Social Cohesion in Multicultural Society:
A Case of Bangladeshi Immigrants in Stockholm

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*Social Cohesion in Multicultural Society: A Case of Bangladeshi Immigrants in Stockholm.*

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**Key words:** Stockholm, Bangladeshi immigrants, Social Cohesion, Multicultural Society, Social Inclusion, Social Sustainability.

**Abstract**

Due to the rapid urbanization and globalization, urban social life is getting more complex than ever. Stockholm, the capital city of Sweden, is the residence of about 180 nationalities that makes it one of the prominent multicultural cities in Europe. Moreover, sustainable development is one of the main goals of the Swedish government. In this circumstance, it is the challenge to make a socially cohesive society to ensure its social and economic development. This study is aimed to have an inner look at social cohesiveness between Bangladeshi community and other ethnic groups including native Swedish in Stockholm from a qualitative research approach. A social cohesion framework has been formulated by analyzing various literatures for the purpose of this study. This social cohesion framework comprises of social, cultural, political and economic indicators to understand the different dimensions of social cohesion in Stockholm. This framework is used during preparation of the questionnaire for conducting the qualitative survey that includes twelve in-depth interviews. Empirical result reveals that Bangladeshi community has a weak sense of belonging and a lack of common identity to the mainstream society, rather they have stronger attachment to other Bangladeshi immigrants in Stockholm. Although lack of social cohesiveness has been found between Bangladeshi immigrants and other residents in Stockholm, but many threats to social cohesion (for example; racial conflict) are absent in Stockholm. Therefore, it is a reachable challenge to make this society cohesive for the betterment of the country by initiating proper measures.
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Chapter one: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Social cohesion has been a focus of study in both academic and political arenas in the last few decades. Various concepts of welfare state have emerged in this regard focusing on societal qualities among which social cohesion has been taken into consideration due to its collision on social development (Berger-Schmitt, 2000: 2). Social cohesion is based on cohesive community where mutual trust is established and respects grow among groups, clusters and communities of society (Stansfeld et al., 2006).

Social cohesion is important to be investigated as it is concerned to establish the relationship not only at an individual level but also at a societal level. Social cohesion acts as a catalyst to social development and improves the quality of life in terms of societal characteristics, equities, relationships and other social capital (Stansfeld et al., 2006).

According to Spoonley, Peace, Butcher, and O’Neill (2005), policies of settlement concerning cohesive society demands attention for both immigrants and the host country where a special framework should be developed in this regard. Besides, challenges associating to immigrants with other cultures have to be taken into account (Spooneley et al., 2005). According to Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne, and Solomos (2007), growing immigration and diversified ethnicity is raising several issues of danger which has to be critically assessed and different policy tools needs to be incorporated to increase social cohesion among immigrant ethnic groups and host countries.

Sweden, as a welfare state in the first world, is welcoming immigrants of different ethnic groups from different parts of the world. The country has intention and interest to develop social cohesion among diversified groups for which it has provided social mix policies. However, the ways how these social mix policies can effectively address the manifold issues like immigrant-host relationships, settlement process and societal cohesiveness among ethnically diversified groups are yet to be explored.

1.2 Background of the study

Sustainable development has been considering as one of the most significant issues in political discourse for the last few decades. It includes three key aspects such as, economic, environmental and social sustainability. Social sustainability is often ignored in the development plan whereas environmental and economic aspects are mostly focused. Social cohesion, cultural traditions, community cohesion, social interaction etc., are the significant factors for social sustainability (Dempsey, et al., 2009: 291). Therefore, a socially cohesive society is one of the important prerequisites for the social sustainability, and thus for the sustainable development.
Moreover, present trend of globalization allows many cities in the world to assemble people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Global patterns of migration are complex whereas globalization has resulted large scale of migration over last few decades (Kærgård, 2010:471). Globalization and multiculturalism are often seen as independent issues and are not always studied together, though both of them have great impacts on the cities and countries (Roth, 2001: 325).

Sweden has been targeted to achieve sustainable urban development. On the other hand, major cities of Sweden, especially Stockholm comprises residences from diversified ethnic and cultural background due to the large-scale migration from European and non European countries. In Sweden, the numbers of immigrants has been increasing every year and are mainly concentrated in the metropolitan Stockholm (Hårsman, 2006: 1341). As a result, Stockholm has become a city of residence with a variety of ethnic and cultural background. About 180 different foreign background immigrants are living in Stockholm region (Hårsman, 2006: 1345). Pattern and range of ethnic diversity within the community may have different types of impact on social cohesion (Laurence, 2009). However, it is the challenge to attain social and community cohesion in such a society where diverse groups are living like Stockholm city. Although Swedish government has adopted social mix policy limited studies have been done in Sweden on this issue (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 479). Therefore, detailed study is much needed to understand the complex nature of social cohesion in this multicultural society.

1.3 Aim of the study
The primary aim of this study is to investigate the association between ethnic diversity and social cohesion. To understand this complex issue, this study attempts to scrutinize various factors of social cohesion focusing on a particular ethnic group i.e. Bangladeshi immigrant. Therefore, the definitive aim of the study is to explore the pattern of cohesive association of Bangladeshi immigrants with the society in Stockholm

1.4 Research question
The present study has two research questions, such as:

- What are the factors that affect social cohesion in a multicultural society?
- How do ethnic diversity and social cohesion associate with each other at the community level?

1.5 Study area
Stockholm County has been selected as the study area for the purpose of the study. There are 26 municipalities in Stockholm County where about 20% of total Sweden’s population lives, and makes it the most densely populated county in Sweden (The Stockholm Region at a Glance, 2012). According to Statistics Sweden (SCB), in 2011, the total population of greater Stockholm
is 2087902 including 1034129 male and 1053773 female. The County Administrative Board of Stockholm is the responsible body to coordinate and ensure citizen’s right on different aspects as well as environment, nature, labor market, economic growth, social development, animal protection, gender equality, transport, infrastructure and housing of the county. (County Administrative Board of Stockholm, 2012).

1.5.1 Housing types in Stockholm
In Sweden, municipalities are responsible to provide housing to the citizens through the municipal housing sector that is open for all residents (Lena & Bengt, 2008: 278-279). There are different types of housing in Sweden including apartments, row house and villa. In terms of tenure ship, there are several categories of housing such as, private ownership, private rental, municipal rental and tenant ownership.

1.5.2 Political overview of Sweden
During the second half of the 20th century, Sweden developed its social welfare system that includes free schooling, health care, child and elderly care and other social and economic security systems (Andersson et. al., 2010: 241). Sweden has a coalition government at present.

There is a general election in Sweden in every four year. The County Administrative Board is the regional election authority that responsible for organizing general elections (County Administrative Board of Stockholm, 2012). One must be a Swedish citizens and 18 years or older to vote in Parliament election. People who live in Sweden but not a Swedish citizen can vote in Municipal elections and county elections.

1.5.3 Ethnic compositions in Stockholm
About 37% of the population in Stockholm County have foreign background that comprises of people from 187 countries (The Stockholm Region at a Glance, 2012). Each year, the numbers of immigrants are being increasing due to the continuous in-migration to Sweden especially to Stockholm County. Table 1.1 shows the numbers of immigrants in Sweden for last ten years;

Table 1.1: Number of immigrants in Sweden by sex and year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>32638</td>
<td>31840</td>
<td>30786</td>
<td>33443</td>
<td>50710</td>
<td>53628</td>
<td>52460</td>
<td>52982</td>
<td>52638</td>
<td>50824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>31449</td>
<td>31955</td>
<td>31242</td>
<td>31786</td>
<td>45040</td>
<td>45857</td>
<td>48711</td>
<td>49298</td>
<td>46163</td>
<td>45643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden, 2012
In 2011, total population of Stockholm County was 2091473 of which 454588 people were foreign born (Table 1.2). It is noteworthy that the Stockholm County is the most attractive place for both national and international in-migration for its geographical location and economic opportunity.

Table 1.2: Foreign born people and total population in Stockholm County by sex in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Foreign born persons</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>221099</td>
<td>1036083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>233489</td>
<td>1055390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>454588</strong></td>
<td><strong>2091473</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden, 2012

Table 1.3: Number of immigrants in Stockholm County by sex and year (last five years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>16159</td>
<td>14956</td>
<td>15632</td>
<td>16088</td>
<td>16713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>14151</td>
<td>14078</td>
<td>14463</td>
<td>14167</td>
<td>14849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden, 2012

However, fractions of immigrants vary between municipalities within the Stockholm region. Some municipalities, like Botkyrka have the majority of immigrants, whereas municipalities, like Norrtalje have the majority of native Swedish (Harsman, 2006).

**1.5.4 Number of Bangladeshi Immigrants in Stockholm**
The total number of Bangladeshi immigrants was 6530 in 2011 where 4100 were male and 2430 were female (Statistics Sweden, 2012).

**1.6 Structure of the thesis**
This thesis has been divided into seven chapters. Chapter one is titled as ‘Introduction’ that comprises the overview and background of the research topic, aim of the study and the research questions that are investigated during the research period. In the first chapter, a brief idea of the study area i.e. Stockholm in terms of social, economic, political and demographic aspects, is given.

The second chapter is the literature review that aimed to review some of the previous studies related to the present study such as social cohesion, segregation, social mix policy, ethnic diversity etc.

Theoretical framework is the third chapter of this paper. In this chapter, it attempts to formulate a social cohesion index based on previous studies to investigate the present research questions. The
first part of this chapter attempts to define and explain the concept of ‘social cohesion’ from different perspective such as academic and policy discourse. To provide a detail and clear description, the concept of social cohesion has been scrutinized critically. In the second part, a social cohesion framework is developed on the basis of previous frameworks and descriptions. This social cohesion framework has been used to develop questionnaire, accumulate empirical data and eventually to analyze the data and come up with conclusions regarding research topic.

Chapter four includes the methods and methodologies of the current research studies including questionnaire design, data collection process, interview methods etc.

Fifth chapter is titled as ‘empirical findings’, is an efforts to gather and summarize the empirical data collected through an in-depth interview.

The sixth chapter includes analysis of empirical data and the results drawn from the data.

Chapter seven is the last and final chapter that concludes the thesis on the basis of research questions and empirical evidence along with theoretical background of social cohesion.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Literature review

This section is attempted to review some of the previous studies on social cohesion and other social concept and issues related to present study including social sustainability, ethnic diversity, social capital etc.

Dempsey, et al (2009) in their study ‘The Social Dimension of Sustainable Development: Defining Urban Social Sustainability’ attempted to clarify the concept of social sustainability in premise of sustainable development. By reviewing various literatures, the authors identified various factors of social sustainability such as social cohesion, social justice, social capital, safety, cultural tradition, social interaction, social inclusion, urbanity, quality of life etc (Dempsey et al, 2009: 291). Researchers argued that the concept of social sustainability is not stable rather dynamic, and therefore the perception of social sustainability can change with time in a specific place (Dempsey et al, 2009: 292). Moreover, spatial scale is an important aspect within the concept of social sustainability whereas some factors like social cohesion are related to national scale; conversely other factors like social interaction, are related to local scale (Dempsey et al, 2009: 292). There are two significant dimensions of social sustainability i.e. social equity and the sustainability of community which are related to each other and it is important to take both dimensions into account to understand the concept of social sustainability at neighborhood level (Dempsey et al, 2009: 297). Social equity refers to the social justice and no discrimination among the residents in terms of social, economic and political association. Similarly, sustainability of community involves social interaction between members, social cohesion, social inclusion, safety and social ability to sustain (Dempsey et al, 2009: 292-294). Dempsey et al (2009) identified ‘social cohesion’ as an important factor of social sustainability.

Hårsman (2006) examined the growing process of ethnic diversity and segregation during the period of 1991 to 2001 in Stockholm. The author aimed to measure ethnic diversity and regional segregation as well as tried to link his analysis to housing and land use policies (Hårsman, 2006: 1343). During 1991 to 2001 growth rate of immigrants (born abroad or having a foreign background) people in Stockholm region was higher than Swedish native people and during the study period more than one third of the population was with foreign background in inner part of the region (Hårsman, 2006: 1344). The distribution and supply of different types of housing varies in different municipalities, thus local land use and housing policies are important factors for spatial segregation (Hårsman, 2006: 1344-1345). Swedish immigration policies encourages refuge migration while it’s labor migration policies discourage labor migration from relatively rich countries that allows ethnic diversity and results low income and high unemployment rate among immigrants (Hårsman, 2006: 1346). Findings of this study showed that the ethnic segregation is characterized by the concentration of ethnic people in few planning districts. The segregation is low in inner core and high in periphery areas of Stockholm. However, the Swedes
people are preferred to live in areas with less ethnic diversity and income is also an important factor for segregation (Hårsman, 2006: 1363).

Bergsten & Holmquist (2009) studied the Swedish social mix policy that initiated during 1970s to explore how social mix policy addressed the ethnic segregation and implemented in practical planning field. Their study is based on the policy documents and interview of key actors where they also compare the issues to other countries that have similar policies (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 479). Swedish social mix policy was initiated as an instrument for socioeconomic equalization that aimed to decrease segregation and increase integration, social justice and equality (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 480). However, Swedish social mix policy was not included of ethnic groups rather focused on various socioeconomic groups (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 482). High employment rates among immigrants during 1960s and 1970s could be a reason for this exclusion of ethnic issues in social mix policy (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 482). However, implementation of the Swedish housing mix policy did not involve in moving disadvantaged households and individuals as it was though unethical rather it was voluntary (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 482-483). The Swedish social mix policy is implemented by developing mix housing types (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 483). During 1990s public debate focused the ethnic segregation even though Swedish housing policy was not affected by the debate as the policy is continuing with no or limited focus on ethnic segregation (Bergsten & Holmquist, 2009: 486).

Hamde (2008) examined the concept of cultural diversity in Swedish context where the term ‘diversity’ refers to different social groups in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, educational background etc (Hamde, 2008: 87). Although the terms ethnic diversity and cultural diversity are often used interchangeably and ambiguously in Swedish context, the first refers to the diversity arises from immigrants of different country relative to Sweden born residents, whereas cultural diversity can arise from different groups within the same nation born citizens. Another important dimension of Swedish cultural diversity debate is discrimination among different groups in labor market (Hamde, 2008: 87). In Sweden, during 1990s the Multicultural Centrum was established and several programs have been initiated to create a fair multicultural society, and therefore the year ‘2006’ was declared as the year of cultural diversity (Hamde, 2008: 88). However, critics argued that multicultural programs and policies are not able to create social cohesion and justice rather increases discriminations (Hamde, 2008: 88).

Vergolini (2011) has studied the connection between different dimensions of social inequalities and social cohesion in Europe. In this study, the author mentioned that social and economic inequalities involve various factors including poverty, social status, education, occupation, lifestyle and institutional arrangements. This study has three features such as defining social cohesion, identifying different aspects of social inequality and analyzing the relationship between social cohesion and economic inequality. Social cohesion has been defined from two
perspectives, first as a process of belongingness that reduce social exclusion and, second as the state of multidimensional interaction among the members of the society (Vergolini, 2011: 197-198). Comparative analysis is based on welfare regimes perspective. Regime theory states that welfare regimes consist of social policy arrangements and collective patterns of institutionalized solidarity and social justice beliefs (Vergolini, 2011: 201). Analysis was based on data collected from the European Social Survey (ESS) for 18 European countries and from a population survey with a standardize questionnaire (Vergolini, 2011: 201-202). This study measures civic integration and network density where the author uses Institutional trust, Interpersonal trust and Perceived quality of public services as dependent variables for measuring civic integration whereas Participation in associations, Willingness to cooperate/participate and Isolation are considered as dependent variables for measuring network density (Vergolini, 2011: 202-203). Independent variables of this study are stratification factors and components of economic inequality (Vergolini, 2011: 202-203). Vergolini’s (2011) study shows that stratification factors greatly influence the interactions among social actors, and economic inequality affects individuals’ feelings towards society. Therefore, people with higher social position tend to show a higher level of social cohesion. Evidence reveals economic interest affect the level social cohesion (Vergolini, 2011: 210).

Rajulton et al (2006) attempted to measure social cohesion in its multidimensional aspect at the level of census metropolitan areas in Canada. Authors developed a measurement index comprising various indicators by reviewing and analyzing different studies related to social cohesion. Throughout the whole study, different dimensions of social cohesion have been considered such as political, economic and social dimensions. This study also considered the multilevel aspect of social cohesion such as national or neighborhood level and, the author focused on the census metropolitan area (CMAs). Required data have been collected from the ‘National Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating (NSGVP), 2000’ for the purpose of measuring social cohesion. About 64 CMAs with a total of 8374 respondents have been surveyed under NSGVP, but for the ease of the computation authors have selected a sample size with 8093 respondents from 49 CMAs (Rajulton et al, 2006: 465). Different dimensions of social cohesion have been measured on the basis of various factors by creating overall index of social cohesion for each CMA (Rajulton et al, 2006: 468). A statistical technique named factor analysis has been adopted for the analysis of relationship among interrelated indicators of social cohesion. Both exploratory and confirmatory approaches were used in their study. The exploratory factor analysis helps us to select important indicators and the confirmatory factor analysis determined the relationships between social cohesion and its’ indicators (Rajulton et al, 2006: 469). The confirmatory factor analysis produced both positive and negative scores whereas negative scores indicate the least cohesive and positive scores represent most cohesive (Rajulton et al, 2006: 470). Results showed that small CMAs with an overall higher ranking hold a moderate to high rank in at least two domains. Moreover, scattered distribution of highest ranking CMAs were found in Canada (Rajulton et al, 2006: 479). It was also found that no CMAs hold high rank for
all three dimensions rather if a CMA hold low rank in one dimension get higher rank in other dimension, thus the CMAs are not found polarized within Canada (Rajulton et al, 2006: 479-480). Rajulton et al (2006) revealed that ethnic diversity is strongly associated not only with social dimension as assumed but also with economic dimension.

Laurence (2009) studied the relationship between ethnic diversity, socioeconomic disadvantage and social cohesion at local level in English communities. The author has also been attempted to resolve the ambiguity of measuring diversity. This study used both individual level and community level data collected from the 2005 UK Citizenship Survey and the 2001 UK Census respectively. He also collected the measure of community disadvantage from the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation that used in modeling together with individual and community level variables (Laurence, 2009: 75). Social cohesion is measured from two perspectives including social capital and interethnic relations by using factor analysis considering the reciprocity, trustworthiness, community, sociability, common values, attachment, tolerance and interethnic relation (Laurence, 2009: 75-76). Total population was divided into several groups depending on ethnicity and then two individuals were selected from each group and then a typology of areas was developed based on the proportional size, number of ethnic groups, and type of ethnic group in a community to measure the effect of ethnic diversity on cohesion (Laurence, 2009: 76). A random-intercept hierarchical linear models and two-stage modeling technique were used to analyze the effect of individual and community level factors of social cohesion and the relationship between diversity and disadvantage, respectively (Laurence, 2009: 77). Results showed that an individual living in an ethnically diverged society, has lower levels of social capital while he/she has more positive interethnic relations. Again, diversity allows higher exposure to diverse ethnic groups and higher chance of forming bridging ties thus increased tolerance. Moreover, effect of diversity on social cohesion varied from place to place (Laurence, 2009: 85).

A most recent study by Botterman et al. (2012) was attempted to verify the feasibility of including all the dimensions of social cohesion into one single social cohesion index. This study investigated this issue from both theoretical and methodological perspectives on the basis of literature on multidimensional analyses of social cohesion as well on structural statistical data on 308 communities in Flemish region in Belgium (Botterman et al, 2012: 185-186). Two stage factor analyses have been employed to analyze the dimensional structure of social cohesion (Botterman et al, 2012: 191). First step involved the investigation of shared values and norms that includes four indicators such as violent crime, property crime, economic development and social capital. The results of first step lead to the second stage factor analysis that includes the examination of six factors such as religious involvement, absence of property crime, absence of violent crime, economic development, absence of deprivation and social capital (Botterman et al, 2012: 191-194). Statistical analyses i.e. varimax rotations and correlation coefficients have been
done as a part of factor analyses. Authors argued that the study outcome showed combining all the dimensions of social cohesion into a single index is empirically impossible rather results found two forms of social cohesion namely modern social cohesion and traditional cohesion (Botterman et al., 2012: 198). Furthermore modern social cohesion depends on absence of socio-economic deprivation and violent crimes whereas traditional social cohesion depends on social capital, absence of property crimes and religious involvement (Botterman et al., 2012: 198).

However, all these studies are related to the main focus of the present study i.e. social cohesion in multicultural society. These literatures have been investigating social cohesion and other relevant issues from different perspective and used various methods to explore social cohesion. Thus, these studies help as a source of background knowledge to conduct the present study. From these literatures it is learnt that social cohesion is a must concern issue for multicultural society in large cities like Stockholm.
Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

3.1 Concept of social cohesion
The term ‘social cohesion’ is very popular among both academics and policymakers in recent time (Chan et al, 2006: 273). This concept has been studied by both policy makers and researchers since the end of 19th century although the recent attention is given by the policy makers during last decades in Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand and Europe (Hulse & Stone, 2007: 109). ‘Multiculturalism’ is one of the key factors that brings social cohesion issue in the political agenda of EU due to the increasing migration and population diversity in EU countries. This resulted new social problems after the foundation of EU (Chan et al, 2006: 278). In 2000, the European council meeting in Lisbon emphasized on social cohesion as a significant issue for the economic enhancement (Hulse & Stone, 2007: 113). Though the term social cohesion has been used in different policy documents of European Union, OECD and the Council of Europe, none of these organizations has a clear and widely accepted working definition of social cohesion (Jeannotte, 2000: 8). In this part of the thesis, the concepts of social cohesion from different aspects are discussed to provide a clear understanding of social cohesion.

Although no universally accepted definition of social cohesion has been developed till now (Rajulton et al, 2006: 462), various scholars and researchers tried to define social cohesion from different perspective. Bernard (1999: 2) presents ‘social cohesion’ as a hybrid mental construction that has two facades including relatively realistic validity confirmed by scientific method, and vague and flexible character that makes it difficult to define precisely.

Social cohesion has been scrutinized in two broad contexts such as academic discourse and policy discourse (Chan et al, 2006: 274). But there is no clear distinction between these two practices since policy makers often utilize academic literature likewise academics frequently employ policy oriented concepts of social cohesion (Hulse & Stone, 2007:109). Academic discourse is not able to provide an operational definition of social cohesion yet because of multidisciplinary research interest such as social science, sociology, social psychology etc., though a detail framework is found in academic context (Chan et al, 2006: 277). On the other hand, divergence concept of social cohesion is found in policy domain depending on country to country and organization to organization. However, the academic and the policy discourse have diverse focuses with reference to social cohesion premise (Chan et al, 2006: 279). In this study, both academic and policy contexts have been focused to conceptualize the concept of social cohesion.

In a socially cohesive society, citizens share common values, moral principles and behavior that lead them to reach common aims and objectives, and where individuals are engaged with the political systems and institutions (Kearns & Forrest, 2000: 997). Thus, the concept of social cohesion exhibits some sort of common feeling and sharing among the citizens. A similar working definition is developed by the Social Cohesion Network, Canada, and i.e.
Social cohesion is the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians’ (Jeannotte, 2000: 5).

The Social Cohesion Network, Canada, is focused on an equal opportunity of citizens for both risk and benefits whereas every individual has some sort of common expectation and belief. According to Lockwood (1999), ‘Social cohesion refers to a state of strong primary networks at community level’ (Chan et al, 2006: 275). Lockwood’s concept is somewhat related to the idea of common values and sharing as it is important to have common values, goal and expectation among the citizens or groups to build a strong network. Consequently, strong networks at the community level results from the citizen’s willingness towards collaboration and sharing that influences citizen’s attitudes to each other and thus reduce negative social effects like conflict, violence etc. Social cohesion can be seen as a phenomenon that allows citizen’s willingness to cooperate and support each other under existing social norms (Koonce, 2011: 145). Citizen’s sharing and cooperative attitude may affect social binding positively and social conflicts negatively. Absence of general conflict is a significant characteristic of a cohesive society (Kearns & Forrest, 2000: 998). It is seen that social cohesion has a cause-effect relation with other social factors in terms of social opportunities, economic benefits etc. Some researchers and policy-makers consider social cohesion as an independent variable as it produce outcomes such as economic benefits, social well beings etc while others think as dependent variable as it is the result of some actions (Beauvais & Jenson, 2002: 4).

Chan et al (2006) propose a more comprehensive definition of social cohesion:

‘Social cohesion is a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of society as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioral Manifestations’.

In their definition, Chan et al (2006) emphasize both subjective and objective aspects that includes people’s feelings as well as acts of belonging, belief and cooperation. Vertical interactions refer to the association of society with respect to the state, whereas horizontal interactions indicate the relationship among individuals as well as between different groups within the society. Thus horizontal interactions refer to the social and cultural network at community level while vertical interactions indicate the accessibility of the citizens towards economic opportunity and political participation. Thus, Chan et al (2006) include social, economic and political aspects in their concept of social cohesion.

According to Green & Janmaat (2011), social cohesion involves two aspects, such as; social attitudes and behavioral aspects and institutional aspects. The first feature includes shared values, common goals, sense of belonging and common identity, tolerance and respect for other individuals and cultures, interpersonal and institutional trust, civic cooperation, active civic participation and law- abiding behavior, whereas the later includes institution for the sharing of
risk and providing social protection, equal opportunity and conflict resolution mechanisms (Green & Janmaat, 2011: 6).

In the UK policy discourse, the concept of social cohesion has been phrased as ‘community cohesion’ that mainly focuses on the ethnicity rather than the social and economic class (Andrew & Liudmila, 2007: 24). On the other hand, The Council of Europe classifies cohesion into three categories i.e. democratic cohesion, social cohesion and cultural cohesion; where democratic cohesion includes the issues related to democracy, accessibility and human rights; cultural cohesion focuses on both demographic and cultural aspects including trust, mutual respect, and awareness of the cultural community in the multicultural society of Europe, and social cohesion refers to the social interactions among individuals and groups as well as assurance of social equilibrium (Jeannotte, 2000: 9-10). On the other hand, OECD focus on the economic dimension of social cohesion as it defines social cohesion as ‘a world where life is characterized by stability, continuity, predictability, and secures access to material well-being’ (Jeannotte, 2000: 8). The concept of social cohesion described by OECD is somewhat related to social inclusion and equity where everyone has same social and economic opportunity or access while the Council of Europe incorporates social, cultural, political and economic issues within the concept of social cohesion.

However, the concept of social cohesion is varied depending on perspectives and geographical locations. Academic and policy documents show that social cohesion is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes social, cultural, political and economic aspects of the society. In every point, there should have a common philosophy, for instance, individuals and groups should have a common values, sharing and opportunities. Social cohesion comprises of diverse features such as common values, social solidarity, social networks, social interaction, shared values, (Jensen, 1998; Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Chan et al., 2006). This common feeling helps individuals and groups to build networking and to encourage social interactions that lead to a stable and equilibrium society. Therefore, social cohesion refers to the citizen’s feeling, act and association with each other within the society as well as with society and state beyond the ethnic, social and economic class.

### 3.1.1 Social cohesion indicators

Social cohesion is a multidimensional and multilevel concept, thus it is important to take both aspects into account for measuring social cohesion (Rajulton et al, 2006). Different researchers, academics and policy makers have been trying to develop the social cohesion index considering geographical, social, economic and political context for measuring social cohesion for years. Factors for measuring social cohesion, includes membership of community and civic groups, interpersonal trust, attachment to neighborhoods, social ties, and levels of reciprocity (Laurence, 2009: 72).
Jeannotte (2000) stated that recently the European Union, the OECD and the Council of Europe independently attempted to clarify the concept of social cohesion where they includes the following components;

- Democratic / political cohesion
  - Freedom of expression
  - Free flow of information
  - Access to information
  - Protection of human rights
  - Application of the rule of law
  - Political link between citizen and state
  - Active participation in society
- Economic well-being
  - Stable and secure society
  - Secure access to material well-being
  - Regulation to correct market failure
- Social well-being
  - Universal system of social protection
  - Access to housing, health care and education
  - Freedom from crime and corruption
  - Social links to community
  - Systems of social dialogue
- Cultural cohesion
  - Positive attitude to cultural diversity
  - Strengthened sense of European identity

A two-by-two framework for measuring social cohesion has been developed by Chan et al. (2006) considering both horizontal and vertical social interactions. Their measuring framework is;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horizontal dimension (Cohesion within civil society)</th>
<th>Subjective component (People’s state of mind)</th>
<th>Objective component (Behavioral manifestations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• General trust with fellow citizens</td>
<td>• Social participation and vibrancy of civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Willingness to cooperate and help fellow citizens, including those from “other” social groups</td>
<td>• Voluntarism and donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sense of belonging or identity</td>
<td>• Presence or absence of major inter-group alliances or cleavages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This framework mentions some specific indicators such as trust among citizens, willingness to cooperate, sense of belonging, social participation, political participation and trust in public figures.

Spoonley et al (2005) proposed a Conceptual Framework for New Zealand to measure social cohesion that is based on two broad aspects: elements of socially cohesive behavior and elements that comprise conditions for a socially cohesive society. The first broad aspect includes Belonging and Participation, whereas the second aspect includes inclusion, recognition, and legitimacy (Spoonley et al, 2005: 103).

Framework developed by Spoonley et al. (2005) has features: one for the host community and another for the migrant community. However, following indicators are identified by Spoonley et al (2005) under the framework to measure social cohesion for the migrant community:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of socially cohesive behavior</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Belonging                             | • sense of belonging
|                                       | • frequency of intimate/family friend contact/networks
|                                       | • social involvement index
|                                       | • membership of groups
|                                       | • telephone and internet access
|                                       | • unpaid work outside the home
| Participation                         | • participation in tertiary and adult education
|                                       | • participation in preschool education
|                                       | • participation in arts and cultural activities
|                                       | • involvement in sports teams and leisure
|                                       | • percentage of immigrants voting
|                                       | • civic engagement

Source: Spoonley et al, 2005: 105

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions for a socially cohesive society</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Inclusion                                 | • market income per person
|                                           | • paid employment rate
|                                           | • labor market participation rates
|                                           | • English literacy skills
|                                           | • unemployment rates

Jeannotte (2000) determined number of indicators for measuring social cohesion based on the documents published by the European Union, the OECD and the Council of Europe independently that involves social, cultural, economic and political factors. Jenson (1998) and Spoonley et al (2005) have similar concept that comprises these aspects i.e. socio-cultural (belonging and recognition), economic (inclusion) and political (participation and legitimacy). Similarly, the study of Chan et al (2006) also includes all the aspects whereas horizontal dimension includes social and cultural factors and vertical dimension includes economic and political factors.
3.1.2 Dimensions of social cohesion
On the basis of several literatures, Jenson (1998) identified five dimensions of measuring social cohesion, such as:

- Belonging vs Isolation
- Inclusion vs Exclusion
- Participation vs Non-involvement
- Recognition vs Rejection
- Legitimacy vs Illegitimacy

The first dimension ‘belonging’ represents a feeling of collective identity that allows citizens to think themselves as a part of the society. Isolation is the opposite of sense of belonging that indicates the absence of common or shared values whereas presence of isolation is a threat of social cohesion (Jenson, 1998: 15). Second dimension refers to the citizen’s equal opportunity to economic institutions and market where exclusion is the indication of low level cohesion (Jenson, 1998: 15). Jenson’s third dimension ‘participation’ is similar to the vertical interactions stated by Chan et al (2006). Participation refers to the involvement in political decision making process in both local and national level, thus the link between local level and state that lead to national unity (Jenson, 1998: 16). Fourth dimension means the citizen’s feeling about their acceptability to others and the acknowledgement of their contribution to the society by the society (Jenson, 1998: 16). Final and fifth dimension is legitimacy that means the citizen’s feeling of authority on the social and political organizations that act (Jenson, 1998: 17). However, these five dimensions of social cohesion proposed by Jenson (1998) can be considered as broad element for measuring social cohesion where each dimension may include several specific indicators. Moreover, isolation, exclusion, non-involvement, rejection and illegitimacy are considered as threat for social cohesion by Jenson (1998).

3.1.3 Threats of Social Cohesion
Jeannotte (2000) identifies following threats for the social cohesion after reviewing different literature published by European Union and other agencies:

- Unemployment
- Poverty and regional disparities
- Social exclusion
- Rural deprivation
- Urban distress
- Lack of a sense of European citizenship
- Deterioration of the environment and quality of life
- Exclusion from the Information Society
3.2 Development of social cohesion framework
Social cohesion indicators include social, cultural, economic and political factors but the specific indicators under these dimensions may vary depending on socio-political contexts. For instance, social cohesion indicators for the democratic society may not be the same as the indicators for the welfare society. Moreover, indicators for measuring social cohesion at the community level may differ from the indicators for state level measuring. Determination of indicators for measuring social cohesion is difficult as the concept of social cohesion is still blurry and universally undefined. However, for this study purpose a set of indicators has been developed by considering the most common issues and factors found in related academic and policy oriented literatures.

Indicators for measuring social cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad aspects of social cohesion</th>
<th>Specific Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social and cultural</td>
<td>Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willingness to cooperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence or absence of major inter-group alliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter ethnic group interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Access to labor market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal opportunity to economic institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>welfare receipt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Political link between citizen and state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Access to information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freedom of expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in political institutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This framework comprises following features:

- Subjective and objective feature; as Chan et al (2006) stated
- Finally, this indicator framework focuses different geographical scales.
Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Research approach
Social cohesion research has been often criticized for depending on positivist manner where the tendency is to rely on quantitative material; without understanding qualitative aspects of the issue (Spoonley et al, 2005). This study is attempted to investigate social cohesion from a qualitative research approach. This study tried to get detail and insight view of social cohesion from the community perspective in a multicultural society. It is assumed that the qualitative research methods offer a deeper understanding of social issues than quantitative methods (Silverman, 2001: 32). Social cohesion is a complex social issue where multiple factors are involved that can be better understood through qualitative study. Qualitative methods are widely using in different field of study including sociology, social science, anthropology, political science, economics etc (Denzin et. al, 2005). As qualitative methods involve unstructured, flexible and descriptive nature of study, it will help to go in detail of this research topic. Flexibility nature of qualitative study allows researchers to be innovative (Silverman, 2001: 25). Thus, as social cohesion is a vast and ambiguous aspect; this study involves many factors and issues which can be easy to deal through qualitative methods.

4.2 Research method
In-depth interview method has been adopted for the purpose of data collection in this study. During data analysis, interpretive techniques are used.

4.3 Research scope
Though social cohesion has been analyzed from some other perspective like social psychological, political etc in academic premise, but this study investigates different aspects of social cohesion from a socio-cultural perspective.

There are several ethnic and cultural groups including Arabic, African, Asian and European immigrants in Stockholm. This study exclusively focuses on the Bangladeshi immigrants in Sweden and try to explain how they socially cohesive in the multicultural society of Stockholm. It is easy and feasible for the author of this thesis to contact with Bangladeshi community and also to conduct interview season because of the same ethnic background and language.

4.4 Data collection
For the purpose of this study, both primary and secondary information are collected from different sources.
4.4.1 Primary data
Primary data are collected through an open ended questionnaire whereas interviews are recorded with a recorder with the permission of interviewee. Later on, recorded interviews are transcribed and ready for analysis.

4.4.2 Secondary data
Secondary information is mainly collected from previous studies including journal articles, working papers, books, internet and other secondary sources. Secondary information is used mainly for conceptualization of social cohesion and determining factors and indicators of social cohesion.

4.5 Selection of Respondents/ sampling technique
Snowball sampling method has been adopted in this study for selection of respondents among Bangladeshi immigrants in Stockholm. In first stage 3 different respondents have been selected purposely from the researcher’s own network and each of them was asked before/after interview for getting more respondents from their network. Thus a non probability snowball technique has been using in this study. First stage of selection process involved three different individuals in terms of sex, age, profession, location etc so that all respondents who have been selected through snowball method during second stage of selection process must not from the same network. Thus, selection of samples accordingly followed the Exponential Non-Discriminative Snowball Sampling technique. It is worth mentioning that the sequence of selected respondents and the sequence of interviews are not same due to appointment time changes sometimes.

During selection of respondents, it is concerned to cover people with diverse experience in terms of age, sex, occupation, housing types and living areas. Respondents have been selected from different location and different types of housing such as rental, owner occupied, row housing, single family housing, student housing etc. it was concerned that both male and female immigrants has been studied for the purpose of the research. Moreover, respondents are selected with various age group and occupation so that individual’s experiences and views varied depending on their age and occupation. Duration of living in Stockholm or year of migration has also been kept in mind during selecting interviewees as people’s thoughts and attitudes changes with time.
The flow chart showing the selection process:

![Flow Chart Image]

Figure 4.1: Exponential Non-Discriminative Snowball Sampling. (*note: respondent numbers do not represent the sequence of interview, rather these numbers refers to sequence of selection)

4.5.1 Selection criteria

This study limits to only Bangladeshi immigrants because it is not possible to include more ethnic groups due to time constraints and language differences. Followings are the basic criteria that considered during selection of respondents for in depth interviews.

- Bangladeshi community
- Living in Stockholm for last five years (minimum)
4.5.2 Sample size
Total 12 respondents including both male and female are interviewed. During the survey phase, it is tried to include interviewee from all types of common housing.

4.5.3 Overview of Respondents

Respondent 01

First respondent is a 20 year old girl who born in Sweden but she went back to Bangladesh with her family when she was 11 years old. She came back again after 2 years. She is single and studying at university. There are total three family members in her family. She lives in a rental apartment at Rotebro in Sollentuna, Stockholm. According to the respondent 01, this place is beautiful and quiet, mostly native Swedish people lives there.

Respondent 02

Second respondent is a 49 year old man. He is married and lives with his wife and two children at Farsta. His wife is also born in Bangladesh. He moved to Sweden from Bangladesh 20 years back and has been living in Farsta for last 15 years. He lives in his own apartment that he bought 2 years ago, before he was living in a rental apartment at the same area. He has a university degree from Bangladesh. He works in a school.

Respondent 03

Respondent 03 is a 60 year old man who born in Bangladesh, but he was living in bulgeria for few years before he moved to Sweden. He moved to Stockholm 22 years ago from Bulgaria where he has come to study and moved to Stockholm after finishing his education. His household size is 4 and his wife is a Bulgarian citizen. His occupation is business. He lives in an owned apartment (insats) at Enskedea, Stockholm. He has been living there from the time he has first moved in Stockholm.

Respondent 04

Forth respondent is a 32 year old male person. He is married and his wife is also from Bangladesh. He has been living in Stockholm for last 6 years. He lives in a rental apartment with his wife and his only kid at visatra, Huddinge. He moved this apartment 2 years ago. He is a doctor and working in a hospital for last one year.
Respondent 5

Fifth respondent is a married male person. He is 57 years old. He lives with his wife and 2 children in a row house (radhus) at Botkyrka Kommun, Stockholm. He has been living Stockholm for last 13 years, before he was living in Gothenburg for 3 years. He is living in his present house for 2 years but he moved into this area 7 years ago. His wife is also Bangladeshi. Currently he has no job, but he was working in a health centre; he lost his job few months ago. He is looking for a new job now. He has a diploma degree in engineering from engineering institute of Bangladesh and he has done some vocational training in Sweden as well.

Respondent 6

Respondent 06 is a 45 years old woman who is the head of the single mother family. She is working in a social welfare department as an officer. She is also a politician. She has done her post graduate in law in Sweden. She has two children. Currently she is living at Mörby from 2007. She moved to Sweden from Bangladesh in 1991. She has been in Stockholm for last 21 years.

Respondent 7

The seventh respondent is a 43 year old man who lives in Högdalen with his wife and two children. His wife belongs to Bangladeshi ethnicity. He has a university degree and works in Stockholm Public transport (SL). He lives in a rental apartment. He moved to Stockholm from Bangladesh in 1996 and has been living in Högdalen for the last 13 years.

Respondent 8

Respondent 08 is a 47 year old man. He is married and he has his wife and two children in his family. He has a master’s degree and he is working in a private organization in Stockholm. He came to Stockholm about 23 years ago. He is currently living in a rental apartment currently and has been living in Farsta for the last 18 years.

Respondent 9

The ninth respondent is a man and he is 57 years old. He drives bus in Stockholm. His wife is also from Bangladesh and they have three children. He migrated to Sweden 18 years ago and has been living in the municipality of Salem from the beginning. Before he was living in a rental
apartment but currently he lives in row house (Radhus) that he bought 3 years back. He is a MS
degree holder.

**Respondent 10**

Respondent 10 is a 21 year old female student. She is married and living with her husband in a
student apartment at Flemingsberg. She has moved to Stockholm 10 years ago. Initially she was
living with her parents but she moved in Flemingsberg when she got married.

**Respondent 11**

Respondent 11 is a female person who is 33 year old. She is a housewife but she used to do part
time jobs before. Her husband is a private service holder. She has a bachelor degree. There are
total 4 family members in her family. She has come to Stockholm in 2002. She lives in Tumba in
a row house (radhus). She moved here 2 years ago, before she was living in a rental apartment.

**Respondent 12**

Respondent 12 is a 46 year old man who is working in a hotel. He is married and total family
member is 3. He has done his graduation from a university in Bangladesh and working in a bank
in Bangladesh. He moved to Stockholm in 1993. Currently he is living in a rental apartment in
Varberg. He has been living in this apartment for last 13 years.

**4.6 Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire comprises of open ended questions as well as tag questions and follow-up
questions where necessary. The questionnaire is designed in a way so that it covers all the
indicators that developed in theoretical part for investigating social cohesion. The questionnaire
is divided into 3 parts where each part will cover three broad social cohesion dimensions such as,
socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. An informed consent is attached with the
questionnaire.

**4.7 Ethical consideration**

Research ethics refers to the consciously adopted moral issues that should follow by the
researcher throughout the research work including research design, data collection and result
presentation. In past, the purpose of research ethics were to protect research subject from abuse
but now it includes other issues such as individual privacy, social values etc. Thus Research
ethics protect individual and groups from any kind of harm, damage and harassment in the name
of research. Though some research such as biological or medical research involves certain risk to
participants for perusing result and development of knowledge; however the extent of risk depends on study area. Research is carried out for the betterment of individual and society therefore the debate is whether it is reasonable to stop research or not while it involves very limited harm to participants. However, there should have a balance depends on method, participants, level of harm and benefit (The Swedish Research Council, 2005).

This study is going to involve qualitative interviews where individuals are going to participate. During the process of questionnaire design, interviews and presentation, it will be ensured that participants remain safe from any types of harm and abuse. As my target group is Bangladeshi immigrants in Sweden for interviewing, it would be easier to keep safe their privacy and cultural values during questionnaire design and interview because I have background knowledge about Bangladeshi social and cultural norms, values, emotions and other sensitive issues as I am from Bangladesh too. Therefore, it will be tried to design questionnaire keeping their sensitive issues in mind and during interview and conversation as well. I hope because of same ethnical background, participants will accept me easily and it will help to communicate properly. Finally, it will be tried to protect the participants from harm and exploitation during the whole research work.

This study follows all the rules of plagiarism and never use anyone’s idea, statement and work without acknowledge properly. While some concept and information is used from previous studies, it is ensured that proper citation and referencing has been used. It is always tried to use authentic and acceptable sources for information and readings for the purpose of this study.
Chapter Five: Empirical findings

5.1 Access to information
All respondents express almost the same opinion that they have well access to information regarding economic, political and other issues in Sweden. No one has experienced any obstacle or discrimination for seeking information that indicates equal access to information in Sweden for all the ethnic groups.

Respondent 03 says “Information is open for all in Sweden”.

Respondent 08 states “…never feel that information is confidential here”.

From the statements of respondent 03 & 08, it is clear that both of them have the perception of well accessibility to information. These statements are about all kind of information such as economic, political and social welfare etc.

Some of the respondents are found who are not interested to seek information on political issues or they think they don’t need to know much about political activities, but they believe that if they want to know they can easily reach to necessary information.

Respondent 01 says “As I am not interested in politics, I don’t seek for information, but if I want to know I might get help from internet, newspaper or discussion with friend”.

Respondent 01 has a feeling that she has access to political information though she never searched for that; moreover, she knows the sources of information from where one can get necessary information.

Few interviewees have doubt about the authenticity or acceptability of media as a source of information especially for political issues.

Respondent 02 says “Information available in internet, newspaper, but some media is biased, not fair”.

Respondent 02 also knows that he has full access of information, but he thinks media doesn’t reveal the true facts sometimes. For example, particular newspapers support a specific political party, whereas another newspaper is biased to other party. However, even though this kind of biasness does exist, but one has the opportunity to choice several sources and discovers the actual fact. Moreover, respondent’s opinion reveals that some of the media is biased not all, thus it is not a big problem for citizens to seek and find the necessary information.

Many of the respondents agree that networking and social relation does play a significant role for acquiring information regarding job market. Some of them agreed that networking with other people helps them to find information and get a job. There is no legal or social constrains for
getting information in Sweden. Nevertheless, almost each respondent are happy with the easy accessibility towards social, economic and political information.

5.2 Welfare receipt
All the participants states that they have equal access to welfare services in Sweden. There is no discrimination among citizens depending on ethnicity or race. No one claims that s/he has experienced any kind of inequality during receiving welfare benefits.

Respondent 03 says “……In Sweden, a child will get same benefit like king’s child or prime minister’s child in terms of social welfare benefits”.

Social benefits distributes according to the rules where if one is eligible for a specific benefit by rules than he must achieve that benefit. Like many other citizens Respondent 03 has a strong feeling and confidence regarding equality in welfare receipt.

5.3 Freedom of expression
Almost all respondents think that they have freedom to express their views, opinion and beliefs in different forms including demonstration, signing petitions and through mass media. Swedish social system allows both natives and immigrants to express their perceptions and claim against social, political and economic actions.

“The way of expressing or demonstrating should be within the Swedish tradition, you just cannot perform like your own way...cultural difference is a factor” says respondent 08.

This speech of respondent 08 has twofold, first he has the freedom to express his/her opinion, second he should not do anything that looks odd or unusual in Swedish context. It is individual’s responsibility to follow the Swedish norms or traditions that are practicing for protest or claim against a specific stuff. This view shows the sensibility acceptability towards host society that certainly a positive sign for building a cohesive society. But this kind feeling might results from legal constrain or for other fear. However, when he was asked about legal constrain, he replied that he doesn’t know about such kind of rules or regulations, rather it is his/her own perception. Cultural difference is the chief cause for developing this perception that results from personal observation.

Respondent 02 says “If I express my opinion in media it would not focus or highlight by media, but there is no risk/threat to express my opinion.....I have the opportunity to demonstrate or claim but I don’t practice due to personal business and poor language”.
Like other respondents, respondent 02 also thinks that everyone has the right to express their opinion and views. There is no threat for showing own feelings though he argues that individual’s opinion is not focused in media. Second part of the statement reveals that there are some personal limitations such as language, business act as hinder for demonstrate individual’s feeling. The following statement shows amore strong and positive feeling regarding freedom of expression.

Respondent 03 says, “Anyone can express their opinion, even if anyone want to protest or demonstrate s/he can go in Sergels torg (public place near Stockholm central) and speak whatever s/he wants against prime minister or any other public figure”.

Nevertheless, there is confusion among several respondents that whether their claim or protest can have any impact on decision making process or not.

Respondent 04 says, “I have full right to express my opinion, there are institute (authority) for claim but I am not sure about the consequence whether my opinion will affect their decision or not”.

Respondent 06 says “…..If large number of citizens claims or protest against a specific matter then it works”.

Respondent 04 doesn’t know how or what extend the opinion works, while respondent 06 thinks collective claims is more effective. Respondent 07 have more specific feeling about the effectiveness of individual’s opinion.

Respondent 07 says, “I can express my opinion, but I don’t know whether it will be accepted or not. I think at Local level it works more, but at national level my opinion is less effective. However politicians consider collective opinion, if political parties/ government think public opinion is reducing on them then they take is seriously”.

This statement reflects the relation between citizen and decision making process affects by the geographical scale. It is easier to influence decision makers at macro level; conversely citizens have less control on national level action. However, from empirical evidence it can be said that freedom of expression doesn’t vary on social or ethnical background; rather everyone has same right to present their views, opinion and agreement or disagreement.

5.4 Social participation and cooperation
Evidence shows that some of the respondents are involve in cultural organization based on Bangladeshi community in Stockholm, while some other respondents are not interested to actively involve with any kind of club, association and organizations due to their personal business and unwillingness, but everyone agreed that there is no legal or social constraints to
perform their own festivals and programs. Some people think that to be a part of organization or association doesn’t useful for their personal life.

Respondent 04 says, “…..I am a member of forening (association for rental apartments) of but I don’t actively participate there because I think it cannot bring any benefit for us”.

Nevertheless most of the interviewees participate in cultural program or festivals as a viewer related to Bangladeshi culture and traditions. However, some of the respondents occasionally participate in any other club, organization or programs beyond the Bangladeshi community.

Respondent 03 says, “Swedish government or system is liberal to allow this kind of cultural program. Sometimes I go to other ethnic cultural program as spectator”.

It is seen that there is a clear boundary between Bangladeshi community and other ethnic groups in terms of active participation or membership in a common platform, but Bangladeshi immigrants other ethnic people including Swedish native and other immigrants visit each other’s cultural program and festivals occasionally. Some of the respondents involve in their profession related organization and housing owner association but they are more active in their professional association. Some people think that to being a part of organization or association doesn’t useful for their personal life.

Respondent 12 says, “I am not involved in any organization, I think this kind of activity arise conflicts among people, I want to live without problem”.

In case of voluntary participation in society, it is found that most participants are not involved in such activity, few of them specially who lives in row housing (radhus) perform community level cleaning activity (storstädning) once or twice in a year. Some participants who are involved in cultural or sports club, they think those are also kind of voluntary activity. People who are not involved in any kind of voluntary activity in society stated various reasons such as business, lack of information and misperception.

Respondent 09 says, “At present I don’t have time, but I have plan to do some voluntary work after retirement, but every year we participate in neighborhood cleaning activity”.

Respondent 07 says, “Honestly speaking I am not responsible to involve with voluntary work, because I am paying tax and government using that money for various purpose....and government is responsible to do that kind of activity”.

Evidence shows that there is a lack of understanding or information among respondents regarding their responsibility to the society. Some people even don’t know voluntary work they should do for the betterment of the society; other thinks they are not responsible for performing such actions.
In terms of cooperation or help at personal level, people think that person from their own community is more reliable and they often ask to other Bangladeshi people or family if they need help. Though some respondents argued that asking for help depends on what kind of help s/he needs; for example, if it is about borrowing money than definitely Bangladeshi community is reliable, or if it is about to ask for keeping home’s key when they are in vacation than his/her neighbor can help him/her.

Respondent 01 says, “If I need any help I will go to Bangladeshi family first, or if they need any help they will come to us first”.

Respondent 05 says, “If anyone needs help I will try to help them. I think People will help me also but depends on what types of help. But I will go to Bangladeshi community first if I need help”.

Respondent 03 says, “If I need help I will first go to my neighbor”.

Thus at macro level, people are more comfortable with same ethnic group for asking help and they think people for same community are more reliable.

Respondent 01 says, “as me and another person from Bangladeshi community has same background, culture and view, s/he will understand my problem properly….while a person from another culture will not think my problem in my way…because s/he cannot realize the fact”.

5.5 Participation in political premise
It is found that everyone cast their vote regularly.

Respondent 07 says, “I vote regularly, because my only way to express my opinion is vote. But I think many immigrants don’t bother about voting”.

Though most of the participants do not participate in political activity regularly, but only one participant (respondent 06) is actively involved in politics. The most common reasons are lack of interest and personal business among people for not being involved in politics actively. Few of them think that they are not capable to take part in politics due to their poor language proficiency.

Respondent 02 says, “I don’t have quality to involve in political parties actively as I don’t know Swedish language very well”.

Respondent 03 says, “Not interested in politics and don’t want to participate”.
Respondent 12 says, “I am not interested in Swedish politics, rather I try to know what going on Bangladeshi politics”.

Survey results show that most of the participants have trust on political system in Sweden but some respondents don’t have faith on political leaders.

Respondent 03 says, “Politicians are same everywhere in the world, they promise a lot to get vote but don’t act according to their promise”

Respondent 06 says, “Politicians are diplomatic”.

Respondent 09 says, “I do not trust 100% on political leaders, but they are better than many other countries”.

Perceptions among people on political system and political activities varied widely depending on their education, social networks and participation. However, overall observation is sort of reasonable among Bangladeshi community in Stockholm though some people have different views, but mostly they believe that political government doing well for the country.

Respondent 05 says, “In Sweden, every political party tries to develop the country though they have different approach and ideology”.

5.6 Access to Labor market
Interview results reveal two different views regarding labor market accessibility, while some respondents think there is discrimination in labor market on the other hand, others agreed on fair accessibility. Empirical evidence shows following views related to discrimination in labor market:

- Personal relation and networking helps for getting a job
- Swedish natives have more chance to get a job even though an immigrant is more competent that him/her.
- Discrimination on name and ethnicity
- Discrimination in top level job for example, an immigrant cannot get promotion after certain level.
- Discrimination on salary and increment.
- Discrimination seen at individual level, where the chief or boss prefers someone from his/her own community/ethnicity.
- Discrimination occurs due to prejudice about immigrants.
- Economic crisis could be a reason for such discrimination as job vacancy is less than demand, thus Swedish natives are getting priority.
- In working place, Swedish natives get extra facilities.
Respondent 01 says, “Swedish people treat us differently, once I was doing internship in an organization where one Swedish guy sorting cv that applicant sent for job, that time he delete many emails only seeing the name as they are not from Sweden. I am a direct witness of such discrimination”.

Respondent 05 says, “Job market is running by the mainstream and they think immigrants people are not capable, skilled but now the prejudice has been changing”.

Respondent 04 says, “A Swedish native has 50% to 70% more chance to access in job market though I am more competent and experience. It is a open discrimination. Because Swedish people are in top position and that individual (chief) is responsible for discrimination. I think discrimination does exist in job market and I have been experienced of being discriminated 3 times while I was looking for job. I don’t know about other profession but in my profession there is discrimination between immigrants and Swedish. From institute level it is not seen, but individuals create discrimination. By law there is no discrimination but in practice discrimination does occur. Maybe 5 to 10 % case discrimination happens, but they cannot do more as they need doctors from other country”.

Respondent 02 says, “I think everyone has same opportunity for professional job (salary based job). But there is discrimination in payment or increment in wage based job where Swedish natives get priority. However, I accept this discrimination as I am an immigrant here”.

Some people have own experience while they were looking for job, while others do not have direct experience, but their first contacts had such experience. It is difficult to measure the magnitude or level of discrimination at labor market in Sweden as some respondents mentioned that the discrimination is hidden, where one cannot identify directly, but s/he can feel that s/he is being discriminated. On the other hand, opposite opinion has been show by some of the respondents who think that this is a misconception among people as they are not well informed about labor market. Second argument states that when an immigrant is not called for interview, or not selected for particular job after interview, s/he thinks employer did not select him/her as s/he is an immigrant, though s/he is not the best applicant in real.

People who think there is equal opportunity to labor market for all argue on following points:

- Misunderstanding among immigrants that they are discriminated.
- Immigrants and Swedish natives are not equally capable in terms of language, education etc.

Respondent 03 says, “I think there is same opportunity for all in Swedish labor market, but some immigrants think they don’t have equal access and for that they feel upset. As an employer when
I interview someone for my organization; I don’t care where s/he is from, black or white, whoever can serve my purpose I select him/her”.

Respondent 08 says, “I never faced discrimination, I got job according to my quality may be not accordingly to my need”.

Respondent 11 says, “….Swedish people are better in language so they get priority, moreover, they study here and I study in Bangladesh so they are more knowledgeable in Swedish perspective and thus get priority”.

5.7 Tolerance and trust
Survey results shows that most of the respondents want to live in a mixed area where there is a balance mixing of Swedish natives and immigrants. Few of the respondents prefer to live in Swedish dominant areas where there are few immigrants also contrary few other respondents don’t like to live in Swedish dominant areas. However, almost every respondent do not prefer to live in immigrants concentrated areas. Therefore it is seen that there are different preference among respondents regarding living environment in terms of ethnic mix.

The reasons of favoring mixed area for living includes interest to other cultural people, similar culture and living style among some immigrants, cultural variety, opportunity to learn Swedish culture and language, convenience to practice own culture, easy to contact with immigrant neighbors etc.

Respondent 07 says, “My neighborhood contains different cultural and immigrant people, I like to live in such mixed area because my children can play with other child from different immigrant families, it helps for cultural exchange and understanding. It helps to build up myself and my kids to deal with different people. Again, Swedish social system is not open like UK or America”.

Respondent 09 says, “When I came here first, there were very few immigrants in this area. I think it is better to live in a mixed area, my children can learn Swedish language from Swedish people, and they can know both culture. But in Swedish prominent area, it is difficult for kids to retain our own culture, thus I like mixed areas where Swedish-immigrants ratio could be 65/35”.

Respondent 10 says, “I like to live in mixed area where both Swedish and Bangladeshi and other immigrants have a balance mixing. I don’t like to like in a area where all neighbors are Swedish, If I live in Swedish dominant area I would feel alone, again if it is an immigrant dominant area , there is threaten for violence and crime”.

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Respondents who prefer to live in Swedish dominant areas argue on following points, such as; good attitude of Swedish natives as they are seemed polite, gentle and peaceful whereas bad impression of few immigrants including disobey rules, making noise, rough attitude etc.

Respondent 04 says, “In my neighborhood immigrants is lit bit more, but previously Swedish natives were more. I don’t like to live in a place where mostly immigrants live. I like to live in Swedish dominant area along with few immigrants. I wish to move such place, but few factors involved such as, my financial status, my child’s school, my job etc. Because here some immigrants make noise in public place, don’t follow rules during car parking, don’t throw garbage in right place etc”.

Respondent 08 says, “I like to live in a place where mostly Swedish people live because they are civilized, polite, honest and helpful. Immigrants also good, but as they are from different country and different culture, it is difficult to mix up all the culture”.

Some respondents are totally disagreed to live in immigrant dominant areas due to their negative perception among few other immigrants. Though respondents argue that not all immigrants are same but few of them are responsible for creating such a bad impression in Stockholm.

Respondent 07 says, “Swedish people is moving away from areas where immigrants are concentrating, because may be immigrants are not organized like Swedish people for example, in dealing with garbage, laundry booking, behaving at public places etc. I don’t like to live where mostly immigrants live. If I would be offered to live in Rinkeby or Tensta even free of cost, I would not live there because crime, drugs and other violence are concentrated in those areas. this is because may be the poor financial condition among many immigrants as their family is not able to provide basic needs for their children that lead them to involve with violence and crime”.

The reasons for choosing immigrant dominant area includes easy communicating and interaction, inconvenience to live with Swedish people etc.

Respondent 12 says, “In this area there are 90% immigrants. I feel good to live here. Because, immigrants like to interact to each other, help neighbors, they greetings each other in public place…..Before I lived in Skanstull where there were mostly Swedish people, at that place I felt uncomfortable because Swedish people complaint sometimes about small matters like cooking or bathing in late night. Swedish and Bangladeshi community has different life style so we have a gap”.

Most of the respondents replied that trust depends on individuals; one cannot say that particular an ethnic group is more trustable or another group is undependable. But many of them argued that it was easy to trust people during 20/30 years back in social life, but now a day interpersonal trust in social life is reducing.
Respondent 03 says, “Presently it is unusual to trust people easily, if I lose anything during 70s I could trust people that I have great chance to get it back, but now it depends on that person who find it. Economic crisis is the main cause for this change. Security level is also worse than before. Comparatively it is easy to trust Swedish people than immigrants”.

Survey result reveals the reasons behind this change such as, immigration from non European and east European countries, economic crisis, globalization and technological development etc. however, some many respondents mentioned that trust does not depend on ethnicity or race, rather on individuals.

5.8 Social interaction and sense of belonging
Close interaction is found only within the same immigrant group during this study. Almost all the participants mentioned that they visit mostly other Bangladeshi families in Stockholm and vice versa. This inter ethnic interact is not related to geographical scale, rather related to professional and personal networking. The reasons includes

- Same cultural background
- Same lifestyle
- Same Language

Respondent 07 says, “Other culture don’t helpful in my family life, but it helps me at outside to live in society…. It took 2 years to be familiar with my neighbor. My social networking is mainly with Bangladeshi community, but I have contact with other immigrants and Swedish people for my job purpose. … I make the whole society into two different groups such as Bangladeshi community and other including both Swedish and other ethnic people. But other immigrants are little bit open than Swedish. It would be better if the society is open than we can know each other. I think lack of interaction permits racism and segregation”.

Respondent 09 says, “Swedish people are not hospital like us, but I have sort of formal relation with Swedish people, I maintain good relation with neighbors. Mostly Bangladeshi people visit our family we visit them frequently. I don’t think it is important to have such close relation with Swedish people; close contact with Bangladeshi community is enough. In my work place I have good contact with others. Personal relation depends on how I present myself to others, if I approach nicely people often accept me easily”.

It has been seen that kids or students have good contact with other ethnic people for their academic and other purpose like sports, and adults have contact with other ethnic people for their job or business purpose. Thus interaction among different ethnic group at personal level is mostly purposive; therefore their social life at personal or family level is articulated with same ethnic group.
Respondent 12 says, “I visit mostly Bangladeshi family, I have interaction with other immigrants in public place…. Family friends are mainly Bangladeshi, but my son has many Swedish friends”.

Few of the participants do visit other immigrant and Swedish families occasionally but if only they are invited. Sometimes kids visit other ethnic families due either occasionally like birthday celebration or regular visit for academic or sports purpose etc. Nevertheless, there is a gap between Swedish natives and Bangladeshi community in terms of visiting each other, sharing happiness and sorrows due to different culture, food habit and language etc.

Respondent 06 says, “Swedish people are well planned in their daily life as well as formal, even within their society they doesn’t visit each other without appointment or pre planning. That’s why my interaction with Swedish friends is kind of formal. But I have many friends from Swedish community. I should not expect that they will interact or behave with me in my way; rather I have to learn their system as I came here from somewhere else. It is easy to build network with Bangladeshi community, and I have a good contact with them. My network with other immigrants and Swedish people are mainly based on my kid’s activity like swimming, music school, sports, education. Moreover, I have good network with Swedish people because of my professional purpose”.

Result shows that religion is not an important factor for personal interaction and creating social network. Though Bangladeshi community and some other ethnic group have same religion but no close interaction has been found among them in their social life because their culture, language and living style is different.

Respondent 02 says, “I have good relation with other ethnic people both Swedish native and immigrants, but we are not close. I think different groups want to keep distance with other group here. Different life style is the main reason; religion is not significant here…. If I need help I will go first to Bangladeshi people even though s/he lives far away”.

It has been observed during interviews that many of the respondents have a perception that there are mainly two ethnic groups; namely Swedish natives and Bangladeshi immigrants. During interviews, several times they were talking about social interact with only Swedish people. It seems that they are not concerned about other immigrant group in this society.

Following types of interaction with Swedish and other immigrants has been found:

- Based on professional work
- Through children
- With neighbors
- In public place
Diverse thoughts have been found during interview among respondents regarding their sense of belonging in society. Following types of opinions are revealed by the respondents:

- One of the society
- Immigrants and Swedish natives are two separate community, and a part of immigrant community
- Only a part of network that comprises mainly Bangladeshi immigrants

All respondents have been agreed that as they born in Bangladesh (except respondent 01, she born in Sweden) and grown up there, their feeling certainly stronger for Bangladesh compared to Sweden. However, individual’s perception changes with time, some respondents think themselves as an important part of the society, while others think themselves isolated within the society.

Respondent 03 says, “I think I am one part of the society, I have responsibility to society and I have to follow the social norms system. Though I born in some corner in the world, but I think the whole world is my place”.

Factors prohibit individual to be a part of society and thus being isolated includes:

- Cultural difference
- Language
- Fear to accept new people, new life style
- Fear to loss of own identity
- Prejudice about other people
- Discrimination in social life
- Discrimination in job market
- Limited interaction with other ethnic people
- Religious deference

Respondent 01 says, “When I stay at my home I feel that it is my own place, but when I go out I feel that it is a different world because there are unknown people and they are busy with their life. Here Individual has different choice, so it is difficult to think or act collectively”.

Respondent 04 says, “I will give 4/5 out of 10 because no interaction with Swedish, little interaction with other immigrant group. It would not be justice to comparison between feeling to Bangladeshi and Swedish. I never feel myself as like a Swedish native, my feeling will never change. Because of cultural and religious difference. Difference in life style. My professional business. I think other immigrants also feel like that, all immigrants live here without their relatives that helps to build relation among immigrants….. I feel I am not part of the society and I am not able to be a part of the society... But rules and regulations is not a hindrance for
creating this feeling rather it is individual’s feeling and might be I am responsible in some extend I think”.

Respondent 06 says, “I don’t want to be one of them (Swedish natives), but I don’t want to be alien also at society”.

Respondent 10 says, “I feel myself as one of the society but sometimes feel I am not well accepted when I faced discrimination, for example, during Eid I don’t get day off, though this is the biggest festival for us. As I live here so me and society are related”.

Respondent 12 says, “If I want to live in the way I lived in Bangladesh, I must live with Bangladeshi community. I can easily live with Bangladeshi community here separately. My society is not within Swedish society, I have separate society with Bangladeshi immigrants. There are two different types of areas Swedish dominant area and immigrants’ dominant area. There is a wall between immigrants and Swedish people, because we have different life style”.

However, it has been found from the speech of respondents that there is no conflict or threat between different ethnic groups in Stockholm.
Chapter Six: Discussion and Results

6.1 Discussion and Results
The discussion part of this study is mainly focused on the five dimensions of social cohesion i.e. Belonging vs Isolation, Inclusion vs Exclusion, Participation vs Non-involvement, Recognition vs Rejection and Legitimacy vs Illegitimacy that also include social cohesion indicators.

Belonging vs isolation
The concept of belonging is related to the following issues: sense of belonging, social networking and contacts, membership of groups or social organization and collective identity (Spoonley et al, 2005; Jenson, 1998). Empirical results show that Bangladeshi immigrants in Stockholm have a sense of isolation from the mainstream society in terms of social and cultural interactions. With a few exceptions, most of the immigrants have strong networking with other Bangladesh immigrants and a weak social bondage with Swedish natives and/or other immigrants. Some other respondents feel that they are isolated from the entire society in terms of social and cultural bonding because of different culture and living style. Typically, they have only purposive contact with Swedish native and other immigrants; for example, they meet other immigrants and Swedish natives in work place, shopping centers, and children’s school but not in their family events or social affair. Nevertheless, Sense of belonging is positively correlated to repeated interactions among people in social life (Chan et al, 2006: 289). Thus, purposive interactions among Bangladeshi immigrants and other ethnic groups are not enough for developing the sense of belonging among them.

Evidence shows similar ethnic backgrounds, language and life style underpin the immigrant group to form their own society within the whole society that segregates them from the mainstream society in social life. On the other hand, cultural difference and language barrier discourage Bangladesh immigrants to associate with Swedish natives and/or other immigrant groups that lead to lack of collective identity. Survey results demonstrate that most of the Bangladesh immigrants are comfortable with the same ethnic people for sharing their own thoughts, personal problems, social concerns etc. They think people from other social and cultural backgrounds would not understand or feel in the same way as they do. Chan et al (2006) states that identity or sense of belonging is subjective. Subjective nature of sense of belonging is one of the findings of this study as well. However, the level of belonging varies with individuals depending on educational background, duration of living in Sweden, housing type and personal thoughts, but no one has been found during the survey that has a strong sense of belonging in the society. It is seen that people who are living in row houses have better networking with neighbors than the people living in apartments; possible reason is as they need to interact with
neighbors for some common interests like neighborhood cleaning, sharing common fence between houses etc. Furthermore, sense of belonging increases with duration of staying in particular neighborhood, but in large scale the process of improving sense of belonging is slower than the neighborhood level.

Majority of respondents mentioned that they have a good formal relation with neighbors, colleagues and co-workers from different ethnic background including Swedish natives but they have stronger interaction and social relation with other Bangladeshi immigrants even though they do not live in the same neighborhood or do not work in the same place. According to the empirical data, the reasons of lack of interaction between Bangladeshi immigrants and other ethnic groups are:

- Bangladeshi immigrants think they are more hospitable in their own way than others, so they are not comfortable to visit other people often.
- Introvert nature of Swedish natives discourage immigrants to keep distance between immigrants and natives.
- Most of the Swedish and other immigrants want to live in their own way, and no one wants to bother others which results in weak social networking among them.
- Language difficulties; although most people learn Swedish language, but the level of proficiency is not good enough to express their feelings properly.
- Variation in religion is not a significant factor as some other immigrants have same religious background but do not have close interaction because of different culture, living style, and language. Very few of the respondents think that religion somehow influence the social networking because of religious prohibition on food and dress up.
- Fear to lose own identity and culture. Many Bangladeshi immigrants want to retain their own identity in terms of culture, language and religion. They also want their next generation to know and follow Bangladeshi culture, learn Bengali as language and also follow their parent’s religion. Consequently, Bangladeshi immigrants have a fear to lose their own culture if they mix a lot with people of other culture. Nonetheless some of the respondents are quite open in this issue who think every culture has some good things and we should learn those good things from other cultures.

On the other hand, there are some factors that are positive for the sense of belongings, such as:

- Openness of some of the Bangladeshi immigrants towards new society that influence them for acknowledgement of new people and new culture and thus increase sense of belonging to the mainstream society.
- Economic and other benefits received from the society helps immigrants to thinking themselves as a part of main society and create stronger sense of belonging.

However, following two characteristics have been found from the empirical data:
a) Bangladeshi immigrants have a formal interaction with other immigrants and native Swedish in public places, work place, children’s school and in the neighborhood to some extent.

b) Bangladeshi immigrants have stronger social and personal networking with other Bangladeshi immigrants only.

Some respondents think that it is not important to maintain close relation with other immigrants and Swedish natives; contrary, some other want to interact closely but they have fear how other ethnic people will react, thus they just stay within themselves. In both cases, there is a hidden wall that discourages Bangladeshi immigrants to endeavor for creating strong networking with other ethnic groups that results negative effect on collective identity and having a sense of belonging to the society as a whole. Nevertheless, second generation of Bangladeshi immigrants who were born or grew up in Sweden has stronger sense of belonging though they have identity crisis due to cultural diversity at home and outer world.

**Inclusion vs Exclusion**

Inclusion refers to the equal accessibility of the citizens to labor market and economic institutions as well as welfare receipt and occupational distribution in the labor market whereas lack of accessibility indicates presence of exclusion in the society. This study tried to explore the respondent’s experiences and perception on equal opportunities to the labor market and information in the society. Survey results reveal there are mixed impression among Bangladeshi immigrants on this issue; some respondents think there are some sort of discrimination in labor market while others argued on equal opportunity of the labor market. Nevertheless, everyone agreed that they have equal accessibility to information as well as there is no discrimination by laws and constitution. Besides, no discrimination has been found in welfare reception from the government in terms of health insurance, unemployment benefits, tax return, and access to other economic and financial grants etc. Noteworthy, economic inclusion promotes social cohesion (Chan et al, 2006: 287).

Some immigrants have personal experiences of discrimination while some others got information from their friends and relatives; on the other hand, some respondents have no such experiences. Discrimination in labor market includes discrimination on employment, salary and increment etc that results from individual employer’s personal views, thoughts, prejudice about immigrants. Some employers favor own ethnic people at work place and/or during recruitments that results exclusion or sort of under estimation of other ethnic people. Contrary, other immigrants, who argued on no discrimination, proclaim that discrimination does not exist; rather it is a misunderstanding among immigrants that results from lack of information and knowledge. Some people don’t get job or promotion or increment in their work place because of they are not skilled and qualified enough.
Empirical results shows that there is no big discrimination in labor market and information from institutions, rather few incidents results from individual employee or superior’s personal approach that does not represent the organizational approach or the labor market. Different opinions on inclusion-exclusion issue can be summarized in following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary sorting</th>
<th>Respondents’ arguments in Favor of discrimination</th>
<th>Respondents’ arguments Against discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discrimination on name/ethnicity without proper judgment of working skill</td>
<td>It happens in very few cases, where individuals are responsible, not the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Swedish natives get priorities than immigrants in job market</td>
<td>Swedish natives are more skilled, at least they have better language proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and position</td>
<td>Under estimation of immigrants for top level position, salary increments and promotion</td>
<td>These are controlled by organizational procedure; individual cannot influence or interfere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional favor</td>
<td>People get extra favor from same ethnic people in their work place</td>
<td>Depends on personal relation, ethnic variety does not matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information on labor market is available for all</td>
<td>Information is available for all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare receipt</td>
<td>Everyone has same access to welfare</td>
<td>Everyone has same access to welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of discrimination</td>
<td>Invisible discrimination, one can feel it, or experience it but cannot prove</td>
<td>Misunderstanding among immigrants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the discussion it is can be said that whatever the real fact is whether there is presence or absence of discrimination in labor market but many Bangladeshi immigrants think that there is discrimination. This understanding can be right or wrong, but it does impact negatively on social bondage particularly on trust and cooperation between immigrants and Swedish natives. However, most of the respondents agreed that no big discrimination exists in Swedish labor market rather few disparities result from personal prejudice, but exceptional cases can have severe influence in long run.
Participation vs Non-involvement

This dimension of the social cohesion refers to the social involvements and political participation of the citizens within the society in terms of participation in education, association in arts and cultural activities, percentage of immigrants voting, involvement in sports teams and leisure and overall civic engagement to the socio-cultural affairs. Though individuals might have different choices and attitudes toward social and political involvement, but this study found Bangladeshi immigrants have a similar approach towards this issue. Most of the respondents are involved with their own ethnic socio-cultural affairs. They mostly associate and participate in Bangladeshi cultural and social events. Moreover, most of the respondents are found not interested in politics though they cast their vote regularly.

Some people are actively involved in socio-cultural events and they regularly organize Bangladeshi events and festivals so that they and their next generation can be in touch with their own culture. However, everyone else often participate in festivals though some of them are not very active because of their personal business. Almost all respondents concur that there is no difficulty or obstruction from administrative and/or social point of view to arrange and participate own cultural events, that reveals they have freedom to practice their own culture in this society. It has been noticed that Bangladeshi immigrants mostly participate to Bangladeshi socio-cultural events; only very few people participate in Swedish or other ethnic events and festivals. Thus, a socio-cultural segregation exists among the multicultural society in terms of social participation. In addition, majority of Bangladeshi immigrants seldom participate in voluntary social activities that might indicate their sense of non-insolvent to the mainstream society. Moreover, many of them are not well informed about any voluntary activities within the society that what kind of voluntary actions they can do or they supposed to do. It reveals that immigrants have lack of cohesiveness towards the society in terms of their responsibility to the society. Nevertheless, people are more comfortable with same ethnic group in terms of social cooperation and personal help.

Almost every participant has cast their vote regularly and believes that the government tries to do good for the society, though there are some basic differences among political parties. It is found that a particular political party has been supported by most of the Bangladeshi immigrants as they think this specific party is better for immigrants, and they also think other immigrants also have the same impression. However, respondents do not have a big claim against the political system and overall they have good sense towards political activities.

Recognition vs Rejection

This dimension includes social and racial discrimination in the society where presence of discrimination represents the presence of rejection and the opposite represent the presence of recognition. Tolerance among different ethnic people, trust in social life and tension or conflicts
among racial group are the indicators to determine the existence of recognition/rejection in the society.

Tolerance can be understood from the willingness of living with other ethnic people in same area, neighborhood or building. Choice of living area in terms of ethnic composition varies among individual Bangladeshi immigrants. Empirical result shows there are three different preferences for living among respondents, such as, mixed neighborhood, Swedish dominant neighborhood and neighborhood with good number of Bangladeshi immigrant. Most of the respondents prefer mixed neighborhood for living where people are from different ethnic group, contrary some people don’t like mixed area for living. Similarly, some people like to live in such neighborhood where mostly Swedish people live, and few others are comfortable to live in areas with many Bangladeshi immigrants. Following table shows the reasons of choosing and avoiding specific types of neighborhood for living:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood Type</th>
<th>Cause of liking</th>
<th>Cause of disliking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swedish dominant neighborhood</td>
<td>• Quiet and peaceful area&lt;br&gt;• everyone follows rules such as car parking in right place, waste dumping in proper way&lt;br&gt;• helpful to learn Swedish language like natives</td>
<td>• Less social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed neighborhood</td>
<td>• Opportunity to meet various people, know different culture</td>
<td>• Different ethnic people has different attitudes that make social life complex&lt;br&gt;• diverse people speak different language that discourage people (specially children) to learn perfect Swedish language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood with many Bangladeshi immigrants</td>
<td>• Gives a feeling of home country&lt;br&gt;• possibility to reach people easily if any help is required</td>
<td>• Some people from own ethnic group interfere in personal life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood with many other immigrants</td>
<td>• Areas with many immigrants are usually having crime, noise and violence of rules and regulations</td>
<td>• No one prefer this kind of neighborhood for living</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, individuals has own choice to live depending on social interaction, comfort, peacefulness, help and other benefits etc, but it is clear that every types of neighborhood have some pros and
cons and residents need to trade off between positive and negative aspects. Evidence shows that, most of the interviewees prefer to live in a mixed neighborhood where there is a balance between Swedish natives and immigrants so that they can be familiar with Swedish culture as well as practice their own culture.

It is apparent that there is no existence of social or racial conflict among the immigrants in Stockholm. However, trust in social life varies among individuals depending on past experience, living area, personal relation etc. Some inhabitants mentioned that day by day it is becoming difficult to trust people, whereas people could trust each other more in the past. They argued that this statement is true for the whole world because of growing individualism, global economic crisis, social inequality; moral degradation etc. Still, lack of trust among citizens in social life is not worth mentioning in Stockholm. Conversely, few other respondents mentioned that it is easy to trust Swedish natives compared to other immigrants while some other stated that trust is not related to ethnicity rather it is associated with individuals’ family background, education and morality etc.

**Legitimacy vs Illegitimacy**

Evidence shows that most of the Bangladeshi immigrants are not involved in social and political institutes; more specifically they are not willing to be involved in such institutes because they are busy with their personal life. Thus, it can be said that they are prioritizing their own life. Other reasons that discourage immigrants to engage in social and political institutes are:

- Lack of confidence
- Lack of language skill
- Cultural difference

One respondent is actively involved in one of the political parties in Stockholm where she didn’t find any difficulties to be involved and participate in political premise. She mentioned that after a certain level it is very hard to hold higher position because political parties are dominated by native Swedish who lack trust on immigrants to appoint them in higher position. Hence, she believes there is some sort of discrimination though she didn’t mention directly. Other reasons for not holding decision making positions in political parties might be the inadequate education and poor language proficiency among immigrants. However, there is no concrete proof of such discrimination; rather it is a personal conception.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion
Social cohesion aims to achieve a well-functioning society that shares common goals and values where everyone has shared responsibilities and willingness to participate to reach the goal (Andrew & Liudmila, 2007: 25). This study aimed to scrutinize the inner mechanism of incorporation of a specific immigrant group into the mainstream society from a socio-economic perspective. A set of indicators has been developed from diverse academic and policy literatures to examine social cohesion from qualitative research approaches. This study is mainly focused on Bangladeshi immigrants in Stockholm region and it attempts to investigate the pattern of a particular immigrant group socially cohere to the mainstream society as well as to other immigrant society.

Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne, & Solomos (2007) argued that the factors of the social cohesion vary from country to country and community to community depending on social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Following factors are identified which are directly or indirectly correlated with social cohesion;

- common goals and shared values
- sense of belonging to the society
- common identity
- tolerance and mutual respect for other individuals and cultures
- interpersonal and institutional trust
- participation and cooperation to social and political institutes
- equal accessibility to information and labor market
- equal opportunity to social welfare and economic benefit
- social solidarity, social networks and social interaction
- absence or presence of general conflicts
- freedom of expression

Sweden as a welfare state provides equal social and economic benefits to the citizens, thus some of the factors of social cohesion like; social welfare, economic benefit, freedom of expression and access to information are not much concern for social cohesion in Sweden, while few other factors such as economic inclusion, social interaction, common identity are more important for Sweden due to small labor market and cultural diversity. These factors are separate but interconnected entities, and are very important for building sense of belonging among the citizens. Sense of belonging refers to the existence of common values and collective identities that allows citizens to feel themselves as part of the society (Jenson, 1998: 15). Remarkably, ‘language’ along with these factors, is found as a significant factor for social cohesion as many respondents replied that the lack of Swedish language skill discourages them to get involved in
social, political and economic activities. Thus language difficulty acts as a hindrance for building social network and creating social networks. Bertotti, Adams-Eaton, Sheridan & Renton (2009) have found similar results in their study that language barrier negatively affects shared values and norms and thus social cohesion. On the other hand, many researchers argued that ‘religion’ is an important factor for social cohesion. However, in this study it is found that religion diversity is not a big issue rather cultural diversity is much more important factor for being cohesive socially. For instance, although Bangladeshi community and Arabic community have common religion, they don’t have strong social interaction due to the language and cultural difference. On the other hand, Bangladeshi immigrants have better networking with South Asian immigrants as their life style is similar. However, social cohesion is a complex social phenomenon that incorporates various social, cultural, economic and political factors.

The European Union, the OECD and the Council of Europe mention three broad components of social cohesion in their policy documents, i.e. socio-cultural cohesion, economic inclusion and political/democratic cohesion. This research includes all the three components of social cohesion while examining social cohesion in Stockholm, Sweden. As social cohesion is a compound social concept that involves various aspects of social, political and economic sphere of human life, miscellaneous outcome is expected during the examination. Similarly, this investigation is not ended up with a single concrete result which can reveal that Bangladeshi immigrants are socially cohesive with mainstream society or not; rather, both positive and negative associations have been found for individual indicators during investigation. In some occasions, different participants have different opinions regarding a single indicator that reveals both positive and negative correlation for individual participants. For example, some of the indicators like, access to information, absence of racial conflict, welfare receipt and freedom of expression are found encouraging for social cohesion in Stockholm whilst some other indicators like, sense of belonging and inter-ethnic group interaction are negatively correlated with social cohesion in Stockholm. Furthermore, some of the indicators like, access to labor market, tolerance, trust, social participation and cooperation shows mixed correlation because of dissimilar opinions and views among the immigrants on such issues. However, evidence shows that Bangladeshi community has strong democratic/political cohesion whereas they have lack of socio-cultural cohesiveness. On the other hand, Bangladeshi immigrants have a mixed association with economic component of the social cohesion depending on individuals. Though Bangladeshi immigrants are found to be less engaged in political organizations but they vote regularly with the belief of having equal voting rights, freedom to express their own voice and access to the political information that encourages them to be a part of the society in large scale. Therefore Bangladeshi immigrants have a stronger social cohesion from the democratic perspective. One of the important findings of the study from Chipkin & Ngqulunga (2008) was ‘existence of political tension and lack of trust’ in south African community that has been treated as a threat for social cohesion. In contrary, the present study reveals that there are no such political and racial conflicts in Stockholm and, therefore Stockholm deserve a more cohesive society. This study
also shows that, Bangladeshi immigrants have a weak attachment with the mainstream society from socio-cultural viewpoint. This socio-cultural notion results from the cultural diversity, language variety, different living style, fears and cynical ideas about outer societies. People often pretend of being discriminated in their socio-economic life even though the existence of discrimination is debatable. Although the causes of weak cohesiveness vary upon individuals, the general level of socio-cultural cohesiveness is weak between Bangladeshi community and rest of the society. They have much stronger union within the Bangladeshi community. The socio-cultural cohesiveness increases with the duration of living. Lastly, some of the indicators under economic aspect of social cohesion are positively associated whereas few other indicators are negatively associated. Berger-Schmitt (2000) reported that the social cohesion and the quality of life are positively correlated. Therefore, it is important to achieve solidarity and unity in all the dimension of social cohesion.

This study is mainly focused on one particular immigrants group i.e. Bangladeshi immigrants and intended to investigate the social cohesion from Bangladeshi immigrants’ point of view. There are scopes of future study for the further understanding of social cohesion in Stockholm by studying other ethnic groups as well as Swedish natives where the current study methods and results can be helpful.
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Appendix

Questionnaire
Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University
Master’s program in Urban and Regional Planning

Social cohesion in multicultural society

Date: Time:

Basic information

Age:
Sex:
Occupation:
Marital status:
Educational background:
Household size:
Spouse’s nationality:
Area:
Housing types:
Duration of living in Stockholm:
Duration of living in present area:

Specific questions related to research topic

Social & cultural issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance</td>
<td>• What kind of neighborhood do you prefer to live in terms of mix of immigrants from different countries/area with mostly same ethnic group/area with mostly Swedish natives? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>• To what extend you trust people in this neighborhood? for example, if you lost your wallet, do you think you will get it back? Or if you lend money to your neighbor, do you think s/he will return in time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is geographical scale (neighborhood/municipality/Stockholm city) has any impact on your level of trust?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of</td>
<td>• Do you have a sense of belonging to your community (neighborhood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| belonging | level) or society (whole nation)?  
| | • If yes, what factors help you to build a sense of belonging?  
| | • How strong is your sense of belonging to your neighborhood or community?  
| | • If no, what are the reasons?  
| | • What are the basic differences between in your sense of belonging in this country compared to your home country?  
| Social participation | • Are you a member of any club, political parties or social organization?  
| | • If yes, how often do you usually participate in their activities?  
| | • How do you interact with other ethnic people there?  
| | • If no, what are the reasons?  
| | • Do social, cultural, or legal constraints limit the participation of you?  
| | • Do you think you get benefits from this kind of participation?  
| Cooperation /Willingness to cooperate | • Did you undertake any voluntary work?  
| | • What sort of voluntary work are you doing? How often do you participate in voluntary activities?  
| | • Do other people tend to help you in daily routine? If yes, How and what extend this assistance take place?  
| Inter ethnic group interactions | • Apart from your immediate family, do you ever visit people of other nationalities or ethnic backgrounds?  
| | • Apart from your immediate family, do you ever have people of other nationalities or ethnic backgrounds visit you?  
| | • How do you interact with other ethnic groups in public places like shopping centre, park etc?  
| | • What factors are important to bring people together, build network among people from a different background?  
| | • What are the barriers to bring people together, build network among people from a different background?  
| General Conflicts | • Do you think is there any tensions between different groups in your community?  
| | • If yes, what are your thoughts about the cause and solution of these?  
| | • What kinds of conflicts have taken place in the community earlier?  

**Economic issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Access to labor market | • Has ethnic diversity any effect on labor market with respect to opportunities, markets, information, and services?  
<p>| Equal | • Do you think that you have equal opportunity to economic/financial |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>opportunity to economic institutions</th>
<th>institutions compared to other ethnic groups?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If yes, to what extend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If no, what are the causes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare receipt</td>
<td>• Do you receive any welfare from the society? If yes, what kind of welfare you receive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do you think you have same opportunity to receive welfare from the society compared to other ethnic and native groups?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If yes how? If no, what are the causes?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Political issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political link between citizen and state</td>
<td>• How often did you vote in legislative council and local council elections?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do you trust on political parties’ statements and actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td>• To your thought, what extend of accessibility do you have towards obtaining local and state level political information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are the available sources and channels to receive information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is there any differential distribution of information among different groups?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of expression</td>
<td>• How often do you participate in signing petitions, strikes, demonstrations etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How often do you express opinions towards current affairs through the mass media?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in political institutes</td>
<td>• Do you participate in any political activated for example, as a member of an interest group, a political party, a union?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If yes, how often do you participate in such political activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does this group include people of a different national or ethnic background to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If no, what are the causes of exclusion in political participation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you