



■ Article ■

## Transnational Belonging of Bangladeshi Migrants in South Korea

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### Abstract

This study aims to examine transnational belonging among Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea. The results showed that Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea have strong transnational belonging to their homeland. The highest degrees of transnational belonging were found to be a motherhood-like relationship with their homeland, in the category of autographical belonging; talking in their native language and eating traditional food in the area of cultural originality belonging; watching Bangladeshi television in cultural entertainment belonging; taking care of families who stay in the homeland in economic livelihood belonging; saving money for future wellbeing in economic financial belonging; feeling proud of being a Bangladeshi citizen in legal psychological belonging; and feeling secure as a Bangladeshi citizen in legal safety and security belonging. Transnational belonging to the homeland varies more by present occupation, visa status, and reason for migration, while labor migrants who hold E9 visas and migrants who migrated for economic reasons showed stronger transnational economic livelihood belonging and economic finance belonging. This study suggests subsequent studies to compare transnational belonging of various migrant groups through sampling based on socio-demographic factors.

■ **Keywords** : Bangladeshi migrant, international migration, Bangladesh, South Korea, transnational belonging

## **Introduction**

The social, cultural, political, and economic changes in the world present new ways of belonging that transcend physical and virtual boundaries. The concept of belonging provides a deeper understanding of migrants' perspectives on their affiliations in their host societies and illuminates the processes of transnationalism, maintaining cross-border connections and multi-scaled attachments and affiliations to their homeland. Migrants are commonly observed to experience simultaneity in their feelings of belonging to different places (Wilson & Peters, 2005). In the present world, people exist physically in local spaces but connect with the wider social world. Transnational migrants move across international borders, settle and establish relations in a new state but maintain ongoing connections with the polity from which they originated. Migrants' attachment to their host country raises questions of their transnational belonging to their homeland because migrant integration automatically coincides with decreasing orientations towards the society of origin (De Haas, 2005).

International migration has increased significantly in recent decades all over the world due to the substantial progress of economic globalization and advanced communication. The total number of migrants reached 258 million in 2017, up from 173 million in 2000—an increase of 49% (United Nations [UN], 2017). Migrants comprised 3.4% of the total population in 2017 (UN, 2017).

Bangladesh is the fifth largest emigrant country in the world, with 7.5 million people living outside the country's borders (UN, 2017). They are categorized as low-skilled (51.87%), semi-skilled (15.28%), skilled (32.68%) and professional (0.17%) (International Organization of Migration, 2018). Two types of voluntary international migration from Bangladesh have been taking place. One type of migrant moves to the industrialized West and Oceania as a permanent resident, for family reunification, to work as a professional, or be a student. These countries are regarded as having high wages, good working environments, human rights, and

possibilities for settlement. Another type of migrant moves to the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and North African countries as an unskilled or semi-skilled contract migrant worker, facing comparatively low wages and a poor working environment.

A total of 15,983 Bangladeshi migrants live in South Korea, among whom 10,533 migrants are laborers (Ministry of Justice, 2018). Though the number of migrants is not large compared to the numbers of migrants from China or Vietnam, migrants from Bangladesh are flowing steadily to South Korea every year. Over more than 20 years of significant migration from Bangladesh to South Korea, the purposes and types of Bangladeshi migrants have diversified. In the early 1990s, South Korea implemented the industrial trainee system and began to employ people from different Asian countries, including Bangladesh. In 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the governments of Bangladesh and South Korea on the transmission of labor following the introduction of the Employment Permit System (EPS). Since 2000, the composition of migrants has become increasingly diverse due to the formation of new groups of migrants, including investors, students, professionals, and family members.

Despite the diversified types and vigorous activities of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea, only a small number of studies have been conducted on this topic. The increasing interconnectedness of migrants has changed their ways of life, and that raises interesting questions about the relationship of migrants with their homeland. Research on different migrants' cases is important for understanding the ways migrants interact with their homeland, which relates to their perceptions and sense of belonging. It also helps to understand migrants' levels of belonging to their homeland while in their host country. This study on migrants' access to and construction of transnational belonging leads to a critical assessment of the concept of transnational belonging. The objectives of this study are to analyze the concept of transnational belonging, to examine the socio-demographic characteristics and transnational belonging to their homeland of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea, and to find the differ-

ences in the construction of transnational belonging to the homeland in terms of the socio-demographic characteristics of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea.

## **Previous Studies and Theoretical Discussion**

### **Theoretical Discussion**

Belonging is a personal, intimate feeling of being at home in a place (Antonsich, 2010). It is influenced by different historical trajectories and social realities that form senses of belonging and creates ties that extend beyond ancestry, authenticity, and places of origin. Belonging relates to specific geographic and symbolic spatial localities and territories with familiarity, comfort, and security (Antonsich, 2010). It allows an affective dimension—not just being, but longing (Probyn, 1996). Belonging exists in human nature as a result of one's own choices as a strong and inevitable feeling. It is a fundamental human motivation that is so universal that the need to belong is found across all cultures and types of people. All human beings need a certain minimum quantity of regular and satisfying social interactions. An inability to meet this need results in loneliness, mental distress, and a strong desire to form new relationships. The notion of belonging is an emotional feeling by an individual (Antonsich, 2010). It pertains to emotional attachment, feeling at home and feeling safe (Yuval-Davis, Kannabiran, & Vieten, 2006).

Belonging describes alterable attachments that can be social, imagined, and sensual-material. A more fluid and less bounded conception of belonging can be imagined as a rhizomatic and chaotic network composed of multiple attachments of heterogeneous actors. The common form of expression of the sense of belonging of migrants to their homeland is based on personal and particular connections. The attachment is to particular locations, people, and associated memories that thus have come to represent the country (Erkmen, 2015).

Transnational migrants have multi-positioned social, symbolic, and material ties to different locales on account of their migratory journeys:

already-existing ties binding them to their homelands and new ties forming to bind them to their new place of residence. Belonging can illuminate how the processes of incorporation and transnationalism occur simultaneously and how these two processes can consist of multi-scaled and territorialized/non-territorialized attachments and affiliations (Nagel & Staeheli, 2008). Transnational belonging refers to feelings of being at home that cross the borders of nation-states. The sense of transnational belonging at home arises through transnational networks or practices that occur outside of the country.

### **Previous Studies**

Most migration studies have focused on the practices of migrants from a western perspective, since western countries have long been a destination of migration. Therefore, only a few of those studies have touched on the concept of belonging. Migrants have very strong feelings and connections to their homeland (Glorius & Friedrich, 2006). Emotional attachment and loyalty characterize narratives about migrants' feelings towards their homeland. National attachment is a sentiment involving feelings of closeness, affection, and pride in one's country (Erkmen, 2015). Transnational social and economic wellbeing practices and identifications serve emotional needs and feelings of transnational belonging (De Bree, Davids, & De Haas, 2010).

Notions of belonging to places are linked to social relations, whether these are of the past, in the present, or imagined (Mand, 2010). The preservation of collective memory enhances national belonging (Hoteit, 2015). Transnational belonging refers to practices and engagements that signal or enact an identity that demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group (Levitt & Schiller, 2004). Migrants preserve their ethnic identity through organizing various sports events, folk music and dance programs, national holidays, and ethnic festivals (Orozco, Bump, Fedewa, & Sienkiewicz, 2005). Preparing, eating, and sharing their ethnic food let them express their strong connections with their homeland, and signifies their ethnic identity (Vallianatos & Raine, 2008). Remittances express

migrants' long-distance social ties of solidarity, reciprocity, and responsibility that link them with their kin and friends across national borders (Guarnizo, 2003). Transnational moralities are based on transnational attachments, such as a sense of obligation towards the family, community or whichever social group they have left behind, and are maintained through remittances (Carling, 2008). Migrants belong to their homelands through the acts of sending remittances to support their families, buying land, making investments, and establishing businesses in the home country (Malešević, 2012). The money that migrants transfer to their countries of origin as remittances, beyond sustaining migrants' household income, represents the surest lifeline for many developing nations that migrants come from (Kosse & Vermeulen, 2014).

The vast body of literature regarding Bangladeshi migrants is mainly based on western countries and focuses on transnational cultural and economic belonging (Rahman, 2010). Bangladeshi migrants preserve cultural roots through celebrating various national and traditional social, cultural, and religious festivals in their host societies (Eade & Garbin, 2006). They also use ethnic media, preparing and enjoying Bangladeshi dishes on a daily basis (Garbin, 2005; Morad & Gombac, 2015). Migrants' ties are expressed by sending remittances such as money, gifts, and gold to their families in Bangladesh, particularly for special occasions and weddings, due to moral responsibility, religious duty and cultural tradition (Stevanovic, 2012); they also send remittances to develop their family lifestyles back home regarding food, living, and clothing (Rahman, Uddin, & Albaity, 2014) and through investment in various sectors of their natal villages or towns (Morad & Gombac, 2015). Migrants maintain transnational belonging through buying land and building houses, and through the significance of kinship as well as providing materiality in the context of displacement (Mand, 2010). In addition, they often visit their homeland, particularly to attend special occasions and weddings because of moral responsibility, religious duty, and cultural tradition (Garbin, 2005; Morad & Gombac, 2015; Stevanovic, 2012). Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea send remittances to their home country that are a major source of livelihood

for their families and that provide hope for their future lives in their home country (Lim, 2010). Therefore, this paper analyzes transnational belonging as formed by Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea.

## **Research Design**

### **Definition of Operational Variables**

Belonging is an attachment with a specific group, belief, and nation that brings feelings of inclusion and identity. Every human requires belonging to meet the needs resulting from avoidance of loneliness and mental stress. People tend to have a natural desire to belong. Transnational belonging of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea is based on feelings according to the strength of attachment to and composition of various symbolic and material entities. Therefore, different results are produced depending on the degree and configuration of transnational belonging. In this study, I apply a total of 32 items to measure transnational autobiographical, cultural, economic, and legal belonging on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 points ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### **Transnational Autobiographical Belonging**

Transnational autobiographical belonging relates to past history—personal experiences, relations, and memories that attach a particular person to a given place. This category of transnational belonging makes migrants emotional for their homeland through their feelings about past memorable events, times, childhood, experiences, relations etc. In this study, the items to measure transnational autobiographical belonging are as follows: “I have many memorable events in Bangladesh,” “I have an enjoyable time in Bangladesh,” “I have a memorable childhood in Bangladesh,” “I have experiences of volunteer activities in Bangladesh,” “I have experiences of social service activities in Bangladesh,” “I have a spiritual relationship with Bangladesh,” “I have an emotional relationship with Bangladesh,” and “I have a motherhood-like relationship with Bangladesh.”

## **Transnational Cultural Belonging**

Transnational cultural belonging includes cultural expressions, traditions, and habits as well as cultural practices. It is considered one of the basic pillars in building nations through beliefs, values, norms, and social practices. Transnational cultural belonging is divided into transnational cultural (originality) belonging and transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging. Cultural originality is the aspect of being novel and distinguishable in cultural aspects, such as language, food, clothes, etc. Cultural entertainment is a form of activity that gives pleasure and delight, such as listening to music, singing, watching television, reading newspapers etc. In this study, the items to measure transnational cultural belonging are as follows: “I like to talk in Bangla,” “I like to eat Bangladeshi food,” “I like to wear Bangladeshi traditional dress,” “I like to watch Bangladeshi TV programs,” “I like to spend time reading Bangladeshi newspapers,” “I like to sing Bangladeshi songs,” “I like to celebrate my religious festivals,” and “I like to practice Bangladeshi traditional customs.”

## **Transnational Economic Belonging**

Transnational economic belonging refers to making a safe and stable material economic condition for the individual and her/his family in their homeland. It is divided into transnational economic (livelihood) belonging and transnational economic (finance) belonging. Economic livelihood is the basic necessities of life such as food, water, shelter, clothing, etc. Economic finance is investment of assets and liabilities over time under conditions of different degrees of uncertainty and risk. In this study, the items to measure transnational economic belonging are as follows: “I support my family members in Bangladesh,” “I bear education expenses of my family members in Bangladesh,” “I bear medical expenses of my family members in Bangladesh,” “I help financially in community activities in Bangladesh,” “I buy land in Bangladesh,” “I invest in building houses in Bangladesh,” “I invest in business in Bangladesh,” and “I save money in Bangladesh.”



## **Transnational Legal Belonging**

Transnational legal belonging refers to migrants as being obedient and respectful to their homeland and to feeling secure in the host country. It is divided into transnational legal (psychological) belonging and transnational legal (safety and security) belonging. Legal (psychological) belonging is the feeling of satisfaction as a Bangladeshi citizen. Legal (safety and security) is protection from non-desirable outcomes. In this study, the items to measure the transnational legal belonging of Bangladeshi migrants are as follows: “I am proud of having Bangladeshi citizenship,” “I am happy having citizenship of Bangladesh,” “I get service from the Bangladesh embassy in South Korea,” “I am satisfied with the service from the Bangladesh embassy in South Korea,” “I get social beneficial rights as a Bangladeshi citizen in South Korea,” “I feel secure as a Bangladeshi citizen in South Korea,” “I am safe from ethnic violence as a Bangladeshi citizen in South Korea,” and “I get legal protection as a Bangladeshi citizen in South Korea.”

## **Research Methods**

The analysis method of this study is based on SPSS Statistics 21.0 of collected data of the total 310 survey questionnaires conducted during six months from March 2016 to August 2016 in areas in Korea populated with Bangladeshi migrants, including Gyeonggi-do (Ansan, Paju, Ujeonbu, Sanguri, and Khwangju), Seoul, Incheon, Gwangju, Busan, Daegu, Ulsan, Gimhae, and Jinju. The survey questionnaire was written in two languages, English and Bengali. The author visited manufacturing factories, Bangladeshi restaurants, halal grocery stores, and mosques in the survey areas and collected data. The main target group in this study is laborers, since most of the Bangladeshi migrants in Korea are laborers. Other groups include migrant groups with future potential to grow in numbers: students, professionals and businessmen.

In this study, transnational belonging determines seven factors with 27 items from the total 32 items, which accounted for 73.823% of total

variance explanatory power. The KMO for verifying the fit of the sample is .853 and the significance value of Bartlett’s sphere test is .000. It shows the size for the sample is very good. Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients are all above .771, showing desirable internal consistency and credibility of the factorial scale.

Table 1  
*Reliability Analysis of Measurement Variables*

Concept	Variable	Item	Cronbach’s Alpha
Transnational Belonging	Autobiographical belonging	Auto-biographical belonging	8 .884 .901
	Cultural belonging	Cultural (originality) belonging	3 .853
		Cultural (entertainment) belonging	3 .771
	Economic belonging	Economic (livelihood) belonging	4 .817
		Economic (finance) belonging	4 .868
	Legal belonging	Legal (psychological) belonging	2 .890
		Legal (safety and security) belonging	4 .802

## Transnational Belonging of Bangladeshi Migrants

### Socio-demographic Characteristics of Migrants

The socio-demographic characteristics of the total 310 Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea participant in this study is shown in Table 2. The age of most of the migrants is between 20-40 years, with 140 (45.2%) migrants under 30 years old and 140 (45.2%) migrants aged between 30-39 years. Regarding the length of time migrants had lived in South Korea, the highest percentage response was less than 3 years, for 141 (45.5%) migrants. A further 73 (23.5%) migrants had lived in South Korea for 3-4 years and 96 (21.0%) migrants had lived in South Korea for more than 4 years. With respect to gender, 301 (97.1%) migrants were men and only 9 (2.9%) migrants were women. The proportion of male migrants was significantly higher since Bangladeshi females are not allowed to migrate abroad alone because of Bangladeshi culture, as

doing so would result in the loss of honor in the eyes of Bangladeshi society (Lee & Hafiz, 2014). There were several bans on Bangladeshi women's migration for lower level jobs. The government of Bangladesh withdrew its restrictions on the migration of semi- and low-skilled women in 2003 but female migration is still only 2% to 4% of the total migration (Nath, 2012). In a Muslim male-dominated society, women travelling to another country depend on the male elders of the family. However, this situation is gradually changing. The number of married and unmarried migrants surveyed was almost the same, with 160 (51.6%) migrants married and 150 (48.4%) migrants unmarried. In this study, 286 (92.3%) migrants were Muslim, and 24 (7.7%) migrants were Hindu, reflecting the Muslim dominant society of Bangladesh where 88% of the total population is Muslim and the second highest religion, Hindu, accounts for only 8%.

Table 2

*Socio-demographic Characteristics of Migrants (N = 310)*

Division	Content	Frequency	Ratio (%)
Age	Less than 30	140	45.2
	30-39	140	45.2
	More than 39	30	9.6
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years	141	45.5
	3 years-4years	73	23.5
	More than 4 years	96	31.0
Gender	Male	301	97.1
	Female	9	2.9
Marital status	Married	160	51.6
	Unmarried	150	48.4
Religion	Islam	286	92.3
	Hinduism	24	7.7
Education	Below HSC	75	24.2
	HSC pass	87	28.1
	Bachelor pass	87	28.1
	Masters pass	61	19.7
Present occupation	Labor	227	73.2
	Others	83	26.8
Visa status	E9 (Labor)	219	70.6
	Others	91	29.4

Division	Content	Frequency	Ratio (%)
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee	77	24.8
	Student	106	34.2
	Businessman	78	25.2
	Others	49	15.8
Reason for migration	Economic	227	73.2
	Others	83	26.8
Living area	Capital area	179	57.74
	Others	131	42.26

The education status of surveyed Bangladeshi migrants in Korea found 75 (24.2%) migrants had less than higher secondary education, 87 (28.1%) migrants had completed higher secondary education, 87 (28.1%) migrants had achieved a bachelor’s degree and 61 (19.7%) migrants had achieved a master’s degree, showing that most of the migrants are educated. A total of 227 (73.2%) migrants are laborers and the remaining 83 (26.8%) migrants included students, professionals, and businessmen. As a result, 219 (70.6%) migrants hold an E9 non-professional employment visa. Looking at migrants’ occupations in Bangladesh, 77 (24.8%) migrants were private employees, 106 (34.2%) migrants were students, and 78 (25.2%) migrants were businessmen, showing the diversification of the professional backgrounds of migrants. Bangladesh is a developing country with a huge population where jobs are not available. As a result, 227 (73.2%) migrants migrated to Korea for economic reasons. Since the area most populated with Bangladeshi migrants in Korea is the capital area, accordingly 179 (57.74%) of the migrants surveyed were found to live there.

**Analysis of Transnational Belonging**

Table 3 shows the analysis results of transnational belonging of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea. The results show that the highest scale of transnational belonging of Bangladeshi migrants is in transnational cultural (originality) belonging (4.73), followed by law (psychological) belonging (4.61), autobiographical belonging (4.47), eco-

conomic (livelihood) belonging (4.33), law (safety and security) belonging (4.31), cultural (entertainment) belonging (4.26), and economic (finance) belonging (3.79). The results prove that Bangladeshi migrants have strong transnational belonging to their homeland. However, there are slight differences among transnational belongings of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea.

Table 3  
*Analysis of Transnational Belonging (N = 310)*

Measured items		Average	SD
Auto-biographical Belonging	Memory	4.44	.755
	Moment	4.52	.691
	Childhood	4.58	.595
	Voluntary Experience	4.19	1.011
	Social Service Experience	4.24	.967
	Heart	4.57	.617
	Emotion	4.56	.669
	Motherhood	4.68	.521
	Total	4.47	.554
Cultural (originality) Belonging	Language	4.78	.445
	Food	4.78	.428
	Dress	4.62	.583
	Total	4.73	.431
Cultural (entertainment) Belonging	Television	4.29	.920
	Newspaper	4.24	.980
	Song	4.25	1.013
	Total	4.26	.805
Economic (livelihood) Belonging	Family Take care	4.39	.862
	Family Study	4.27	.974
	Family Treatment	4.34	.877
	Total	4.33	.855
Economic (finance) Belonging	Buy Land	3.68	1.211
	House	3.72	1.213
	Investment	3.67	1.218
	Saving	4.09	1.033
	Total	3.79	.991
Legal (psychological) Belonging	Proud	4.64	.727
	Happy	4.58	.803
	Total	4.61	.727

Measured items		Average	SD
Legal (safety and security)	Social Beneficial Right	4.11	.976
	Secured	4.51	.723
Belonging	Legal Protection	4.35	.756
	Save from Ethnic Violence	4.27	.811
	Total	4.31	.650

Among the items of autobiographical belonging, having a motherhood-like relationship with Bangladesh showed the highest result at 4.68 ( $\pm.521$ ), and having experiences of volunteer activities in Bangladesh was lowest at 4.19 ( $\pm 1.011$ ). Among the items of transnational cultural (originality) belonging, talking in their native language (Bangla) and eating Bangladeshi food were highest, each at 4.78 ( $\pm.445 / \pm.428$ ), and wearing traditional dress was lowest at 4.62 ( $\pm.583$ ). Among the items of transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging, watching Bangladeshi television was highest at 4.29 ( $\pm.920$ ) and reading Bangla newspapers was lowest at 4.24 ( $\pm.980$ ). Among the items of transnational economic (livelihood) belonging, supporting family members in Bangladesh was highest at 4.39 ( $\pm.862$ ) and supporting study was lowest at 4.27 ( $\pm.974$ ). Among the items of transnational economic (finance) belonging, saving money in Bangladesh was highest at 4.09 ( $\pm 1.033$ ) and investing in business in Bangladesh was lowest at 3.67 ( $\pm 1.218$ ). Among the items of transnational legal (psychological) belonging, feeling proud as a Bangladeshi citizen was highest at 4.64 ( $\pm.727$ ) and feeling happy as a Bangladeshi citizen was lowest at 4.58 ( $\pm.803$ ). Finally, among the items of transnational legal (safety and security) belonging, feeling secure as a Bangladeshi citizen in Korea was highest at 4.51 ( $\pm.723$ ) and getting social beneficial rights as a Bangladeshi citizen was lowest at 4.11 ( $\pm.976$ ). The results showed that the highest average was talking in their native language (Bangla) and eating Bangladeshi food, each at 4.78 ( $\pm.445 / \pm.428$ ), and the lowest average was investing in business in Bangladesh, at 3.67 ( $\pm 1.218$ ).

## Differences in Transnational Belonging

**Transnational autobiographical belonging.** The results of Table 4 show that age, reason for migration, and living area have significant differences in transnational autobiographical belonging. The significant differences were in terms of age  $F = 4.713(.01)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; reasons for migration  $t(p) = 2.147(.033)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and residential areas  $t(p) = -2.930(.004)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Migrants aged over 39 years had stronger autobiographical belonging, followed by those aged less than 30 years, and those between 30-39 years of age. Migrants who migrated for other reasons showed stronger autobiographical belonging than those who migrated for economic reasons. Migrants who live outside of the capital area demonstrated stronger autobiographical belonging than those who live in the capital area.

Table 4

### *Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Auto-biographical Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.5161	.50799		<b>4.713</b>	c>b
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.3804	.61013		<b>(.010)</b>	c>a
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.6875	.40171			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.4384	.58678		.478	
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.5086	.56838		(.621)	
	More than 4 years(c)	96	4.4922	.49564			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.4703	.52446	-.045		
	Married	150	4.4732	.58712	(.964)		
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.4872	.47341		.556	
	High school pass (b)	89	4.4844	.60583		(.695)	
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.4943	.51922			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.3811	.59047			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.4403	.57472	-1.648		
Others	83	4.5572	.48894	(.100)			
Visa status	E9	219	4.4392	.56647	-1.596		
	Others	91	4.5495	.52004	(.111)		
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee (a)	77	4.4302	.52546		.556	
	Student (b)	106	4.4458	.58249		(.644)	
	Businessman (c)	78	4.5064	.54501			
	Others (d)	49	4.5391	.56030			
Reason of	Economic	227	4.4309	.56248	<b>-2.147</b>		

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
migration	Others	83	4.5828	.51991	<b>(.033)</b>		
Living area	Capital area	179	4.3939	.56720	<b>-2.930</b>		
	Others	131	4.5788	.52022	<b>(.004)</b>		

**Transnational cultural belonging.**

**Transnational cultural (originality) belonging.** The results of Table 5 demonstrate that socio-demographic variables had no significant differences in transnational cultural (belonging) sense of belonging.

Table 5  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Cultural (Originality) Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.7810	.38094		2.014	
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.6786	.47379		(.135)	
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.7111	.42646			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.7329	.42765		1.544	
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.6575	.49992		(.215)	
	More than 4 years (c)	96	4.7743	.37305			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.6896	.45805	-1.623		
	Married	150	4.7689	.39751	(.106)		
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.6939	.42403		.335	
	High school pass (b)	89	4.7079	.46553		(.854)	
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.7280	.39873			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.7596	.42658			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.7225	.44987	-.370		
	Others	83	4.7430	.37657	(.711)		
Visa status	E9	219	4.7382	.42532	.619		
	Others	91	4.7033	.44569	(.517)		
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee (a)	77	4.6537	.44076		1.479	
	Student (b)	106	4.7296	.46030		(.220)	
	Businessman (c)	78	4.7991	.39235			
	Others (d)	49	4.7279	.40066			
Reason of migration	Economic	227	4.7239	.43805	-.271		
	Others	83	4.7390	.41335	(.786)		
Living area	Capital area	179	4.7114	.44045	-.792		
	Others	131	4.7506	.41827	(.429)		



**Transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging.** The results of Table 6 show that marital status has significant differences in transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging  $t(p) = -2.801(.005)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Married migrants show stronger transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging than unmarried migrants.

Table 6  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Cultural (Entertainment) Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	$t(p)$	$F(p)$	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.3524	.69917		2.338	
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.1500	.91118		(.098)	
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.3222	.69195			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.2813	.73924		.442	
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.2968	.87058		(.643)	
	More than 4 years (c)	96	4.1944	.84972			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.1354	.85684	-2.801		
	Married	150	4.3889	.72601	(.005)		
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.3265	.75612		.722	
	High school pass (b)	89	4.2285	.77132		(.577)	
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.2644	.80877			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.1585	.95570			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.2555	.84217	-.092		
	Others	83	4.2651	.69796	(.926)		
Visa status	E9	219	4.2648	.82140	.230		
	Others	91	4.2418	.76830	(.819)		
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee (a)	77	4.1732	.79400		1.569	
	Student (b)	106	4.1918	.75586		(.197)	
	Businessman (c)	78	4.3120	.93256			
	Others (d)	49	4.4490	.68229			
Reason of migration	Economic	227	4.2291	.84455	-1.049		
	Others	83	4.3373	.68371	(.295)		
Living area	Capital area	179	4.2160	.76471	-1.075		
	Others	131	4.3155	.85666	(.283)		

### **Transnational economic belonging.**

**Transnational economic (livelihood) belonging.** The results of Table 7 demonstrate a significant difference in the transnational economic (livelihood) belonging in terms of present occupation  $t(p) = 7.172(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; visa status  $t(p) = 7.494(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; occupation in Bangladesh

$F = 9.428(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; reason for migration  $t(p) = 6.860(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and residential area  $t(p) = 2.278(.023)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Labor E9 (non-professional employment) migrants showed stronger economic (livelihood) belonging than other migrants. The economic (livelihood) belonging was the strongest among those who did business in Bangladesh, followed by others and private employees. Students showed the lowest economic (livelihood) belonging. Migrants who migrated for economic reasons showed stronger economic (livelihood) belonging than others. Migrants who live in the capital area show stronger economic (livelihood) belonging than those who live outside of the capital area.

Table 7  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Economic (Livelihood) Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	$t(p)$	$F(p)$	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.2881	.93533	2.401 (.092)		
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.3095	.81123			
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.6556	.57056			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.4066	.83580	1.736 (.178)		
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.1781	.89595			
	More than 4 years (c)	96	4.3438	.84529			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.3021	.85887	-.664 (.507)		
	Married	150	4.3667	.85290			
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.3265	.92669	.164 (.957)		
	High school pass (b)	89	4.3933	.80177			
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.2950	.81875			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.3169	.90763			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.5286	.69309	7.172 (.000)		
	Others	83	3.7992	1.01871			
Visa status	E9	219	4.5495	.62968	7.494 (.000)		
	Others	91	3.8132	1.07865			
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee (a)	77	4.2294	.88235	9.428 (.000)		a>b
	Student (b)	106	4.0692	.99917			a<d
	Businessman (c)	78	4.6752	.59087			d<c
	Others (d)	49	4.5238	.57735			

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Reason of migration	Economic	227	4.5213	.67975	6.860 (.000)		
	Others	83	3.8193	1.05705			
Living area	Capital area	179	4.4171	.76832	2.027 (.044)		
	Others	131	4.2188	.95252			

**Transnational economic (financial) belonging.** The analysis results of Table 8 show significance differences in terms of present occupation  $t(p) = 6.022(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; visa status  $t(p) = 5.267(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; occupation in Bangladesh  $F = 4.613(.004)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and reason for migration  $t(p) = 5.273(.000)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Labor E9 (non-professional employment) migrants show stronger economic (financial) sense of belonging than other migrants. In terms of occupation in Bangladesh, economic (finance) belonging is the strongest among others, followed by businessmen and private employees. Students showed the lowest economic (financial) affiliation. Migrants who migrated for economic reasons show stronger economic (financial) belonging than others.

Table 8  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Economic (Financial) Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	3.7143	1.05921		1.357 (.259)	
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	3.8143	.95651			
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.0333	.78711			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	3.7801	.95780		.059 (.942)	
	3-4 years (b)	73	3.8253	.98309			
	More than 4 years (c)	96	3.7786	1.05436			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	3.6828	1.01123	-1.981 (.48)		
	Married	150	3.9050	.96005			
Education	Below high school (a)	75	3.6684	.92897		1.175 (.322)	
	High school pass (b)	89	3.8876	.97118			
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	3.9052	.96391			
	Masters pass (d)	61	3.6434	1.06894			
Present Occupation	labor	227	3.9846	.86525	<b>6.022</b>		
	Others	83	3.2590	1.11834	<b>(.000)</b>		
Visa status	E9	219	3.9737	.87632	<b>5.267</b>		

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Occupation in Bangladesh	Others	91	3.3489	1.11173	<b>(.000)</b>	<b>4.613</b>	a>b a<c c<d
	Private employee (a)	77	3.7468	.98550			
	Student (b)	106	3.5566	1.06697			
	Businessman (c)	78	3.9423	.90536			
Reason of migration	Others (d)	49	4.1224	.84336	<b>5.273</b>	<b>(.000)</b>	
	Economic	227	3.9626	.86617			
Living area	Others	83	3.3193	1.15315	1.281	(.201)	
	Capital area	179	3.8520	.90784			
	Others	131	3.7061	1.09346			

### Transnational legal belonging.

**Transnational legal (psychological) belonging.** The analysis results of Table 9 show that residential areas had a significant difference in transnational legal (psychological) belonging  $t(p) = -2.054(.041)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Other migrants who live outside of the capital area have a stronger legal (psychological) sense of belonging than those who live in the capital area.

Table 9  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Legal (Psychological) Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.5929	.80597	-.516	.137	
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.6179	.64766			
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.6667	.71116			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.5532	.77851	2.771	(.064)	
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.5342	.78319			
	More than 4 years (c)	96	4.7552	.57581			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.5906	.75833	(.606)		
	Married	150	4.6333	.69434			
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.7347	.44607	1.550	(.188)	
	High school pass (b)	89	4.6573	.59159			
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.4655	.91751			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.5984	.83576			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.6322	.67357	.835	(.404)	
Visa status	Others	83	4.5542	.85900	.879	(.380)	
	E9	219	4.6347	.68829			
Occupation	Others	91	4.5549	.81463	1.307		
	Private employee (a)	77	4.5909	.56035			

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
in Bangladesh	Student (b)	106	4.5189	.90218		(.272)	
	Businessman (c)	78	4.7244	.63781			
	Others (d)	49	4.6633	.65660			
Reason of migration	Economic	227	4.5837	.78399	-1.105		
	Others	83	4.6867	.53937		(.270)	
Living area	Capital area	179	4.5391	.82013		-2.054	
	Others	131	4.7099	.56485		(.041)	

**Transnational legal (safety and security) belonging.** The analysis results of Table 10 demonstrate that present occupation shows a significant difference in transnational legal (safety and security) belonging  $t(p) = 2.589(.010)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; visa status  $t(p) = 2.365(.019)$ ,  $p < .05$ ; reason for migration  $t(p) = 2.135(.034)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Labor E9 (non-professional employment) migrant workers were found to possess stronger belonging (safety and security) than other migrants. Migrants who migrated for economic reasons have stronger legal (safety and security) belonging than those who live in Korea for other reasons.

Table 10  
*Analysis of the Differences in Transnational Autobiographical Belonging*

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Age	Less than 30 years (a)	140	4.2946	.65719		.105 (.900)	
	30 years -39 years (b)	140	4.3179	.65002			
	More than 39 years (c)	30	4.3500	.64527			
Duration in Korea	Less than 3 years (a)	141	4.2660	.71851		.625 (.536)	
	3-4 years (b)	73	4.3356	.62807			
	More than 4 years (c)	96	4.3568	.55931			
Marital Status	Unmarried	160	4.2828	.67066	- .773		
	Married	150	4.3400	.63012		(.440)	
Education	Below high school (a)	75	4.1939	.66196		.686 (.602)	
	High school pass (b)	89	4.3624	.64294			
	Bachelor pass (c)	87	4.2902	.63323			
	Masters pass (d)	61	4.3197	.70435			
Present Occupation	labor	227	4.3678	.58620	2.589		
	Others	83	4.1536	.78460		(.010)	
Visa status	E9	219	4.3664	.59972	2.365		
	Others	91	4.1758	.74675		(.019)	

Variable	Division	Frequency	Average	SD	t(p)	F(p)	Scheffe test
Occupation in Bangladesh	Private employee (a)	77	4.2727	.66166		.699	
	Student (b)	106	4.2642	.69849		(.553)	
	Businessman (c)	78	4.3910	.57206			
	Others (d)	49	4.3418	.65091			
Reason of migration	Economic	227	4.3579	.57935	2.135		
	Others	83	4.1807	.80520	(.034)		
Living area	Capital area	179	4.3575	.59783	1.491		
	Others	131	4.2462	.71454	(.137)		

### Discussion and Conclusion

Transnational belonging to the homeland of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea is a sentiment that exists as feelings of closeness, affection, and pride. Migrants have very strong feelings for and connections to their homelands (Glorius & Friedrich, 2006). Migrants’ past memories, activities, and feelings seem strong in the “preservation of collective memory and the enhancement of national belonging” (Hoteit, 2015). They articulate their sense of belonging mostly through materiality in which they view their homeland with a motherhood-like relationship. Usually labor migrants cannot bring their families with them to South Korea, which makes them lonely and nostalgically recall their past memories of their homeland. They belong to their culture through practicing and enjoying it in their everyday life. Migrants preserve their ethnic identity through various modes of cultural belonging (Orozco et al., 2005). They practice their basic culture in their daily life, such as language, food, traditional dress, etc. They also find entertainment through their culture, such as watching television, singing songs, reading newspapers, etc. Talking in their native language (Bangla) and eating Bangladeshi food are very common in the daily life of migrants, and is the strongest item of transnational cultural (originality) belonging. Food expresses strong connections with home, and signifies ethnic identity (Vallianatos & Raine, 2008). Watching Bangladeshi television is the strongest item associated with transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging among

Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea. Migrants abroad often live alone, so they spend their leisure time watching Bangladeshi television. On the other hand, Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea may feel difficulties in adopting the local culture because of differences in religion and language. Since most of the migrants are Muslim, they only eat halal food. They also often lack understanding of the Korean language. This results in a continuing attachment with Bangladeshi culture. Migrants belong at home through sending remittances supporting their families, buying land, making investments, and establishing businesses in their home country (Malešević, 2012). Bangladesh is a developing country. Most of the migrants leave their homeland for economic reasons. Their dream is for their family to live with economic happiness and prosperity, so they support the livelihood of their families and friends who stay behind in their homeland, as ties of solidarity, reciprocity, and responsibility. They also make financial efforts for their future wellbeing. Transnational legal belonging of Bangladeshi migrants is strong. They feel proud, happy, and secure as a citizen of Bangladesh, “feeling pride and safe” (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 197). Migrants’ attachment to their homeland is a sentiment of feelings of affection and pride (Erkmen, 2015). The results of this study on the transnational belonging of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea support both the studies that have explored the concept of transnational belonging and the studies on Bangladeshi migrants in western countries—that Bangladeshi migrants exhibit strong transnational belonging to the homeland. Though labor migrants in South Korea on average stay for a short time—four years ten months—in comparison with western countries where many migrants have settled for a long time, this does not make any difference to migrants’ sense of belonging to their homeland. Belonging to one’s homeland is common and universal for human beings.

In terms of the socio-demographical characteristics of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea, there are some differences in transnational belonging to the homeland depending on age, marital status, present occupation, visa status, occupation in Bangladesh, reason for migration, and

living area, but there are no differences depending on duration in South Korea and education. However, socio-demographical characteristics have more impact on auto-biographical belonging, economic (livelihood) belonging, and economic (finance) belonging comparatively but no impact on transnational cultural (originality) belonging of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea. Bangladeshi migrants' autobiographical belonging is strong since migrants are in stable positions and remember their old lives in their homeland (Zontini, 2015). While abroad, unmarried migrants have stronger transnational cultural (entertainment) belonging. They pass their leisure time with entertainment since they are single and have more free time to enjoy themselves. Labor migrants have stronger transnational economic (livelihood) belonging, transnational economic (finance) belonging, and transnational legal (safety and security) belonging than others. Labor migrants holding E9 visas can sign job agreements before coming South Korea. As a result, they can begin work after coming to South Korea without the expense of job searching. The wages and welfare rights in South Korea are also good since South Korea has become a developed country. In addition, migrants have to spend only a small amount of their earned money since they live alone in industry dormitories. Therefore, they can support people who have stayed behind in their homeland and accumulate wealth for their future wellbeing in their home country easily. Migrants who were businessmen in Bangladesh have stronger economic (livelihood) belonging and economic (finance) belonging. Businessmen enjoyed good economic conditions in Bangladesh that allowed them to support family members and friends. These migrants' stronger economic belonging also affects support to family members and friends from abroad. Their business experiences in their homeland help them to engage in financial activities for their future wellbeing in their home country. Students have less economic livelihood belonging and economic financial belonging. They cannot support their family members and friends and cannot save money in their home country for their future wellbeing, but instead spend money on living and education expenses. Migrants who migrate for economic reasons



have less autobiographical belonging but more economic livelihood belonging, economic finance belonging, and legal safety and security belonging than others. Economic conditions in Bangladesh are not good, so they struggled in the past in their homeland, which made them more depressed. Therefore, they understand better than others the livelihood needs of family members in their homeland and financial wellbeing for their future. Migrants who live in metropolitan areas are very busy because of engagement with various community activities for various reasons. They are busy with their daily work so they remember less about their past life in Bangladesh. But wages are comparatively better in the metropolitan area, so they earn much more money and can support more people in their home country.

This study has limitations in generalizing migrants. Since laborers are the majority of Bangladeshi migrants in South Korea and set as the target group of this study, it does not show the overall situation of migrants in South Korea. In addition, the differences of religious and gender groups are so high that they are not statistically significant in analyzing the differences of transnational belonging. As mentioned, transnational belonging of migrants can vary according to various socio-demographical characteristics, so subsequent studies are necessary to compare the transnational belonging of various migrant groups through sampling based on socio-demographic factors.

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