

A study on the socio economic realities of Bangladesh based dancers: Understanding their financial struggles and industry issues that set dance as a marginalized profession in Bangladesh

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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The thesis/project titled “A study on the socio economic realities of Bangladesh based dancers: Understanding their financial struggles and industry issues that set dance as a marginalized profession in Bangladesh” submitted by Lamia Saiyara Mela of Fall, 2019 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Social Sciences in Anthropology on 26/12/2019.

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Abstract: This paper highlights the major nuances that constitute the life of a professional dancer in Bangladesh, within the local dance industry that exists. Given the socio-economic backdrop that Bangladesh has, earning from marginalised professions is difficult. There is an

absence of proper structural advances and means to stabilise the profession economically. However, due to the labyrinth of other possibilities such as one's class position, varying capitals, their 'habitus' and the industry's 'doxa', the dancers find their realities rather paradoxical. Passion drives their interests, but the low income becomes a reoccurring theme, while the industry treats dancers of different classes, differently. Therefore, this study tries to understand the idiosyncratic economic situation of dancers who earn solely from their craft while rationalising what it means to be a Bangladeshi dancer, in a developing country, and the possible interpretations of why their realities turn out the way it does. The chosen site for this study is the capital of Dhaka, where I conducted interviews with 5 dancers. I try to fine tune the major issues there that lies in determining each dancer's position in the economy, noting their hardships and aspirations, while critically analysing their choice of sticking to dance as a profession regardless of the struggles.

Keywords: Dance, exploitation, capital, physical capital, income, culture

Introduction: The aim of this thesis is to analyze the industry of Dance in Bangladesh and how dancers within it sustain their profession despite their incomes being drastically challenging. It is a known phenomenon within the industry that making income solely through dancing can be tough, and often not economically feasible at all. For years, it is typical for dancers to train for a particular dance area of Classical Indian Dance, from where they branch out to either many disciplines or decide to stick to one. The passion remains from the beginning to be an aspiring dancer, who takes on the stage like no other, but as reality hits, it becomes difficult to continue that as one grows older as a part of this industry. This is so because the income generated solely through dancing steals the spotlight of overwhelming tension. Only performing can yield very

minimum income, in the backdrop of a developing country such as Bangladesh, which does not yet favor marginalized professions or ones that are considered deviations from the norms. In my thesis, I would like to deeply look at what navigates these dancers' lives financially, and how they navigate it. Dancers tend to either find other pathways to earn their living like acting, teaching dance in various fields or simply retiring their dancing career to find a better job. The reality of the dance industry is far from how it looks like from its exterior. What is portrayed by local TV channels on the beauty and grandeur of dance can be often be perceived as an end goal for most young dancers. The glamorized entertainment aspect is often a mask; while what is left underneath is a constant negotiation that dancers must put up with to make ends meet by only pursuing dance. Even that aside, there exists further labyrinth of issues that interconnect; such as one's social, cultural and economic capital. The kind of training they adhere to and from what/which organization or exponent they adhere to is another area that concerns a dancer's employment. The goals each dancer has as a professional also determines how much income they would end up making; whether they want to stick to performing for TV channel based entertainment shows and shows that is led by multinational corporations, or sticking to their 'root' which is typically thought of performing Classical Indian Dance and/or Folk Dance. And such differences only embark my exploration towards the lives of Bangladeshi dancers, as there is an array of situations that puts pressure on their professional lives in addition to a strangling economic system that the Dance Industry embodies.

3.1. Research purpose:

The goal of this research is to show the Anthropological view of the socio-economic lives of Bangladeshi dancers who are working in extreme conditions in the dance industry, while their

income remains vehemently low. Their lives are often difficult to navigate in, as they constantly find it hard to follow their passion as a job and also earn substantial income with it. The idea is to question the industry workings and what constitutes this paradoxical reality of dancers, as there is less research in this area. Through my research, I want to enable a critical analysis of the industry of dance in Bangladesh, which is very less spoken about. Lack of speaking further mutes the realities and struggles of dancers, and any expected betterment is thus silenced. I want there to be an explanation for the reasons why dancing becomes this idea of a profession that is 'not enough' to sustain life, but the craft in itself is a boast-worthy element that is definitive of Bangladesh's cultural rootings. This further raises questions of why dancers ultimately choose this profession, regardless of the immense issues embedded within it.

3.2. Methodology:

The methodology of this study was based on in-depth interviews (IDI) that I conducted with my interlocutors. 5 professional dancers, including male and female were my interlocutors who specialized in various dance forms. They were Dhaka based dancers, Zuairiyah Mouli, Anandita Khan, Md. Hasan Ishtiaque Imran, Mashrur Rahman, Arthy Ahmed. I provided questionnaires to them concerning their lives as dancers and details of their profession, including their income, expenditure and perceptions about relating issues within the industry etc. I include the data I collect from those interviews in the study to analyze the socio-economic situations of dancers as a whole in Bangladesh, in identifying their class positions from their social, cultural and economic capitals, their 'habitus' and other possible issues that identifies why dance as a profession is an unsustainable one. Lastly, I have used participant observation as a major method to my research. I was able to do so, as I have been actively a professional dancer myself for more than 5 years. The main challenges I faced were getting to ask the dancers questions in a way that

does not make them feel unsafe, as many feared if their answers might get ‘leaked’ and their professional sphere getting affected. They at times felt hesitant to answer personal questions and I also had to keep in mind their devotion towards their craft while asking questions. I also formed a table of finances that will show the dancers’ (who gave me permission) daily expenses and revenue earned from solely dancing, over a month’s period.

3.3. Literature review:

The theoretical framework came from Pierre Bourdieu’s capital analysis (Bourdieu, 1986), as well as an overall class-analysis, using Bourdieu’s framework. I mostly look into dancers’ social, cultural and economic capital as an entry-point of the analysis, then delve into ‘habitus’, and ‘doxa’ (Bourdieu, 1977) which they face, that constructs their reality as dancers. Each person’s ‘habitus’ then guides them in forming it as a profession, how they form and its extents, while the industry also uses the dancer’s habitus to their advantage in forms of providing them low income, arising in a certain ‘doxa’ that makes their realities harder.

Michel Foucault’s ‘Panopticonic’ surveillance (Foucault 1977), with Jeremy Bentham’s formulation of ‘panopticon’ (Miller & Miller 1987) is an aspect explored in talking about surveillance of the hierarchical superiors between teachers and students/guru and shishya (Sooklal, 1990). As teachers posit a surveilling relationship, monitoring their students and their engagements in the industry. Aside that, many parts of my study brought into focus more issues, including hegemonic beauty standards, body ideals, imagery and movements of dance propelled by the West, which I categorised under ‘body-hexis’ (Bourdieu 1977). The politicism of dance (Guzkowsi, 2013) (Matthew, 2014) is an important understanding too that must be taken into account when asking these dancers why they want to still carry out dancing, regardless of it not being a sustainable profession. This, I feel is further expressible as argument in Nazmul Ahsan’s

work on social theater, where he is explaining its position in society at large (Ahsan 2004, p. 9). I talk about the Wests' conditions of Ballerinas, who were paid in meagre amounts under state-based contracts (Barker, 1978, p. 173). I also bring into focus the question of passion, why dancers feel a 'natural high' (Alter, 2011, p. 72) and end up sticking to an economically restraining career. When it comes to dance being included or a part of education systems, certain exposure of dance education is desired by dance-scholars (Sansom, 2011, 39), but I question this from the data obtained with my interviews on the harsh realities that dance industry constructs, which often pushes them into a middle-class position (Diamond, 1997, p. 93). I also find linkage in the middle-classes' resistance (Tejaswini, 2019) with dance, and most indigenous entertainment forms (Kar, 2013, p. 140). Especially the indigenous forms, which speak of the people who made these forms (Ahsan, 2004, p. 58), which are carriers of their stories. With references to '*Lathi Khela*' (Ahmed & Mahbub, 2018, p. 1), and rationalise certain political implications that middle-class dancers may posit. The physical capital and its conversion (Shilling, 2003, p. 119) is a good way of understanding how dancing as labor is treated and placed in the industry, as monetizing the craft has a number of ambiguities.

3.4. Research question-: What are the socio-economic struggles that a dancer in Bangladesh faces in the dance industry, and how do they negotiate with them keeping in mind the limitations of monetizing through arts?

Analysing the problem:

4.1- Salary structures of dancers

These are estimated salary structures formed on the basis of my interlocutors' information.

Fig 1.1: Md. Hasan Ishtiaque Imran's information (approximately)

Income	Fixed (bdt)	Variable (bdt)	Total (bdt)
Teaching and tuitions + show remuneration	18,000	5,000	23,000
Expenditure (Rent, transport, food)	14,000	4,000	4,000
Savings-			(0.00)

Fig 1.2: Anandita Khan's information (approximately)

Income	Fixed (bdt)	Variable (bdt)	Total (bdt)
Teaching and tuitions + show remuneration	10,000	7,000	17,000
Expenditure	5,000	10,000	15,000
Savings-			2,000

Fig 1.3: Mashrur Rahman's information (approximately)

Income	Fixed (bdt)	Variable (bdt)	Total (bdt)
Teaching and tuitions + show remuneration	20,000	5 lacs	5 lacs 20,000
Expenditure (only miscellaneous)	10,000		10,000
Savings-			5 lacs 10,000

4.2. Analysing the capitals of the dancers:

Before I introduce my interlocutors, it is vital for me to address why their varied capitals matter. The capital accumulation of each interlocutor produces their habitus (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72) which will be discussed in the next section of this work. But for now, it is crucial to understand their specific realities with the capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241) they already have accumulated. This takes shape in the forms of their social, cultural, economic capitals.

1. Anandita Khan, age 23, enrolled in the University of Dhaka's BBA Program, lives in the area of Mirpur with her father and mother. She is a freelance dancer and teacher. She has an elder sister who is married, and is a University lecturer. Her father is a writer and freelance poet, with an income generating about 20,000 taka. Her mother is a former boutique owner, and had displayed interests in fashion designing. The sole earner in her family is currently no one. Her father's income is, as per Anandita notes, '*not enough to make ends meet*'. For this, her sister contributes a majority share of her income to her family. With her family income, she says the income fluctuates highly. This is also indicative of her class-position, as the income struggles are a part of her reality. While she has no other dancers in her family line, it is evident through our conversation that her family has been well exposed to the arts as her father is a notable writer in Bangladesh, working with major newspapers and also known for his personal literary work. When trying to understand her class-position, even though she has said it belongs in the spectrum of a traditional middle class, it is somewhere in that spectrum that her social capital is marked high. Her father's association in the academic and education industry is

one which benefits her social capital generation. This happens through her father's professional linkages, prestige and value in the work area he belongs to and over all status he has attached to his name. In simpler forms, her father brings in a high amount of social capital, which is not translatable to economic capital right away, but is holding a system of value that Anandita is benefitted unknowingly in the sense of nobility (Bourdieu 1986, p. 244). To further provide to her capital analysis, cultural capital is very important to note. Her cultural capital is coming through the embodied and institutionalised state, as she is moving in and staying in the spaces of dance and also acquired a level of training to get to where she is. She received dance training from exponents in Bangladesh, including dance courses at BAFA (Bangladesh Academy of Fine Arts). She further had cultural capital in the embodied and objectified sense, from her exposure to american stylistic dance forms through a US-based dancer who taught her contemporary dance styles in her blooming years.

2. Zuairiyah Mouli, 28, is a choreographer, dancer and teacher based in Dhaka. She attended the University of Dhaka for a BBA degree, and pursued her passion for dance at a Masters level at the Bangalore University. Her Masters was on 'Bharatnatyam', which is a South Indian dance discipline. She resides in Dhaka's Azimpur area, where she lives with her father and mother. Her father works at the University of Dhaka as a Public Relations' officer, while her mother who is currently a home-maker was an administrator at the local college. She has an older sister who is into filmmaking. She suggests her family members to have been quite motivated towards the arts. She notes her class position to be of the middle class, however she says it is a comfortable upbringing she has had if asked about her over-all family's income level. She has had undergone her

dance training from noted institutions like Chayannaut. Later, she became a student of Amit Chowdhury, a Dhaka based dance exponent. She later took various other styles of Bharatanatyam training in Bangalore. Here, she details certain accounts of working with Bangalore based dance groups and performances, from where she enmeshed herself within the local dance scene of that specific area. On a scale of analysing her capital, her cultural capital is the highest if considering the cultural capitals in its embodied, institutionalised states. As for embodied state, she embodies her identity as a Bangladeshi dancer in the given cultural setting she has been living in. She also, absorbs certain attributes from her experiences studying in Bangalore, where she further adds to her cultural capital accumulation. As cultural capital attaches onto the long lasting dispositions of the mind and the body (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 241), it provides consensus that Mouli acquires a high position of this state of cultural capital. Along with this, she acquires a state of institutionalised cultural capital as well through her academic achievements throughout the course of her life. She gained knowledge about her academic discipline, from academic institutions as well as learning over the years with various dance institutions. As for social capital, the linkages which are necessary for her and her position as a dancer were established before she had embarked on her journey as a dance student to Bangalore, because it had occurred while she resided amongst the dance scene in Dhaka. This enabled her journey to study in Bangalore as she had a sense of durable networks and institutionalised relationships (Bourdieu 1986, pg 248). This she details when she talked about Shadhona, a dance company in Dhaka, promoting her and helping her with scholarships to fund her study in Bangalore.

3. SM. Ishtiaque Imran- SM Ishtiaque Imran, 27, is a choreographer, dancer and teacher. He lives by himself, bearing his own expenses. His father is a freedom fighter, and his mother is a home-maker. He has siblings and aunts who were interested in the arts, which later motivated him to learn dancing. He, however, faced objection towards choosing the path of dance as a career choice from his family, but he later negotiated. He had acquired his Bachelors and Masters both in Kathak, from Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata. Before going, he had been trained under notable teachers and dance exponents in Dhaka, namely M.R Wasek who is a folk dance instructor. He slowly started performing, and got scouted by Shadhona. From then on, he made linkages within his circle which helped him further in establishing himself as a dancer. In Kolkata, he trained under Kathak exponents as well, which enabled him to make connections in the prominent hub of the Kathak dance scene there. This signals, that his cultural capital in embodied and institutionalised forms are very much present. The former happened through his embodiment of his cultural identity, as he notes many times that he was aware he had a Bangladesh-i representation he must abide by in Kolkata. As a part of that, he also institutionalised other aspects of his cultural capital through his studies, his training and his exposure to knowledge about his discipline. As for his social capital, his father being a freedom fighter rather worked in oppositely- he faced troubles taking dance as a profession as it was not as matched as a status as high as his fathers'. There is a different sense of nobility (Bourdieu 1986, pg 244) that is working here. He gained social capital for himself through enmeshing with his surroundings in Kolkata, and Dhaka. For him, his cultural capital is deemed to be high.

4. Mashrur Rahman- Mashrur Rahman, 32, is a choreographer, dancer and dance teacher, who resides in the Bailey Road area in Dhaka. His father is a consultant and his mother is a Member of Parliament, Cabinet Member. His education included having a Cambridge based, O and A level education. He studied in University of Texas, under the BBA program and also Bachelors in Performing Arts. The latter program, he was scouted into by his university lecturers. He identifies himself to be of an upper middle class household. He now works with BAFTA as a Lecturer, and also taking on shows when he pleases. As for his social capital, it rates to be significantly higher, when compared to my other interlocutors' realities. This of course, is enabled through his class position. But further, it is his mother's recognition as a member of the cabinet that gives him a certain amount of social capital in the form of durable networks (Bourdieu 1986, pg 248), insoluble material and symbolic exchanges (Bourdieu 1986, pg 249). This he does so, by the linkages and relationships his mother has politically and socially that transfers to Mashrur. Within this transfer, his status as a dancer and as an upper-middle class person, gets added values. This facet of values, one that is undeniable a marker of social capital (Bourdieu 1986, pg 244), allow him exposure to multi-faceted layers of privilege. By that, I mean he has the key to maneuver within the dance industry with that privilege. His social capital is also accumulated through his exposure to the relationships he has made while being in the USA, as again, Bourdieu says such factors to be responsible for social capital measurement. Thus, the volume of social capital, that he possesses, is subjected to the volume of effective links he has established (Bourdieu 1986, pg 249). At embodied sense, he pertains to the identity he brings to Bangladesh from the USA, as his work revolves around teaching american blend of dance techniques. Institutionalised state of

cultural capital is also high, in the sense that his academic standings include foreign degrees, and of a different curriculum/background than the rest of my interlocutors. Due to his social and cultural capital accumulation, he has the opportunity to work within a privileged boundary, as he notes. His mother's position also generates a substantial amount of economic capital for him, which he also later combines with his income he generates.

5. Arthy Ahmed- She, 26, is a choreographer, dancer, dance teacher and activist. She lives in the Dhanmondi region of Dhaka city, while residing with her mother, brother and sister-in-law. Her father lives separately, and she mentioned him not being a financial contributor to her household. She attended Rabindra Bharati University for her Bachelors in Bharatnatyam, and later pursued her Masters in the same discipline. She also had taken a post-graduate course on 'Teachers' Training' at the University of Chennai. She attended her Bachelors program on ICCR scholarship, but the rest of her education was self-funded. As for her mother, she states her mother to have been a Principal at a school for more than 20 years and states her brother to be the dominant contributor for household finances. She is now a dance-teacher at Kolpotoru, and a former ad agency consultant. She performs, but only for occasions she feels is seemed suitable for her marked training and respect. Here, we see her using the strengths of her cultural and social capital. In the sense that she can choose from the pool of engagements displayed in front of her, and invest her time and energy into the ones that pays the right amount as per demands, it goes to show that her accumulated capitals are having an effect. As for her cultural capital, she accumulates it through institutionalised and embodied sense, in the form of having education and training from a renowned institute, and also having core

values that she believes to be a part of her embodiment of the sort of culture she is exposed to (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 244). Her being able to choose her initiation with the industry, goes to show that her embodied cultural capital does not fully allow her to enmesh into traditional surroundings that most dancers' might consider the norm. She carefully crafts her engagements in the industry, which signals her presupposition of her time and value; what is cost-effective and what is valued driven. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 244). This she can also do, due to her large social capital. This is being generated due to her relationships that she created before having set out for her education in Kolkata, as a member of a renowned dance-team, or student of a famed dance school. It's those durable and effective relationships (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248) that helped her access the later parts of her dance-career.

What can be deduced from the varying levels of capital accumulation of my interlocutors' is the forces they carry in the industry, taking the form of different accumulations of capital. This also introduces the fact that, much of the economic capital is derived from the social and cultural capitals, while the social and cultural capitals at the end of the day, are '...profits from one area necessarily paid for in another' (Bourdieu 1986, pg 253). The social and cultural capitals liaise them to their economical capitals, respectively. This, further pushes the topic of 'habitus' and its interconnection with each interlocutors' realities, while the employers flexes a 'doxa' (Bourdieu 1977, 164). The next section of the study discusses how 'habitus' and 'doxa' interplays within the industry to place different realities and struggles for different dancers determined by their capital accumulation, hence class position.

4.3. Habitus and Doxa; how do they interplay in the Dance industry?

The 'habitus' and 'doxa' that Bourdieu conceptualises, are guiding the dancers to posit themselves in the industry within the economic struggles. To begin the illustration of how habituses are guiding each dancer, I want to attempt proving my point by stating their distinct incomes, choices/tastes, and financial expenditures and how specifically their habituses are constructing their realities in the industry.

Through the findings that my interlocutors had provided, it became apparent that a large portion of the industry is guided by the dancers' habitus; 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules..' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). In layman's words, it is ingrained habits that one rationalizes their practice with and that unconsciously mandates how their realities would structure, through underlying structures that motivate it which are not necessarily set in motion through a determined plan. I engage with this explanation, as each interlocutor I have spoken to has their own sense of 'system of durable and transposable dispositions', and these systems structure themselves within their lives as dancers. This is so, because their actions and decisions are partially guided by their capital accumulation, which sets in motion the 'habitus'. This ensures that each dancer has a specific type of reality, constitutive of particular type of environment. And this environment, is mapped out by their capitals- and is disposed through their 'habitus'. What

then later guides the industry norms, are the 'doxa' which naturalizes the arbitrariness (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164) of the employers to continue their rhythm of exploitative behavior.

It is to note, that these specific habituses are also produced as a part and parcel of their accumulated capital. I talk about 'doxa' of the employers, at the end- and how and if employers create a low paying income structure through their own jurisdiction. I also talk about the relation of body-hexis of each dancer, and how that relates to their habitus. I do this in accordance to what Bourdieu says regarding agent's habituses being the strategy generating principle (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72), in order to determine what is yet to come. My interlocutor, Mouli says the following when asked about her income and expenditure;

“ I earn 20-30,000 bdt on a good month. If shows are not consistent- I earn 10/15,000 bdt instructing tuition classes of dance. I wouldn't and couldn't save at all. Transports would cost the most. Maybe it wouldn't come down to a 0, at the end of the month. I'd pay for a few of my tuition fees too, back in my student life. But expenditure would be around the same as earned even then.”

While Imran had addressed his income and expenditure as;

“I would say, all of my expenditure is equal to my income. Sometimes, I even cannot afford meals, seeing where my expenditure is.”

The above interlocutors display an income that is if not totally, but almost equal to their expenditure. They both have broadened the fact that fluctuation happens in regards to getting shows, it may vary greatly from one month to month. Some shows could want background dancers, which they would not settle on; as they have prior education and training. And some could want genres of dance forms which they do not engage with stylistically. Since their institutionalised cultural capital is significant, i.e- education and extensive training from India,

they do shows which are dignified of their positions. Which is producing a certain kind of habitus, that is limiting their choices in ways, and hence their income in the market. Their mobility within the industry is determined through their habitus. However, their incomes are estimated solely as their fixed income, which they both receive through teaching. Here, we see these interlocutors sharing similar choices emanating due to their similar habituses. This is because, their economic choices are ‘nothing other than their habitus’ (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 83). They further note that partly, they cannot save due to travelling to one rehearsal after another, and also paying for other factors. Imran, who lives alone and has to pay for his rent, food and transports all from the 18,000 bdt monthly salary he gets, has a hardships far greater. He says further to illustrate a normal weekend for him;

“I get 18,000 bdt a month through dance teaching. So, weekends become very hard for me as I travel to Chittagong. I get a lunch break as I get back to Dhaka, and then as soon as I get back to Dhaka, I go take my tuition classes. Transports cost a lot now, even when taking cheaper ride-sharing services. I end up not even having some money to buy snacks on the go. “

When it comes down to income and expenditure, my interlocutor Arthy states,

“ I make 10,000 bdt from teaching, and from shows’ remuneration, it really fluctuates. I do consultancy and course planning for organizations and universities. On a good month, variable income can be 10-12,000 bdt. But on a rare occasion, a month can have 80-90k in income, when seasons cultural festivals arise (Puja/Eid/Bengali New Year etc.) I perform very less, I select. But I arrange the shows through meetings, so I am getting an amount but other communication fees are not provided.”

From what Arthy illustrates, we can see how the locatedness in her residence and in her family, also due to having a high cultural capital accumulated from her institutional education and training, helps her choose the extents of her work. The reason she can be less mobile as a dancer and yet earn, almost a typical fixed income like my other interlocutor Imran, is due to her habitus. Her habitus results from her capitals, and acquired tastes (Bourdieu 1984, pg 231). Which in turn, allows her to perform less, due to her distinct preferences. Further, this factor of taste and an added privilege of choice is seen when I talk about Mashrur, another interlocutor of this study. If we investigate what shapes the habitus regarding my interlocutors' spendings, we can see that whoever is coming from an upper-middle class background, or has significantly a higher social, cultural and economic capital, their array of choices are more. Mashrur, who displays a significantly larger accumulation of capitals and has an upper-middle class background, is spared from the burden of paying overhead costs such as rent, electricity bills, food, transport costs etc. He states,

“I choose the shows I do. I only choreograph for good shows/projects. I can charge up to 1 lac-5 lacs in bdt, which was the budget for the very last project I was in under Channel-I. I had to choreograph it. But that is variable income. Fixed income would be about 20,000 bdt earned from teaching. Expenditure is not a lot, apart from my personal expenses. I use my family's car, I live with my family. So, fixed expenditure wise I have very little. I save whatever I earn, or use it when I need to.”

“..if I go dance at an institution, I don't disclose my identity. The treatment will be different. I want them to treat me for who I am. I might disclose if I feel comfortable. I don't boast about it. I don't say of my mother's background.”

From what he briefs, it can be deduced that his habitus is shaped by the privileges he has coming from a certain class background, by the locus of his practical realisations (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 83), which in turn guides his economic choices. Here, those realisations are that he does not have to bear immediate costs to sustain life, and he can safely design his career with the specific works he takes on, and curate where his efforts will go into without constantly having to think about solid income. Given he has the opportunity to pick and choose a performance he would do or choreograph, it displays certain extents of choice he has, and autonomy both economically and creatively. And this choice that is linked with this formation of habituses. (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 83), hints evidently that his class-position has a big role to enable him to be connected to his habitus. This also allows him to adhere to his taste (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 231) when choosing performances to choreograph or be a part of. This is again is linked to his perception, judgment and action (Murdock, 2010, p. 64). If we treat the performance he is choreographing as a good in the market, which essentially it is, we can apply Bourdieu's concept here more precisely. What ends up happening is, this good is then being matched by his/her social conditioning, and is also being subjected to the state of the system of this good that is being produced (Bourdieu, 1979, p. 231). He/she also then knows, this good will be treated with a distinct monetary value and be likeable for consumers of that distinct taste. These factors are forming, in this case, Mashrur's tastes in the market of dance, in the sense that he can carefully craft his works and his personal satisfaction with them due to his particular stylistic choices and tastes within what his social conditioning has allowed him. Again it is, being under the influence of certain extents of capitals, enabling them to move through various social spaces (Murdock, 2010, p. 64). Thus, we can see how each dancer's specific habitus, comprising of their incomes/expenditure, tastes/choices regulate their position as a dancer in terms of their mobility, opportunities, and also the extent to

which they can monetize their art form. Some are being able to monetize it higher due to their accumulated capital, and some much lower. The observation is; the middle class interlocutors have lesser accumulated capital, hence their position in the industry is more drastically affected economically, while ones of upper-middle class statuses find it easier to maneuver given their capitals are higher and miscellaneous benefits are persistent comprising of their class-positions.

The second part of this analysis explores how the employers who employ the dancers', show a certain kind of 'doxa'. This doxa is arbitrarily set out as rules or guidelines of the entire field, which lies somewhere outside 'hetero-doxo' and 'orthodoxy' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 168). Even though in Bourdieu's sense, this doxa is possessed by the powerful classes, my interlocutors help articulate a new kind of doxa that is deployed by the employers who actually hire them to do their shows/serve as entertainers for events. Taking Bourdieu's theory in mind, I asked my interlocutors the payment method for each show that a corporation provides. I asked whether they pay accordingly to their deserved amount. Mouli states;

“Definitely not. TV shows never guarantee payment in itself. Corporate shows take time too, delaying their payments. They take even a month or two. Or even half a year.

Organizations must be strict with paying. Dancers get paid the last- other people get paid instantly. Like lights person etc. Even though dancers are actually performing in the show; the show is around them! They bring the audience. Still, priority isn't given to dancing as profession.”

While, Anandita states;

“Private channels do not pay enough at all, they do not even cover conveyance costs. They aim to provide 'exposure' as currency. Corporations, maybe they came to a

standard now. But you need to deal with them diligently, bargaining wise. They pay in an orthodox mindset- corporations do not pay enough for professional dancers they hire.

Changing trends, rising prices in Dhaka, none are really considered. “

The corporations that are hiring them, essentially contributing to their income, at the end help produce a doxa that the industry adheres to. Since it is a repetitive process, of arbitrarily associating a certain payment and a very distinct subjugated treatment towards dancers, it becomes a pattern that the rest of the industry abides by. Again, it is to keep in mind that doxa is created beyond question and tacitly abided by agents in the field (Bourdieu 1977, p. 169). In this case, the corporations are formulating doxas that the dancers, through the extents of their habituses, fall into the trap of. If we treat the employers' doxa as one that is similar to dominating classes, we then can understand where exploitation lies. “The dominated classes have an interest in pushing back the limits of doxa and exposing the arbitrariness of the taken for granted..” (Bourdieu 1977, pg 169). This goes to show that there are capitalist interests vested in the employers, hence they pay their dancers through those interests in order to have a sense of gain. Therefore, the doxa of employers, or the ones who have authorities to dictate how they treat these dancers, enter the field as one whose doxa resides somewhere outside heterodoxy, and orthodoxy. Thus, rejected meanings of the real (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 169) and creating unique sense of tacitly placed policies which in many ways, exploit dancers' abilities through paying them in low amounts, delaying their payments and paying them the last. The cycle of paying dancers the lowest is expressed by Mashrur as,

“Most power is with the agency. The corporate or the middle man and the dancers are linked. The budget trickles down the lowest payment to the dancers.”

Finally, the idea of ‘body-hexis’ is the third part of this chapter’s analysis, and a major one. In which Bourdieu states ‘body-hexis’ to be remnants of the ‘motor functions’ (Bourdieu 1977, pg 87), which constitutes someones’ a pattern of postures. I, however, find meaning in this, due to the fact that much of my interlocutors had expressed the bodily conditioning that they go through in order to fit into the industry. This also expectedly becomes a part of one’s habitus, as it combines social meanings and values (Bourdieu 1977, p. 87). Anandita, my interlocutor, states;

“A new kind of politics has risen now, a very weird kind. When I was skinny, it posed an issue, now that I am healthier, this is also an issue. I face body-shaming, in a judgmental way at whatever weight I am. Some shows discriminated my skin tone, so they wanted someone of different looks”

Arthy, had similar indications of such issues, and stated:

“An example I would like to give, one agency person singled out a girl on our dance rehearsal video calling her ‘fat’. And also, another pointed out towards a male dancer who looked effeminate and said, ‘hijra (transgender) ta ke baad dao’. I do not tolerate this, I’d not take those shows. I feel the non-effeminate male dancers have disadvantages too, to survive in this industry. They have to face stereotypes.”

The body-hexis is, which is in this sense, one that is being shaped due to constant pressuring of beauty and bodily ideals. Here, Michel Foucault’s work on the silence over sexes outside the ‘conjugal family’ can be understood; expression of queerness and/or effeminate men are not tolerated. It is something that injects into the dance industry where any intersectionality of

genders come with a penalty¹. It takes up the shape of an ideal. Thus, it narrates the content of dancers' ideals that the employers and the entire industry expect. It firstly, introduces and reasserts a hegemonized ideal of bodies. To which Mashrur says,

“It is harsher for a female. These issues exist and are very prominent. The whole thing is, ‘don’t speak, don’t tell’. The minute you talk about it, you’re out.”

In this case, by dominantly asserting that the fuller you are physically or the level of effeminate demeanour you possess, the less value you have in this industry. The dancers' body-hexis is being shaped with the imposition of an 'ideal body'² (Green 1999, pg 86), especially pertaining to female beauty standards. As the body-hexis is prescribing to these standards of bodies that the industry is adhering to, it is closely attaching itself to dancers' habituses; their ingrained habits, practice. Mouli offers her take on it as,

“ At a point, we as dancers absorb or succumb to feeling these politics.”

It becomes a prescribed notion, and a goal to stay in shape and look a certain way in order to be valued in the industry. This also is an indicator of the kind of body-hexis it is expected of dancers. This further is fueled because a portion of the industry ideals, arguably are Bollywood-ized; Bollywood films, notions of dance, positing a specific normalized Bollywood inspired aesthetic. Imran says,

“ Yes, it is a bollywood-ized industry. I see sometimes politics regarding ‘height’. Some dancers are placed behind and in front due to heights. Importance should be given to each dancer, through choreography. ‘Model’ centric shows are very apparent in this

¹ 'Penalty' here comes in the form of employability; generally effeminate men face risks of being removed from shows/jobs.

Michel Foucault (1978), *History of Sexualities*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4

² 'Ideal body' is noting Jill Green, author of *'Somatic Authority and the Myth of the Ideal Body in Dance Education'*. In particular, what she notes as body perceptions; size of buttocks, stomach, thighs, face, arms etc.

industry. It is a criterion to have models/actresses lead many shows. It feels unfortunate that models invade our spaces like such, as me having an academic background and standing behind them while dancing feels off. It's not like I am invading their workspace by taking on their roles. This comes due to lust towards Bollywood, or glamourization of dance."

What my interlocutor has said is adding to the meaning behind body-hexis here as well, as the body-hexis becomes one that is a signifier of many codes. Here, 'models' exceptionally are said to be given center stage due to a likeability factor, and also what is deeply rooted in the industry values. The closest to bollywood-ized elements make up a stage that centers a model/actress, with many background dancers, as per my interlocutors had expressed. When such hegemonic standards are there within employers, it becomes difficult for trained dancers to find their desired outlet to work.

This is further illustrated by quoting Bourdieu's definition of body-hexis, as "...a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and of using implements, always associated with a tone of voice, a style of speech, and (how could it be otherwise?) a certain subjective experience." (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 87). Here, that subject experience is the industry's aesthetic drive, glamorized beauty ideals. It still comes bearing a certain display of manipulation, assertion, domination from patriarchal modes of thinking and also, constitutive of culturally hegemonic meanings and values. When it comes down to employment, we can expect that the standards of body-hexis inside the industry is beyond problematizing. If one does not meet these standards, it may affect their overall reality as a professional dancer, as my interlocutors above has mentioned. Therefore, the body-hexis being produced for and around dancers' are reflective

of distinct ideology regarding bodies, and that in itself is coming through hegemony of other cultures, i.e- bollywood glamorisation and the strict ‘ballerina’ appeal deployed by the West.

4.4: Dance as physical capital and the gaps in its conversion

Bourdieu explains physical capital to be ‘signified of power, status and distinctive symbolic factors’ (Shilling, 2004, p. 111), and that bodily work is translatable to different forms of capital. In this case, it comes bearing three main determinants which form this social body that becomes a carrier of physical capital; the location, habitus and taste (Shilling, 2004, p. 114). The location of my interlocutors, which is a developing country, their habituses which I discussed in depth and their distinctive tastes as a result of their class-positions are responsible for creating their social bodies. Keeping these factors in mind, we must also address the way their social bodies producing their physical capital actually gets converted into capitals, and it is safe to say with my interlocutor’s data, the conversion often comes with unmet and highly undeserved values. As long-standing dancers in the industry, my interlocutors have faced issues in finding work that gives them an accurate depiction of their value and capabilities; hence, their physical capitals’ conversions show immense gaps as scenarios like conveyance costs, rehearsal time/schedules and miscellaneous issues are not paid heed. My interlocutor Anandita and Mouli says,

“I’d say, if a show paid me 3,000 bdt, I’d ask to raise it to at least 5000 bdt. Because of my training, experience, and the costs in Dhaka city.”- Anandita Khan

“ Individually, I would want 20-25,000 bdt if performing alone. Which is why I perform so less.” - Arthy Ahmed

As we see from what they have articulated, they receive monetary amounts that are not matched by their abilities, keeping in mind they have specific institutionalized cultural capital. This is

meant to advance their abilities as dancers, but despite it, they get a base-set salary which seems to be not suitable for a professional dancer of their training. This talks about the transient and impartial values that physical capital ends up generating (Shilling, 2004, p. 119). Especially, for a physical work does not come with a rubric of conventional professions. For the hours spent commuting to rehearsals and going back home, it does not seem like the dancers receive a remuneration that keeps such factors in mind. Anandita further adds,

“Most of the time I get overworked. Rehearsals could be fixed, whether it is 2 or 3 hours. But it stretches beyond that. There is no time to rest in between, especially when attending more than one rehearsal in Dhaka city. Rehearsing and traveling would take up 12/13 hours of the day. “

However, we must note that the above interlocutors present a middle class background, where physical capital conversion will end up being riskier and bear more opportunity costs (Shilling, 2004, p. 119). This is so, because their accumulated capitals are not in the same scale, or have the same volume as someone of a higher class background. When asking the same question to my upper-middle class interlocutor, he had a different take on his opinion. Mashrur says,

“It is overworked for sure- day to night. Same with shows, acting. It gets overworked but it is brief.”

Mashrur, who has the lowest overhead costs (transport, rent etc) and possesses a large amount of capital, he calls his experience of being overworked, ‘brief’. This signals the potential low risks and opportunity costs that he faces, by belonging in the dominant classes (Shilling, 2004, p. 120). This also means, this undertreatment can be negotiated with Mashrur’s class position because this ‘brief’ overworked nature is not a constant reality for him. To him, this allows him to be rather passionate about his work as his opportunity costs are lower and less riskier. Therefore, it

is of significance that each dancer's specific social position is analysed before trying to understand the value they generate through their physical capitals'. It often operates within an abstract figure, which ultimately ends up producing a meagre currency for their work.

4.5: Power dynamics: Understanding the 'guru-shirshya' scenario

Typically, it is expected that a dancer trains under a 'guru' for an expanded amount of time, and this carries a sense of honor that the student carries with them. It occurred to me, this power dynamic is directly linked to the discourse Michel Foucault has set, in *Discipline And Punish: The Birth Of The Prison*³ regarding surveillance through panopticonic lens. He says, there is a panopticonic functioning (Foucault, 1977, p. 1645) that results from the ones who possess the most power. This links to Jeremy Bentham's formulation of the panopticon that surveils (Miller and Miller, 1987, p. 4). In this case, the panopticonic functioning vests entirely on the gurus, who essentially monitors the students through vigilant surveillance. The power dynamic between the guru and his/her student becomes one that is problematic; gurus use their panopticonic surveillance to discipline their students while limiting their engagements elsewhere with other works, especially with other gurus. They do not simply just give them tutelage, but embody a doxa of their own; they can manipulate their students' movements in other dance associations. This may even limit their exposure as a dancer, and make their incomes a stagnant figure, if not unsustainable. These possess barriers to their employability and engagement at a broader context. What arose from my discussion with my interlocutors were a similar trend of

³ The notion of surveillance is being used here, where Michel Foucault illustrates panopticonic implications of surveilled bodies. He uses Jeremy Bentham's construction of the 'panopticon' (Bentham, 1995) to regulate how it talks about surveillance and disciplining of bodies.

criticizing the culture that is present in between the ‘guru’, meaning the primary teacher, usually an exponent of a particular dance form, and the ‘shirshya’, meaning the student who is expected to be under his/her tutelage until they are ready to take their independent flight, in the world of dance. This tutelage may even be lifelong. Here lies a certain extent of power that the gurus exercises, and my interlocutors had expressed this power to have been stemming from a variety of reasons. Nonetheless, all these reasons show that this, to some extent, nurturing yet toxic relationship between the teacher and the student often poses as serious barriers to individual success. Anandita says in the light of this issue;

“Yes, I do think gurus are necessary for my success. I had an experience where my first teacher did not want me to work elsewhere. Possessiveness is always there. I need to survive too- earn for my existence. “

She further deepens her stance on it by adding,

“Should I not perform in those platforms because I’m working somewhere else? There is less sensitization about students working elsewhere. Gurus see it from their past practices of abiding by this unspoken rule, but the fact that socio-economically we’re changing so much is a tough concept for them. A man doesn’t simply provide now, everyone earns and provides. In the name of ‘parampara’ what’s being passed is underdeveloped. For such reasons, gurus are losing students. “

Arthy further adds,

“ I feel after a certain point, if gurus let the performers go out of their grasp, their honor never stops. They can proudly be applauded. But a barrier poses frustration. There is no benefit.”

This portrays Foucault's notion of panopticonic apparatuses, as they work greatly here in this idiosyncratic relationship that exists between the teachers and students, dictating the 'doxa' of the teachers also. It produces certain extents of power, which the teacher desires to safeguard in the name of 'honor'. This creates an 'immense activity of examination' (Foucault, 1977, p. 1645) that constantly surveils the dancers' identity. It also asserts a heavy level of dominance that the teachers exert over marking their territory, again, in a panopticonic design. Does this affect the dancers' success, implying they may not be allowed to do other shows of other employers? As per my interlocutors' words, it does seem so. It often denotes a departure from studentship once students embark on their professional journey elsewhere. As Foucault says, 'knowable man is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation' (Foucault, 1977, p. 1645), I believe this saying remains relatable to how the dancers' habituses get shaped out of a tacitly placed power-relationship the teachers impose. It impedes, without any set of rules or regulations, and attaches inside the doxa the teachers further.

5. Further research:

To understand the paradox of the industry even further, and why dancers end up choosing this profession regardless of its economic restraints, I would like to take a step back from only talking about today's industry. I would like to focus on the history of how it all can be narrated with bearing in mind, dance as a concept came through generations, potentially through social changes and a sport which enabled low income from the get-go. To illustrate this idea, I would like to first discuss interpretations of overall issues of dancers' from various, global lenses.

Firstly, we have to understand an underlying sentiment that all my interlocutors have; *passion*. This factor of *passion* is a driving force that works intricately within their habituses, as it is creating disposition in their minds (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). This sense of *passion* is a response to their critically struggling realities in the industry, as it becomes a place of negotiation with their realities. As my interlocutors states:

"If one is dancing as a career-choice, they must do it wholeheartedly. I am doing it with passion and yes, incomes are low, but we are all trying to manage within it." - SM.

Ishtiaque Imran

"If you are a dancer through your heart, it is hard to stay away from it due to passion, though." - Arthy Ahmed

"Here, everyone (dancers) is driven by passion. Even if you're from low or high class, the stage isn't showing your class position; they are seeing the output. Without passion, people won't be interested much." - Mashrur Rahman

As much as it is a source of monetization, it is essential to note why it still provides solace to a person, giving one autonomy, even if that autonomy is not financial. How it flourishes their human existence, in all words, is also a huge note to take. It seems as if the answer to this is somewhat an abstract notion of *passion*, which is produced by the engagements within the industry, and being produced as a response of their struggles. The question of quitting often times is not very heard of, as *passion* motivates a substantive part of why they are dancers. And also why they learn to adjust with the doxa that employers use. This again, is a part and parcel of their habitus. Aside that, dancing is also a way of feeling unified and resultant of feeling a ‘natural high’ (Alter, 2011, p. 72) for most dancers.

What my further research suggests is, no part of the world provided the best environment for dancers to foster their craft and make a living if we analyse several trajectories. I say this, with mainly analysing West’s trajectory of dance and how dancers were treated. It is intriguing to note events such as Ballet introduction in the Post-Civil America (Barker, 1978, p. 171) to illustrate dance professions’ and the kind of exploitation they faced, because it gives us insight to the socio-economic reality of the then dancers. Ballet dancers were given meagre amounts as payments for shows, expected to live their lives on it, even the ones who typically possessed high training (Barker, 1978, p. 171). The ones with higher training, were subjected to particular contracts, but they had to be of a higher rank (Barker, 1978, p. 173). This goes to show, western countries faced, or faces similar issues regarding performers’ rights, to their financing and also their labour. And this shows that the ‘dancers’ rights’ issue is not only limited to non-western countries’ performers, who although tends to never even have a contract as part of their employment. Of course, it denotes other political spheres when we say, the westerner or the non-westerner, where the latter marks heaps of unresolved issues provided their subjugated political


identities, and no amount of historical connections (Wong, 2011, p. 99) can totally put both these categories in one true umbrella. If anything, Judith Lynne Hanna's work called, "Right to Dance: Exotic Dancing in the United States" gathered criticisms like such, where she said exotic dancers and U.S dancers at the end display the same art. As much as this is true, it negates the non-westerners subjugated social positions (Wong, 2011, p. 99). Regardless, it is a prelude to depicting, in an all-encompassing sense, the common grounds there may persist socio-economically for Bangladeshi dancers and the rest of the Western world.

Furthermore, when analyzing the class system within the dance industry, it is essential to note the rural-middle classes and their contribution within the industry. I would further like to discuss how the profession in itself rests on the building blocks of 'middle-class' to illustrate this observation. And how, the state patronages that are given towards indigenous art forms, are often times, there to push back the profession into its middle-class boundaries. (Diamond, 1997, p. 99). Hence, the chances of upward mobility within the classes are quite low. One way to critically think about this is by taking an example of a dance form that originated from the rural areas, amidst the middle classes. I want to do so by first discussing the dance form originating in Bangladesh such as 'Lathi Khela'⁴, which is an indigenous martial arts dance form (Ahmed & Mahbub, 2018, p. 1). In an interview published by The Daily Star, dance exponent Lubna Marium states, '*Lathi Khela* and *Monosha Mongol* are ethnic Bangladeshi folk dance and these are very popular in all the rural villages' (Ahmed & Mahbub, 2018, p. 1). Indigenous forms of

⁴ Lathi-khela comprises of a martial arts based dance form, where sticks are used as props. It originates from an act of defense (Tejaswini, 2019), against the British rulers and Zaminders of that time. It also offered a sense of entertainment to men. (Kar, 2013, p. 469).

art usually comes bearing historical references and response to their realities (Ahsan, 2004, pg 9). Here, the dancers took their martial-arts form as combat; as resistance towards their realities against colonial rulers (Tejaswini, 2019). This politics is felt by dancers, especially the ones who are located in the rural middle classes. In fact, potentials of perspective shifts and invoking political actions (Guzkowski, 2013, p. 244) are amongst the motifs of such dance forms which are implicit of middle-class tensions. In globalized contexts, indigenous dance forms then has the potential to show key dimensions of identity, and power (Matthew, 2014, p. 516). Thus, we can see how much of the dance forms which infiltrate the industry, are also being introduced by the middle-classes, performed by the middle classes. To which, the industry reaps benefits of, with incredibly low wages and subjugated treatment. Such as what most of my interlocutors in this study coming from middle classes provided references of repeatedly. It is not a coincidence that much of my interlocutors turned out to be of this designated class position; the reality is that the industry suppresses the means of upward mobility for dancers, as those interlocutors' stories briefs. Of course, individual capital accumulation is a determining factor as the marker of prosperity here. But, the means of upward mobility is weakened as they enter the industry, through the methodology of income that resonates a typical, exploitative behavior. Through the state, as well as through the employers. All the while, the dancers' (Lathi-Khela dancers) who generate their dance forms do not seem to come out of their middle-classes positions as well; they never see an upward mobility either. In the sense of state patronage, in all ways, the state benefits do not benefit the dancers to great lengths. If anything, it reinstates dancers to stay in the gripped edges of the subordinate social statuses (Diamond, 1997, p. 93). The state benefits, or employability of local dancers are not nearly enough to take them out of their social statuses.

Also bearing in mind, dancers' habituses outline their particular likings as well, which state-sponsored jobs might not allow.



বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি
সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা

বাশিএ/প্রশা:(সংস্থাপন)/১১(ক)/৭৯/পাট-১৮/৩১১

তারিখ: ৩০/০৮/১৮

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমির নিম্নবর্ণিত স্থায়ী পদসমূহে সরাসরি নিয়োগের জন্য পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক প্রবর্তিত এক পাতার নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক	পদের নাম ও বেতন স্কেল	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা	সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা	বেসব জেলার প্রার্থীদের আবেদন করা গ্রহণোক্তন নেই।
১	২	৩	৪	৫	৬
১.	সহকারী পরিচালক (প্রোগ্রাম প্রডাকশন, সংগীত) ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	সংগীত বিষয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রিসহ সংগীত বিষয়ক কর্মকাণ্ড সংক্রান্ত কোন বিধিবদ্ধ সংস্থায় কর্মকর্তা হিসাবে ৭ বছরের চাকরির অভিজ্ঞতা। বিভাগীয় প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিলযোগ্য।	৩০ বছর	সকল জেলার প্রার্থী আবেদন করতে পারবেন।
২.	সহকারী পরিচালক (প্রোগ্রাম প্রডাকশন, নৃত্য) ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	নৃত্য বিষয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রীসহ নৃত্য বিষয়ক কর্মকাণ্ড সংক্রান্ত ৭ (সাত) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা।	৩০ বছর	
৩.	লাইট ডিজাইনার ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	স্নাতক ডিগ্রি। লাইট ডিজাইনিং কাজে ১০ (দশ) বছরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা। নাট্যকলা/লাইট ডিজাইনের উপর ডিপ্লোমা।	৩০ বছর	
৪.	সহকারী সচিব ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রিসহ বিধিবদ্ধ সংস্থায় কর্মকর্তা হিসাবে প্রশাসনিক কাজে ৭ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা।	৩০ বছর	
৫.	সহকারী পরিচালক (পি.এস) ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি ও সেক্রেটারিয়াল কোর্সসহ কোন বিধিবদ্ধ সংস্থায় কর্মকর্তা পদে ৭ বছরের চাকরির অভিজ্ঞতা।	৩০ বছর	
৬.	কালচারাল অফিসার ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-	১ (এক) টি	১ম শ্রেণির স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রিসহ সাংস্কৃতিক কর্মকাণ্ডে ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা অথবা স্নাতক ডিগ্রিসহ সাংস্কৃতিক বিষয়ে ১০ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	৩০ বছর	

Fig 1.4: An example of state-sponsored advertisement for hiring artists⁵

Finally, I would like to bring in question dance as pedagogy or other forms of education. Dance, according to dance educators are vital for flourishing (Samson, 2011, pg. 39). But, it is superfluous (Samson, 2011, pg. 39). It is not seen as necessary. I note this with my interlocutors'

⁵ This is an advertisement showing salaries for artists from Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, state funded organisation. Despite the salaries not being as low as my interlocutors' explanation, these state jobs are usually dependent on specific selection processes and does not cater to most dancers' tastes of dancing, neither can it permit full autonomy of the dance artist to work elsewhere, as expressed by my interlocutors.

perspectives as well. It is particularly not an important ally of education felt by masses. My interlocutor Arthy says,

“After I came back from my studies, the most common question asked was what else did I study along with it. Like dance as a subject to study is incomplete; it is not real. It is not seen as a proper discipline of studies.”

This is a good indication of how dance is seen as pedagogy, objectively by people. But my interlocutor had pursued the studies knowingly, that it is necessary and it did give her a fulfillment. Hence, if it is superfluous, yet it is needed (Samson, 2011, pg. 39) it should also be addressed as to how and if then, as a profession dance should be encouraged. And also brings into question, whether dance students should be encouraged to dance knowing the intense struggles they have in store, earning a living out of it. As all of my interlocutors had expressed, they would not recommend this profession unless it is backed up with other jobs. To investigate further, I looked into a study by Judith Alter, *“Why Dance Students Pursue Dance: Studies of Dance Students from 1953 to 1993”*, in which it is evident that most dancers remain as a dance student with the knowingness of how economically restraining and competitive the field can get. It is also noted that most institutions shape their students to take it up as a profession (Walter, 1997, p. 85). Along with that, we must also try to understand the politics of dance forms, especially in industries like Bangladesh where new approaching dance forms are in demand. Colonial cultures that use structured dance movements and transformed under the colonial rules (Reed, 1998, p. 507) are also to be investigated, as much of the industry ideals are shaped towards ‘modern’ and more ‘improved’ dance forms as an ideal. The classical and 'backward' dance forms get lower market and stage value, as per my interlocutors who expressed they find it hard to get called for solo-recitals. Group choreographed, contemporary dance forms are

appreciated. As what is being transferred into the local industry, is in fact entering through forces of hegemony. All such categories only goes to ask the question of whether dance as a profession is a recommendation at all, and whether this profession is residing in the middle-classes, with the class-struggles which in fact will follow their careers' course. Perhaps the paradox to the realities of dancers', are a paradox as a result of what I have picked up and analyzed; that there remains an intricately sabotaging economy underneath it all, yet the delightfully gifting aspect of 'passion' in combination with dancers' habituses are threads which keeps them grasped. Given the financial demands are yet not met to say the least, locating the issues central to the exploitative economy of dance can be noteworthy, as well as understanding the navigation through dancers' lives who live under a suppressed means of income while being strenuously worked for the name of 'art'.

Conclusion:

To conclude, this study has essentially tried to point out possible interpretations of why and how dancers based in Bangladesh find their profession to be unsustainable. This study, along with the data collected from my interlocutors, steadily suggest that it has to do with each dancers' social, cultural and economic capital accumulation that they have. This in turn plays out their distinct habituses that navigate them throughout the industry, starting from which shows to do, how many shows to appear in, what kind of demands they can have. To further nuance the entire

process, the doxa of employing bodies peek through. This signals that the controlling power is within the employer's grasp, and most certainly the dancers' economic treatment too. The way dancers are paid is ruled out by very specific doxas of the authorities who hire these dancers. Finally, this study asks some further questions about dancers' lives, while delving into literature of various fields that give us an outlook of dance economy's position in the world view. Also, it suggests further nuances there are which reinstates the 'middle-class' position of a dancer in the industry, carried forward by dance's historical trajectories both locally and globally. The results of this study direct me to believe that the profession of dance in Bangladesh is a deeply problematic area, which allocates its professionals an unsustainable income while extracting artistic values from them through strenuous labour. However, what does keep the dancers persistent and still working, is their own perception of dance and what it means in the identity of being dancers. It is fueled by *passion*, which becomes a tool of negotiation between their financial struggles and their art-form. Devoid of the struggles there seems to be in their career path, dancers in Bangladesh continue to do their craft with diligence with hopes to strengthen the system they are in one day.

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