

Social Network as Livelihood Strategy of Floating Labourers of Dhaka Metropolitan, Bangladesh

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Abstract

Livelihood diversification using social capital in the sense has been overlooked by most of the researchers, policy makers and social scientists in the study of urban wage labour and rural-urban migration. The rich people can diversify their livelihoods through growth strategies; however, poorer people who are mostly landless, involved with informal economic sector, daylabourer or floating labourer cannot improve their livelihood under existing poverty reduction strategies. They are always looking for opportunities to diversify their livelihoods in the same economic system by using various social capital, relation and networks. Focusing on dynamic of livelihoods diversification, the study focuses that the current situation of urban floatinglabourer can be better analysed. The main aim of the paper is to shed light on more dynamic aspects of livelihoods strategy of urban daily based on wage labourer of Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. Using ethnographic data and case studies, hence, this paper interprets the process of getting out of poverty as livelihood diversification using social network and social capital from survival to accumulation.

Keywords: Social capital, rural-urban migration, livelihood, floating labourer, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Bangladeş Dakka Metropolündeki Gündelik İşçilerin Geçim Stratejisi Olarak Sosyal Ağ

Özet

Sosyal sermaye ile oluşturulan geçim çeşitliliği, gündelik ücretle çalışan işçi ve kırsal-kentsel göç çalışmalarına odaklanan çoğu araştırmacı, politikacı ve sosyal bilimciler tarafından birçok anlamda göz ardı edilmiştir. Zenginlik sahibi insanlar büyüme stratejileri ile geçim kaynaklarını çeşitlendirebilir. Fakat çoğunlukla herhangi bir toprak sahibi olmayan, kayıt dışı ekonomik sektörlerde çalışan gündelik işçiler veya amelelik ile uğraşan işçiler gibi yoksul insanlar, mevcut yoksulluğu azaltma stratejileri kapsamında geçim kaynaklarını iyileştirememektedirler. Çeşitli sosyal sermaye, ilişki ve ağlar kullanarak bu insanlar her zaman aynı ekonomik sistemde geçim kaynaklarını çeşitlendirmek için fırsatlar aramaktalar. Geçim kaynaklarının çeşitliliğinin dinamiğine odaklanan bu çalışma, kentlerde yaşayan ve amelelik ile uğraşan işçilerin günümüzdeki durumunun daha iyi analiz edilebileceğine odaklanmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, Bangladeş'in başkenti Dakka'da yaşayan gündelik çalışan işçilerin yaşam stratejisinin daha dinamik yönlerine ışık tutmaktır. Bu amaçla etnografik verileri ve vaka çalışmalarını kullanarak yapılan bu araştırma, sosyal ağ ve sosyal sermayenin yardımıyla hayatta kalmak için yapılan birikimden yoksulluktan kurtulma sürecine kadar oluşan geçim kaynaklarının çeşitliliğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal sermaye, kırsal-kentsel göç, geçim, gündelik işçi, Dakka, Bangladeş

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past fifty years Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, has become one of the most overcrowded and densely populated metropolitans in the world. At more than 115,000 people per square mile or 45,000 people per square kilometre (Cox, 2012), no cities on this planet uses their lands as efficiently as Dhaka. However, because of the exceptionally over crowded condition, there are severe negative outcomes in the livelihood here. While Dhaka is ranked among the top 20 most populous cities in the world, the average income is so low that the city does not even place in the top 100 metropolitan economies measured by the Brookings Institution (Cox, 2012). In this way, the densest metropolitan in the world has also been among the least economically facilitated metropolitans in the world.

Because of the gradual enhancement of scarcity of cultivatable land in Bangladesh, the lack of rural employment opportunities, internal displacement due to river erosion and other impacts of climate change, internal migration caused by political intolerance, seasonal unemployment and the return of rural refugees continuously accelerate urban poverty in Dhaka (Hossain, 2013: 370-73). Consequently, the Dhaka city is characterized by increasingly overcrowded living conditions, highly competitive and unreliable job markets, widespread residence insecurity, severe health risks and environmental hazards. People who come from rural area of all over the country have no permanent residence and work security. Most of them eventually start to work as a daily wage labourer. These people have no special reality and common story to tell, but they are merely to survive in their own way (Dannecker, 2002). They are mostly floating labourers in search of work (Habib, 2015) and many of them wait at certain points of the footpaths or stations, only using their baskets or working tools as a head-rest as residence.

There are social and economic researches (e.g., Rabby et al., 2011; Hossain, 2013; Kona et al., 2018) particularly focusing on the poverty of Bangladesh, but many of them failed to find ways of sustainable surviving strategy for these poormigrants. Moreover, Poverty Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2000), World Development Report 2000/2001 of the World Bank (World Bank, 2001), and the Rural Poverty Report 2001 of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 2001), all suggest that the leading donor agencies has not found a way to use effectively their huge investments for poverty reduction in the country.

Since 1980s, on the other hand, researchers (e.g., Chambers, 1995) have suggested that it may be more fruitful to think about *livelihoods* rather than poverty and wealth as things to be measured. There is also an alternative concept currently being proposed i.e., *sustainability*, indicating the idea that livelihoods are self-sufficient. In this concept, Chambers & Conway (1992: 14) first argued that the environmental sustainability of livelihoods had to be complemented by

the social sustainability of livelihoods. It is further suggested that 'empirical case studies' are urgently needed to explore this aspect of livelihood opportunities (Hulme & Shepherd, 2003).

The concept of sustainable livelihoods has been also increasingly important to development policy and practice across South Asia (Kabeer, 1994; Chambers, 1995; Scoones, 1998). It is also inherently anthropological in nature. It draws attention to 'the poor' as active agents, who are forging ahead in finding options and opportunities, balancing apparent risks and opportunities with the need for security, strategizing, and making use of a range of resources (or 'capitals'). It is argued that besides the low income rates, poverty also involves a sense of social inferiority, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, seasonal deprivation, powerlessness and humiliation (Chambers, 1995). The concept of social capital has huge importance in the study of poor and migrants (Kritz & Zlotnik, 1992). Many anthropologists have also previously showed the importance of social capital in case of migration (e.g., Butterworth, 1962; Graves, 1974; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Gardner, 1995). However, most of them have focused on the blood relations or clan relation as an important primary factor of migration (Gardner, 1995; de Haan et al., 2002). Some researchers (e.g., Dennecker, 2002; Habib, 2015) also showed that the social capital in migration practices changes through new relationship network. Particularly, migration plays an important role in Bangladesh, for creating dynamism in human life, mainly in making relationships with people. Besides, migration can take place among different regions if family / clan members live in different places (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). If it happens so, most of the cases, it becomes a cultural ritual of that region (de Haan & Rogaly, 2002). On the other hand, very few researches contradict the idea that social relationship should only be based on blood or clan relation (Purvez, 2005) because in many case, the base of social capital is created by clan relation, fictive relation, friendship or working together.

In the contemporary Bangladesh, the livelihood analysis has emerged as a dynamic issue, emphasizing options and opportunities where livelihoods depend upon social relations and networks (Purvez, 2005; Hossain, 2013; Ahmed & Habib, 2015). These options are all too often represented in the literature as structural constraints between the powerful and powerless. It stresses that we should not assume livelihoods to be fixed at one place, or they might not change over time and situation such as seasonal change or over a household development cycle. They are therefore found to be far more complex since the economic aspect of livelihood glosses a range of complex arrangements, which are often heavily structured by both physical and socio-political risks in urban area (Ahmed & Habib, 2015).

In the discussion of social relation and the study of migration, special attention has also been given to some matters such as migrants' regular communication with the main community, sending remittance and other necessary collaboration (Levitt, 1998; Chaudhury, 2006). However,

very significant factors such as power relation or mutual interest are not found to be given importance. On the other hand, albeit some researchers used the term 'power relation' and 'patron-client relation' (e.g., Kuhn, 2003; Rogaly et al., 2002), they are more interested to point it out a single sided relationship since they mainly emphasized on how migrant labourer become more powerful in their own boarding houses.

While social scientists emphasize on relationship among social organizations in terms of analysing social network or social capital (e.g., Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998; Woolcock, 1998; Purvez, 2005), anthropology is more interested in investigating complex diversity of social relationship among human individuals or different people groups. In this background, this study aims to contribute to an unexplored domain of urban poverty studies, to open up new economic opportunities using social network (Purvez, 2005) and social capital (Portes, 1998). Based on empirical data from floating wage labourers, it particularly attempts to explore the relationship network of migrant people in Dhaka Metropolitan and find out how they acquire livelihood within the framework of this network. More specifically, the research finds the importance of social network or social capital in the case of livelihood security among floating labourers. The study further attempts to demonstrate how social relationships survives basing on mutual bonds, exchange, trust, confidence and dependency as well as how mutual trust and power relations helps simultaneously creating new relationships among newly joined floating migrations.

MATERIALS and METHODS

This is an on-going research project launched in 2012. Since the beginning, ethnographic research methods (Lowery, 2001) in urban context have been followed in every fieldwork of this research. Dhaka is the eleventh largest metropolitan city in the world where about 17 million people (total resident and migrant) are estimated to be living currently. The number of population is even gradually increasing since the city attracts some 300,000-400,000 new migrants each year. Considering such massive population, the research project was launched in January 2012 with gradual progress from one part to another. The floating labourers are the poorest of the poor coming from the different geographical settings over the Bangladesh. They are bought by the rich for working hours, days and sometime for months in a contract basis. Fieldwork was carried out mainly at their selling point.

Particularly, Ethnographic interviewing (Heyl, 2001), narrative analysis (Cortazzi, 2001) and in-depth life story analysed / case study analysis (Plummer, 2001) were the primary research approaches to obtain raw data. Both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected since 2012. However, mainly the qualitative data and case study research method were followed for the analysis and arguments of this paper. In many cases, there were field visits at their work places, too. Street corners, where labours wait for employer, were observed closely and scrutinized the 'buying-selling' process during the

fieldwork. Besides, several group-based field surveys and face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted. Since 2012, fieldworks were carried out in almost 50 spots of Dhaka metropolitan and its suburban areas of where mainly the selling-buying of labourers takes place every day. And personal interviews have been carried out from 1879 wage labourers so far.

All of these labourers act as research sample in this study are of 17 to 76 year old. Most labourers comprise the age group between 25 and 40 year old. However, the age group of between 50 and 60 was also found very common. About 63 per cent of the interviewed labourers are male, and about 26-27 per cent of them are of the female labourers. Almost all of the respondents are found to be literate meaning they can write and sign their names. However, most of them could not have chance to complete their high school. Only about three per cent of the respondents completed their high school and only two labourers were found completed their graduate degree.

FINDINGS

Backgrounds of floating labourers

The gathering of day labourers occurs almost every day. They seek for any kind of labouring job at anywhere. These people gather together at an isolated place near the market and wait for to be bought by employers. The gathering usually starts at 6:00 am in the morning and continued until 13.00 pm. The peak hour to be hired is 6:30 am to 11:00 am. Most of the male labourers often get a job. However, lucks of many female labourers often do not smile. They therefore often have to sit idly with their equipment e.g., hoe, spade, basket, hammer etc.

The floating labourers are hired temporarily at an hour basis or daily basis. They usually do not have chance to engage with homogeneous work every day. An individual labourer may have to do various types of work at their employer's requirement. A rich person or contractor can arrive at any time and hire individuals or small group from this bazaar. However, it is overall observed that these floating people commonly engaged with common labouring works such as construction, agriculture, forest plantation, decoration, event management, light manufacturing, painting, landscaping, cleaning, animal farm, moving home or office property as well as similar kinds of jobs. They find work either by a temporary broker or by themselves at a certain bazaar.

The big bazaars for the wage labour are usually set every day at different places of the Metropolitan. Prominent and almost permanent places includes Malibagh Rail Crossing, Khilgaon, Doyaganj, Jatrabari, ShanirAkhra, Mohammadpur Bus Stand, Jhigatola Crossing, Badda Crossing, Nayabazar, Gabtoli, Amin bazar, Svar, Uttara and Abdullahpur. During the fieldwork, nearly 50 places in Dhaka city and its suburban areas have been recorded where the selling-buying of wage labourer occurs every day. About 1000 to 1200 male and female wage labourers usually gathers at each of the bigger markets such as Savar, Uttara, Gabtoli, Jatrabari. With a seasonal variation, on the other hand, 400 to 600 wage labourers

are found every day at small bazaar such as Airport area, Badda, Shamoli.

Aside from fieldwork it is found that, although mobile in nature, the selling labour has a long history that goes back to the post liberation period in Bangladesh, particularly during 1972-74 when famine and mass starvation spread across the country. On the basis of oral history and storytelling of respondents, it was reported that some people came to Dhaka to find a living opportunity and started to present themselves for sell. As the floating labourers believe, that was the beginning of the mobile paid labour market in Bangladesh.

These floating labourers commonly encounter a number of problems. Sometimes they are not paid as they were promised at beginning of work; many of them become the victim of serious hazards at their work; in many case they often have to endure insults and abuses by their temporary employers since they are hired / bought by them who often try to minimize their costs with maximum flexibility. The floating labourers do not represented by any unions or any kind of registered institution. Therefore, all of them are undocumented and unrecognised worker, making them vulnerable to exploitation. Almost every day, a number of labours are included and excluded. However, the number of labourer is sharply uprising recently. It is not easy to get work and they have to struggle every day since the process of selling themselves is not a simple task.

Livelihood diversification

One of the important factors of day-labourer is social relationships of different types, and networks between individuals and labour groups. The networks can further spread depending on personal, family and ideological relationship. The networks often promote the decision for migration into city. Social capital, particularly kinship plays important roles not only in migration but also in obtaining a work or solving accommodation problem. This relationship network provides support and helps individuals to enter into economic base. Reputation of a specific region, clan and family also acts as a determinant for this network. However, the stability of social capital depends on mutual trust and closeness.

The process of making social network

Most of the literatures related to the livelihood studies in Bangladesh (e.g., Ahmed & Habib, 2015) are based on rural area and focused mainly on social relation called 'social capital' (Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998). The nature of relationships they present are *consanguinal* (blood ties) and *affinal* (marital ties). In urban area, however, the nature of social relations especially among the poor mobile labours is very much fictive which are neither affinal nor consanguinal.

For instance, Rasheda (45) described her story like this;

"I was in Kurigram (a district of Northern Bangladesh) before I came to Dhaka and worked as house made. I met a lady in my relative home at Dinajpur (another district of Northern Bangladesh). She was also there to visit her

relatives. I told her about the death of my husband and responsibility for my children. I asked her for a suitable work and she told me that she will try her best. One day another lady offered me to work in her home at Dhaka. The lady told me that she heard about me from that woman I met in Dinajpur. I came to Dhaka and worked there for two years. Since the first day in Dhaka, I met many people and one of them offered me to work with her. She gave me hope to earn more money and because of her I have started to come in Savar for selling my labour. I am very much grateful to them who were not my close kin or known to me before, but they helped me a lot for my survival. Nowadays, I am struggling but the income is convenient to bear my family expenses."

Sattar (50) has same feeling with different context and experience. He described his life story as this;

"Due to river erosion, I lost all of my property and belongings. I was miserable, distress and troubled condition. There was no hope for me to start a normal life again. With this condition, I came to Dhaka. I contacted some close and distant relatives. Joyntal was one of them who suggested me to go to the daily bazaar for floating labourers in Jatrabari. He lent me one thousand taka to buy working tools. Now, I am working in this area. But I normally go to two or three labour bazaar to find work regularly. Now I have a network of friends for sharing and caring each other."

These two cases suggest that the livelihood strategy of urban floating labourers is diverse. Conventional kinship ties do not act strong in an urban setting where labourers are facing new challenges every day. Livelihood sustainability depends on how quick a labour can makes his network and relationships with individuals and established groups.

Role of kin

During the fieldwork, most respondents said that it would be very much tough for them to get a work in Dhaka. However, their social relations contributed a lot for them. They further claim to get a contract with the help of their well-wishers such as kith and kin, friends and acquaintances from the same village or region. Personal relationship play a great role since it encourages helping each other. It is commonly easy for the newcomers to be adjusted whose relatives have already been working at floating labourer market for months or years. Recommendation from former kin labourers also helps newcomers to get a work.

Most people believe that only their relatives can arrange a secure and safe accommodation and livelihood for them. Therefore, before deciding a place for migration or finding a work, most newcomers first find out where they have a relative. During the early period of their migration, the newcomers commonly take shelter in a house/hostel of their kin or clan members. However, in most case,

newcomers prefer seeking help from their relatives. For instance, a young labourer Shamol (20) described his story follows: "Only reason I came here is my uncle lives here. My family still maintains regular contact with him and rather than sending me elsewhere, they sent me here because of him. I did not face any problem since my uncle arranged everything of my accommodation, food etc. When I arrived here, I told him that I am not interested in study but getting an earning. My father also talked to him about it. Therefore, after getting positive response from my uncle, my father sent me here."

Role of 'Sardar'

A *Sardar* is an individual who act as the leader of certain labourer group. *Sardar* plays important role for the distribution of labour. More than one *Sardar* or brokers were found in each bazaar, who often mediates the wage rates between employer and labourer. Mediator is very important particularly for new comers. Some *Sardars* bring new labourers from their village or own kin groups. Among *Sardars*, particularly the case of Anis (48) is striking. The *Sardar* Anis came to Dhaka from Sirajgonj. He was the only earning member of his family of twelve people. He started his livelihood as a daily basis wage labourer. However, inspired by his cousin, he changed his role to mediating among employer and labourers. In this process, Anis is now able to earn more money since he takes commission from each contract done by him. He maintains direct contact with big employer groups such as road and building construction companies or real estate companies. Anis believes that help from his relatives was one of the main reasons for his success. Moreover, most of the labourers working under him are his close and distant relatives. Their trust, confidence and loyalty on Anis helped him to secure his present position as a well-known *Sardar* of floating labourer in Uttara area of Dhaka city.

Analysing the above-mentioned case, it can be argued that social capital is helpful for making livelihood. It also helps finding new job and raising goodwill. This further becomes possible because of mutual trust and confidence between two parties (owner-labour) since the mutual trust act as the centre point of social capital. Looking at the case, it is evident that if Anis was not able to supply trusted and good labourers, he would not achieve trust and confidence of his employers to be a successful contractor or *sardar*.

Creating new relationship

Besides of their kin and distant relatives, as a part of strategy to survival and co-existing, day labourers have to form various relationships with unknown people in their new place. Social relationship building becomes an evolving and continuously changing process for them. Particularly for a woman labourer, this relationship network helps her getting access to better economic benefits. However, building new relationship network does not have any negative outcomes for their previous network. Instead, new relationship network strengthen their previous relationships with multi-connections and multi-formed networking.

It was observed that fictive relationship formed at workplace and their expressions are different according to male and female. Migrants want to ease their relationship and understanding at workplace by creating fictive kinships. On the other hand, employers see this culture of fictive kinship as a way of exercising power since the labourers often use this fictive kinship to ease patron-client relationship so that they can secure highest opportunity from the employer. Therefore, the intention of forming fictive kinship becomes the product of power relation and mutual interest.

On the other hand, the overall social perception about working women has not been changed much although the number of female labourer increased at a remarkable rate. Women labourers commonly face various insecurities in family, society even in workplace. Therefore, they use fictive kinship as a weapon to deal with their shaking position. Using these terms they want to keep their position strong with their workmates. However, strength of fictive relationship depends on mutual interest.

Even a male and a female labour are hired at the same work, they are evaluated differently. There are even various rules created for how their activities will be at workplace. If anyone breaks the rules, he/she gets punished. Female labourers are more concerned to protect their goodwill. Therefore, they often create fictive relationship calling their male colleagues as elder brothers, cousins, or uncles. By doing this, female labourers want to get the respect they deserve. However, sometimes they create fictive kinship to get some extra opportunities. For instance, Mitu (40) said,

"I have good relation with some mediator and some senior labourers. There are some bad mediators too. I do not like or trust them because of they only help the female labourers who work according to their will. Sardars, mediators and sometimes men labourers want to peruse the female labourer who support them and accept their legal or socially illegal tasks."

Finding alternative works

Although networks and relationships are the base of getting a work, finding a position at a market or work place is often negotiable. These arrangements are also not static, motionless and homogeneous. They change according to the time, place, nature and depth of relationship, and often particular circumstances. It can also vary on kinship, economy, politics, region and religion. For instance, Jamela (55) said,

"I worked as wage labourer for twenty years. My body does not support the physically hard work anymore. For this reason, I am working as a hawker in this bazaar for last few years. Many labourers here are known to me for long time and from them my fellow labourer Rashid (60) suggested me to do this work. It is difficult to maintain my livelihood by this mini business, but I have no option in my hand. Therefore, I am doing this and everything is going well. Currently I am selling lighters, matchstick boxes, snacks, biscuits, tea, candy, tobacco and cigarettes."

Trust on same sex partner

It was observed that, if there is no marital, blood or kin relationships, the same sex labourers found themselves most trustworthy to each other. Particularly for women labourer, building a holistic relationships and understanding between women to women was observed to be very significant. For instance Jui (22) stated,

“Men are not good. They use women as slaves and as sex toys. It is very difficult to adjust with this situation. Because of this, I could help myself adjusting with my ex-husband. If I get marry again, maybe it will happen again. Besides, I have a son and he will probably suffer if I get married again. Therefore, I am very afraid to do so.”

Jui narrated that she was never sent to school but had a happy childhood. Unfortunately her father died at her 16 years of age and because of this, at her 17, Jui got married to Kalam, who was living in adjacent district. With a very bad luck, although having a baby boy, she was divorced by her husband within a year of their marriage. After getting divorced, she came to Dhaka with the responsibility of her baby boy and started to work as a day labourer in Mohammadpur area. Her cousin helped her to get this job. Jui said, as there is lot of male and female wage labourer in this area, many men always try to get a chance to have chat with their sexually implicit desire. But Jui thinks that female labourers are different since they are being engaged with this very difficult laborious hard work only for their survivals.

DISCUSSION

‘Social capital’ has been an academic issue particularly of cutting-edge research trends in social science and economy. Since the 1980s, many researchers have defined ‘social capital’ as an economic term (Bourdieu, 1986: 243; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993: 1323) related to economic security (Portes, 1998: 6) and resource mobilization (Boxman et al., 1991: 52) in the context of market place or workplace. However, our data shows that the effect of social network, i.e., the social capital for earning a livelihood is present not only in workplace but also in the lifestyle of a certain people groups. Being the migrant labourers, almost all the respondents in our study had to face different problems as well as follow various suspicions and rules to get a place to stay. However, by developing social network through time, they earned freedom of movement in their new community. Besides, many female migrant labourers were found to get a new accommodation and suitable work with the help of fictive kinship. It can therefore be argued that, such ‘social capital’ is formed/created, spread and evolved on the basis of the needs of livelihood.

Being a migrant and living in new environment, most of the floating labourers first had to face a big challenge to adjust in their surroundings and legalize their position in the community. Expansion of social network, which is strongly based on their daily movements and activities, helps these new migrants to cope up with fearful and

worrying situation. Social network also helps in creating positive relationship between newcomers and the previously settled labourers. Moreover, for making a decision to migrate into Dhaka without having a blood related relative, social network acts as one of the main for these poor wage labourers. However, networking and relationships were never one sided but they were observed to be based on mutual interest and strong power relation in their background.

Livelihoods are often discussed by the economists from material aspect such as capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). This includes natural capital, financial capital, human capital such as skills, knowledge and labour as well as social capital such as networks, social claims, entitlements and associations (Coleman, 1988). What is important is to pay a careful attention to the term social capital, as it has been largely used by economists and can be reductive (Woolcock, 1998). A ‘livelihood approach’ may be much better suited to understanding the varied strategies of poorer people than the term ‘income’ or asset ownership alone. Understanding livelihood in this way, such strategies adopted by urban floating wage labourer in Dhaka is hardly heard, and epitomizes a profound contradiction in acknowledging their active potentials. Therefore, the obtained ethnographic data in this study adds flesh onto this concept unlike of the bald understanding of livelihood.

It has been shown that social network play significant roles for the internal migration into Dhaka (Gardner, 1995; Dannecker, 2002; Habib, 2015). It is also one of the strategies of livelihood diversifications of poorer people in Bangladesh (Gardner, 1995). However, this study suggests that migrants who immigrate on the basis of ‘social network’ or ‘social capital’ at the same time, make the network stronger by earning mutual trust and acceptance in the pre-established community. Yet, the network never has been limited to the blood relations but spreads and evolves for the fulfilment of the need of adoption in a new lifestyle and environment. Besides, this social network does not erase the previous blood relation but by making new social relation, enriches previously existing social capital.

It is overall can be argued that, in contrast of considering the ‘social capital’ as a stagnant and one sided power, it necessary to realize the various diversity of social network, particularly the power relation, social idol, mutual interest, bonding, trust, confidence and dependency on the basis of the gradual experience in day labourers’ life. The current situation of the floating wage labourer in Dhaka can be better analysed, only by focusing on their diversified livelihood basing mainly on their social network and social capital. Since the lacking of developing a network and mutual relationship means strong restriction to the access into work, the study finds that one group of these floating labourers is strongly dependent on other groups. This mutual bonding and dependency can properly be termed as ‘social network’ what they are creating and spreading mainly for their own survival.

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