F. (2010). Providing sex education to adolescents in rural Bangladesh: Experiences from BRAC. *Gender and Development*, 8(2), 28–37.
- Reuwijk, M. & Nahar, P. (2013). The importance to positive approach to sexuality in sexual health programs for unmarried adolescents in Bangladesh. *Reproductive HealthMatters*, 21 (41), 69–77.
- Rospenda K. M., Richman J. A., & Nawyn T. J. (1998). Doing Power: The Confluence of Gender, Race, and Class in Contrapower Sexual Harassment. *Gender & Society*, 12(1), 40–60.
- Schat, Aaron C. H.; Frone, Michael R.; Kelloway, E. Kevin. (2006). Prevalence of workplace aggression in the U.S. workforce. In E. K. Kelloway, J. Barling & J. J Burrell (Eds), *Handbook of Workplace Violence* (pp. 47-89). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sexual Harassment: An Empirical Investigation of Competing Hypotheses. *Sex Roles* (32)429–55.
- Siddikha, M., T.& Khatun, M. (2014). Re-reading Muslim Women's Rights in Bnagladesh. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (Hum.)*. 59(2).323-341.
- Smolak, L., Murnen, S. K., & Myers, T. A. (2014). Sexualizing the self: What college women and men think about and do to be "sexy". *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 38(3), 379–397.
- Stainback, K., Thomas N. R., & Vincent J. R. (2011). The Context of Workplace Sex Discrimination: Sex Composition, Workplace Culture, and Relative Power. *Social Forces*,89 (4). 1165–88
- Stedham, Yvonne & Mitchell, Merwin C. (1998). Sexual harassment in casinos: Effects on employee attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 14(4), 381-400. doi:10.1023/A:1023025110307
- Sultana, A. (2012). Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis. *Arts Faculty Journal*, 4, 1-18. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3329/afj.v4i0.12929>
- T, Dhaka. (2018). "Male participation a must for success of #MeToo Movement". Retrieved from <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/court/2018/05/08/supreme-court-guidelines-sexual-harassment-largely-ignored>
- The Ministry of Women and Children Affair. (2011). National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children. Dhaka, retrieved from mowca.portal.gov.bd/...bd/.../English-National-Action-Plan-to-Prevent-Violence-Agai...
- The Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act 2000. Retrieved from http://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/prevention_act_bangladesh.pdf
- The Quran. Surah At-Tin. 95: 4. Retrieved from <https://quran.com/95>
- The Quran. Surah Al-Nisa.4:34. Retrieved from <http://www.surah.my/4?l=en>

- Uggen, C. & Blackstone, A. (2004). Sexual Harassment as a Gendered Expression of Power. *American Social Review*, 69(1),64-9
- UNDP (2002). *Human security in Bangladesh: In Search of Justice and Dignity*. Dhaka: UNDP.
- Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Blackwell Publishers Ltd.: Oxford, UK and Cambridge USA.
- Welsh, S. (1999). Gender and Sexual Harassment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 25(1),169-90.
- Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S.G. (2005). *Research Methods in Education: An Introduction*. Boston: Pearson.
- Wilson, F & Thomson, P. (2001). Sexual Harassment as an Exercise of Power. *Gender Work and Organization*, 8(1), 61-83.
- Wilson, F. M., & Thompson, P. (2001). Sexual Harassment as an Exercise of Power. *Gender, Work, and Organization*. 8(1), 61-83.
- Women Chapter (2018, November 10). #MeToo in Bangladesh. Retrieved from <https://womenchapterenglish.com/metoo-in-bangladesh/>
- Women Chapter (2018, November 19). #metoo Retrieved from <https://womenchapter.com/views/29005?fbclid=IwAR1FX68NpVgF7v3qZV1CNjokHitKSYHvHi1SA3CrfmDtnxmC96jDFpLxoUc>
- World Economic Forum. (2017). Global Gender Gap Report. Retrieved from <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2017/dataexplorer/#economy=BGD>