

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROLE OF KINSHIP ORGANIZATION IN BANGLADESH : STUDY OF A VILLAGE



By
Md. Shahabuddin

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, '**Socio-economic Role of Kinship Organization in Bangladesh: Study of a Village**', submitted to the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), Rajshahi University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology, is an original research work of mine. This work is carried out by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Sultana Mustafa Khanum, Professor and Chairman of Sociology Department at the University Rajshahi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh. The material embodied in this dissertation is original and no part of it in any form has been submitted to any other University or Institute for any degree or diploma. The sources incorporated in the dissertation has been duly referred and quoted for clarity.

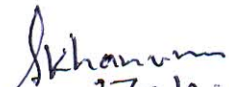

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CERTIFICATE

It is a pleasure for me to certify that the dissertation entitled, '**Socio-economic Role of Kinship Organization in Bangladesh: Study of a Village**', is an original work done by Md. Shahabuddin under my supervision. As far as I know, this has not been previously submitted for any degree or diploma under any University or Institute. I also certify that I have gone through the draft and final version of the dissertation carefully and found it satisfactory for submission to the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), Rajshahi University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.


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ABSTRACT

The dissertation entitled "**Socio-economic Role of Kinship Organization in Bangladesh: Study of a Village**" is an empirical research work based on mainly participant-observation method. The central concern of this study is the analytical description of kinship organization and its socio-economic role (i.e., economic, political, religious, socio-cultural etc), in a village, named Srirampur in Natore district in the northern part of Bangladesh.

Besides participant-observation method, a census was conducted on village household. Furthermore, data was collected on genealogies and some statistics. While living in Srirampur, I had an opportunity to gain an intimate understanding about the underlying factors associated with the interaction of the kin members leading to decision-makings in their everyday familial living. This time I also got an opportunity to bring together field data on various kin terms used among relatives' network in the study village. The various kinship terms as prevalent in the study village have been discussed from the standpoints of Muslim male ego and married Muslim female ego.

The study provides new data and attempts to interpret these data in the light of the recent changes in the rural society of Bangladesh. However, the findings of the study have shown that the kinship systems are universal. These are always important, which play crucial roles in economic, political, religious and socio-cultural sectors. Moreover, it is important to note that the basic units of kinship organization (i.e., household, family and lineage) co-exist in the village and they are in their different phases of the development playing crucial roles in the traditional as well as modern economy and politics of the rural society of Bangladesh including Srirampur, my study village.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
DND	Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GP	Grameen Phone
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
IBS	Institute of Bangladesh Studies
ICDDR,B	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
KSS	Krishak Samabaya Samiti
MA	Masters of Arts
NGO	Non Government Organization
RSS	Rural Social Service
Sq.Km	Square Kilometre
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TAHW	Thana Assistant Health Worker
THC	Thana Health Complex
TK	Taka (Bangladesh Currency)
TSP	Triple Super Phosphate
TV	Television
UAHW	Upazila Assistant Health Worker
UHC	Upazila Health Complex
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad

LIST OF SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

<	mathematical sign to denote less than
%	mathematical sign to denote percent
'	mathematical sign to denote inch
°	mathematical sign to denote degree
&	symbolic presentation of 'and'
△	male alive
▲	male dead
○	female alive
●	female dead
⊙	not included in households
=	related by marriage
	related by descent
	sibling relationship reside elsewhere
→	one-side arrow sign indicating unilateral direction or flow
- - - - ->	one-side dash arrow sign indicating unilateral direction or flow

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Chapter 1

Research Groundwork

1.1 Introduction

Bangladesh is predominantly an agrarian society and it has a long cultural heritage where traditional norms play an important role in shaping the behaviour pattern of the people living in the villages of the country. In rural Bangladesh the household is the primary corporate economic unit, the focus of power structure in the society. The structural elements of rural society include aspects of the family, marriage, kinship system, political system and economic system (Ahmed, 1986:173). Among all these components of social structure, kinship is one of the basic concepts of social organization. Besides, rural kinship as well as kin-groups, residential groups, marriage, family, lineage, inheritance to the land, various types of social systems, institutions, law and order and so on are closely related to the rural society of Bangladesh.

This is a study of socio-economic role of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh. The focus of the study is on kinship condition and its several dimensions in the rural community relating to its socio-economic roles. Kinship organization and its categories are important aspects of the social structure of every society. Actually, it is the basic concept of both primitive as well as modern societies on which the inter-relationship, inter-action, responsibilities, and so on are reciprocally dependent and all these components play vital roles in many spheres of social life. Therefore, a systematic knowledge of kinship organization is essential for an understanding of any society. In fact, kinship plays a significant role from the socialization of individuals to the maintenance of solidarity within the community. It also extends its influence on almost all their activities like- social, economic, political, religious etc. The concept of 'kinship' is vitally important in social anthropology and sociology. Anthropologists over the world give more importance to this concept because kinship and family

constitute the focal points in their studies. They have, in the course of their studies of different societies, enriched the science of social anthropology and sociology. They view kinship as a vital aspect of the society having a bearing on the whole of the social fabric. The socially recognised relationship among the people in a culture who are biologically related who get the status of relatives through marriage, adoption, or other formal and informal institutions. Kinship systems are universal throughout human society, differing among cultures in their importance in the broader social structure, the number of relatives they include, and the demands they place upon the members. In the structure of all human societies kinship systems are relatively easy to identify, and lend themselves to fairly simple analysis. Now-a-days kinship has been central in the thought worlds of man, as expression and symbol of what makes him human (Roger, 1958:152). According to Radcliffe-Brown, "A kinship system is therefore a network of social relations which constitutes parts of that total network of social relations which is the social structure. The rights and duties of relatives to one another are part of the system" (1950:13). So, the reality of a kinship system as a part of a social structure consists of the actual social relations of person to person as exhibited in their interactions and their behaviour in respect of one another. But the actual behaviour of two persons in a certain relationship (father and son, husband and wife, or mother's brother and sister's son) varies from one particular instance to another (*ibid*: 10). On the other hand, regarding the impact of kinship Fox (1967) comments, "the study of kinship is the study of what man does with these basic facts of life-mating, gestation, parenthood, socialization, sibling ship etc." (Fox, 1967:30). Anthropologists, when they talk about "social organization" or "social structure", often mean by that a set of problems centering around kinship in a broad sense. Biological facts of sex, infantile dependence, and the life cycle impose broad constraints on human life in all times and places. On this biological framework, human societies have worked out principles of mating, family structure, and relatedness by birth, decent, and marriage that are far less varied than they might be. Study of these

in anthropology since the latter nineteenth century; and the puzzles they pose have by no means yet been solved (Keesing and Keesing, 1958:148).

In fact, kinship has been called the 'core' of social organization. In every society ties by 'blood' (biological descent) and by marriage (affinal) tend to be the basis for building the more intimate and essential social relations. This is particularly so with consanguineal links, which are ascribed—we cannot choose our ancestors and blood relatives. In many smaller communities and societies kinship is the paramount factor in organizing group activities—this among so-called civilized, as well as non-literate peoples. Furthermore, the ideas, sentiments, and loyalties associated with such kin linkages are frequently carried over beyond the sphere of actual ties, as with the mother superior of a convent, a fraternity brother, or a whole nation calling its ruler 'Father'. Thus, kinship systems build on the complex of relationships between father and mother, between parents and children, and between siblings, and extend them out to and beyond members of a local band (*ibid.* 152). Broadly, speaking, current kinship studies consist of three main areas of interest, such as: (i) kinship terminology; (ii) descent theory and (iii) alliance theory. Whereas some scholars treat these as distinct and competing approaches, many regard them as complementary. However, various types of kinship bond, which may be grouped into consanguine and affine relationships. Along with both classificatory kinships, fictive kinship system is also prevailing among the South Asian societies as in Bangladesh also. Thus, kinship ties fall into three categories, such as (i) ties of biological ancestry (consanguinity); (ii) ties of marriage (affinity); and (iii) fictional ties (i.e., socially defined equivalents, as with adoption, godparents, belief in common descent from some animal totem). We are justified in including fictional linkages in discussions of kinship where socially speaking, the behaviour and sentiments involved are essentially of the same character. In some societies social ties do not correspond at all exactly to biological ties—the person who is 'father' to a child may not always be the actual progenitor; children may be given away, children or adults adopted. In this context, Keesing and Keesing comment, "kinship, to us, intuitively refers

to 'blood relationships'. Our relatives are those connected to us by bonds of 'blood'. Our in-laws, to be sure, are related by marriage and not blood-and so are some of our aunts and uncles. But it is successive links between parents and children that are the essential stands of kinship" (1971:157).

In sociology and social anthropology the term 'kinship' has been used to mean a relationship in different senses. Some of them also argue that kinship means consanguinity and denotes persons who are related by blood. In fact, a consanguine is someone who is identified by the society as a consanguine; blood relation in a genetic sense has not necessarily anything to do with it, although on the whole these tend to coincide in the most societies of the world. Actual or putative genetic connexion, according to the definition of 'genetic' or 'consanguineous' in a given society is usually the basis of kinship relations. According to 'A Dictionary of the Social Science' (1964:125) "Consanguinity may be defined as a social relationship established on the basis of descent from a common ancestor, actual or assumed. Consanguinity may be lineal, where one person is the direct ancestor of another; or collateral, where there is an ultimate common ancestor, but persons are not linked by a direct line of descent". Morgan (1971:17) also referred to 'consanguinity, or blood' relationships in his discussion of Roman kinship, specifying that this involved 'the relation of persons descended from the same ancestor'. Many sociologists and anthropologists argue that it includes relationship by blood and marriage or affinity. It should be made clear that the relationship based on blood ties is called 'consanguineous kinship' and the relatives of this kind are called 'consanguineous kin'. On the contrary, the relationship, which arises out of a socially or legally defined marital relationship, is called 'affinal relationship' and the relatives of this kind are called 'affinal kin'. It is mentionable that 'consanguinity' is distinguished from 'affinity' (the relationship established by marriage). However, it is apparent from the discussion that there is a significant difference between consanguine and affine kin. As the affine relationship is related with marital ties and consanguine relationship is developed through the biological link between the members,

consanguine relatives are more strong and unbreakable in comparison to the relation between affine groups. In fact, there is no denying that kinship is one of the most important social institutions, which make integration among the people in affine and consanguine kinship relationship as expressed by the concept of *Atmyo*, *swajan* and *atmyo-swajan* (Inden and Nicholas, 1977:1). In my work, I shall use the term 'kinship' in both the senses, and the context will decide the precise connotation. From this point of view, then the little of my research work includes that I shall deal with relationships by blood and marriage as well as the fictional relationship.

As the villages constitute the basic units of the social structure of the country, there is an urgent need to study the different aspects of rural communities for a proper understanding of that total social structure. We shall remain ignorant about rural Bangladesh without a series of village studies covering its different regions and different aspects of its social life (Bhuiyan, 1978:3). In this regard, Nicholas (1973) has also pointed out that there will be no economic growth, no general increase in the well-being of the people (of Bangladesh) without a great deal of objective study of its people, society and economy. As the study of all aspects of a village social system would be very elaborate as well as lengthy, I decided to study intensively only the kinship and its socio-economic role in a village named Srirampur in Baraigram upazila under Natore district. By studying a single village, I cannot hope to get a clear picture of the whole of rural Bangladesh. It would be necessary to study a number of villages from different parts of the country as well. Fortunately for me, a few detailed field studies of rural communities have already been made in other parts of Bangladesh which also contain a little information about kinship and its several dimensions in their respective villages (Bessaignet 1963, Hara 1967, Zaidi 1970, Bertocci 1970; 1972, Aziz 1979, Jahangir 1979, Ahmed 1981, Sarker 1983, Naher 1985, Arefeen 1986). Of course, they give certain valuable, though brief, information on different aspects of kinship organization in their respective villages.

The existing village studies of our country reveal that the kinship organization is to be a neglected field. In this context, Rahaman rightly states, "the principal factor responsible for this state of neglect lies with the underdeveloped character of social anthropology and sociology in Bangladesh" (1990:3). So, it is necessary to pursue descriptive and analytical studies in this field at the micro level covering small communities in some parts of Bangladesh. However, this study will help in understanding a vital organization (i.e., kinship organization) of rural society in Bangladesh, which is an urgent need for the proper knowledge about the social structure of Bangladesh because majority of the population of this country live there.

The present study focuses on kinship and its socio-economic role in a Bangladeshi village and thus it is centred on a single village. It should be noted here that I shall refrain myself from making wide generalisation about the kinship organization in Bangladesh as a whole. However, I shall present my analysis of data in such a way that it hopes to cover a gap in the regional coverage of village studies in Bangladesh, and the future researchers will be able to make use of them for comparative studies on kinship organization, marriage and family in Bangladesh. My study village is located in the northern part of Bangladesh where no village study has so far been conducted. It has hindered me in conducting my study to some extent, as there was almost nothing I could rely upon as regards the social organization in the region. On the other hand, this has also added to my responsibility as being the first researcher to make a first hand observation of realities of the village social life in such a way in this part of Bangladesh. Some of the previous village studies conducted in other parts of the country have also benefited me considerably in this task. All these studies have, however, enabled me to compare and cross-check some of my findings as well. Thus, the present study is an attempt to analyse and describe the kinship organization in a village in Bangladesh. Similarly, an attempt has also been made to identify and analyse the role of kinship organization and its impact on social, economic, political, religious, socio-cultural sectors in the rural society of Bangladesh.

Since Srirampur is entirely populated by Muslims, I shall make special attempt to study kinship organization in the context of Islamic laws and customs. Therefore, I have tried to explain how far the Islamic treatises on family as well as marriage have had their impact on the kinship organization in Bangladesh and vice versa. In the present research, I have wanted to evaluate the kinship organization and its role in our rural society. In this context, my research has a broader field to search the socio-economic role of kinship organization in our rural society. So, an attempt has been made to find out the socio-economic role of kinship organization in Srirampur, as a matter of fact, in the whole of Bangladesh. It should be noted here that I do not want to build up any theory at the present study. Thus, the present work is an attempt to explore the social life of villagers in terms of socio-economic role of kinship organization.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The present study is concerned with the analysis of the various dimensions of kinship organization and its socio-economic role in the rural society. In other words, the purpose is to comprehend the role and significance of kinship relations in different spheres of social organization and thereby to examine the relationship between kinship organization and the society at large. Thus, the main objective of the present study is to give a brief account of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh and to analyze its impact on socio-economic sectors. However, the specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- (i) To justify the norms regarding the formation of kinship groups and categories in the village society;
- (ii) To explore the nature and functions of kinship organization and its difference with the local groups in the study area;
- (iii) To identify the kin network in the study village and also to know to what extent they act as cohesive groups;
- (iv) To study the marriage pattern and practice and also its rituals and ceremonies performed by kin network;

- (v) To examine the patterns and various aspects of kinship terminologies used by the villagers;
- (vi) To delve into the major roles performed by the kinsmen on economic, political, religions and socio-cultural sectors in rural Bangladesh.

1.3 Review of Literature

The studies on kinship, marriage, family and related studies reveal that the history of rural and urban community studies in Bangladesh dates back to the British period. Most of the studies which were done prior to 1960s in the Indian sub-continent were either administrative exercises for implementing governmental policies or were conducted by individual researchers looking into the socio-economic inequalities, exploitation, or oppression by the existing administrative system. Some of these works are: *Census of India* (1902) by Gait, *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operation in the District of Rajshahi: 1912-1922* by Nelson, *Bengal District Gazetteers: Rajshahi* (1916) by O'Malley, *Rural Self-Government in Bengal* (1936) by Roy, "Caste Ranking and Inter-caste Relations among the Muslims of a Village in North-western UP" (1956) by Gupta, " Networks and Centres in the Integration of Indian Civilization" (1958) by Cohn and McKim, *Dynamics of a Rural Society* (1957) by Mukherjee, *After a Century and a Quarter* (1960) by Ghurye. But systematic studies on various problems of Bangladesh society made by Bangladeshi, Indian and other foreign scholars were actually begun in the early sixties which also picked up pace only during the seventies after the independence of Bangladesh. A considerable number of rural as well as urban studies carried out by Bangladeshi scholars are available but most of them have been conducted on economic, historical, political, religious, demographic, famine, women affairs, youth and child concerned issues and such other aspects of the society. But the study of kinship is still a neglected field. However, the researches relevant to the present study (i.e., kinship organization), carried out by Bangladeshi scholars, are at a premium.

There are very few full-length studies on kinship, marriage and family in Bangladesh, such as *Paribar* and Kinship by Hara (1967), the Family in a Village in Bangladesh by Bhuiyan (1978), Kinship in Bangladesh by Aziz (1979) and Kinship Organization in a Village in Bangladesh by Rahaman (1990). Apart from the above mentioned studies, the others have also paid attention on kinship organization, though not fully devoted to the kinship organization as such have some portions on the kinship organization in Bangladesh (e.g., Bassaignet 1963, Bertocci 1972, Ellickson 1972, Mashreque 1980, Ahmed 1981, Sarker 1983, Naher 1985, Arefeen 1986 and a few others). Moreover, the research works relevant to the present work conducted by Indian and other foreign scholars covering the whole subcontinent have to be considered. As mentioned earlier, the native scholars have had little full-length works to contribute kinship organization. Therefore, in the absence of enough literature on kinship organization in relation to its socio-economic role in rural society, we have to fall back upon books where a faint mention of this aspect has been made. However, an attempt has been made to review on some studies and tried to find out their major strengths as well as shortcomings from the point of kinship, marriage and family studies. It is mentionable that the review is based on certain ideas and for the time being these books may be the prop of those, who would be interested in this field for meeting the present shortage of literature on kinship, marriage and family.

Aziz's *Kinship in Bangladesh* (1979) is a book based on survey conducted in the villages of Camilla and Dhaka districts covering 233 villages. The period of data collection was 1963 to 1974. This book was originally a thesis, but it has been substantially revised and improved on the basis of observations made over 10 years of field data collection for the International Center for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B).

This is the first substantial work on kinship in Bangladesh and it is an innovative contribution in the context of kinship as well as its basic units (i.e., household and family) studies in the country. Aziz has presented a discussion on village social groups, kinship connections in social organization as well as in religious

participation and he has tried to demarcate social groups by using the terms *ghar* (house), *bari* (homestead), *gushti* (patrilineal kin group or lineage). But the shortcoming in this demarcation of social groups is that it does not throw sufficient light on composition, interaction and identity of the village people belonging to these groups. Thus, he does not draw any distinction between kinship group and other groups (i.e., residential groups) in the villages. Nevertheless, Aziz has endeavoured to discuss the problems of kinship connection in social organization.

Aziz also deals with family typology and its developmental cycle following Andrew Billingsley's typology of family structure. In this context, he states, "Billingsley has suggested three general categories of families: nuclear, extend, and augmented. These are then subdivided into twelve types of family structure" (1979:11). He does not, however, clarify as to what is the justification for using this typology. Another shortcoming of family typology is that he does not make distinction between 'household' and 'family'. He also fails to analyse the norms governing the formation and development of household and family as the basic units of kinship organization. It is also noteworthy that he has not paid enough attention to the progressive and regressive trends in the developmental process of family.

Aziz alludes relatives by terms *atmiya*, *svajan*, *ghati* and *kutumbu*. But this allusion lacks erroneous conceptualisation and differentiation. He does not give much analysis of kinship as a system and as the ways of social economic as well as political organization in the village society. However, his discussion of such terms on kinship connection is important. Apart from this, the long list of kinship terms used by Aziz is useful. He also tries to compile a number of terms. About the Bangladeshi Muslim kin terms he states, "the Bangladeshi Muslim" descriptive kinship terminology" includes more than one thousand and five hundred kinship vocabulary words. . . . the long listing of this vocabulary is primarily an indicator of the fact that it provides the exact description of any kinsmen by a little that distinguishes him or her from the remainder" (1979:99). Aziz also brings out regional variation in the use of some kinship terms in some

districts in the country. It is an innovative contribution in the context of kinship terminologies among Bengali speaking people.

Aziz has also presented a long discussion on marriage, covering several aspects of it, such as marriage rule, marriage network, consequence of marital ties in and outside the village, the age of marriage, *mahar* etc. He also shows that Muslim widows remarry much less often than widowers, and suffer "socio-economic deprivation". Despite this, unfortunately, he fails to pay due attention to some important issues related to village marriages. He does not describe the geographical range in which marriages are solemnized, various ceremonies and rituals performed in marriages and role of relatives in it.

However, Aziz shows how the various kin terms fall into a cultural pattern, and he adds an interesting section on dyadic relationships, which makes the functioning of the kinship pattern come alive for us; he also provides a Table classifying the dyadic relationships. He then goes on, in a highly significant section on fictive kinship to describe how people in the village, or work situation, or in a casual encounter, are brought through use of kin terms into facilitating relationships. Thus, this book provides the raw material of kin terms and dyadic relationships, to understand the kinship system, which is the over-riding organizational principle of Bengali society. And finally, the most important effect is a better understanding of outward-rippling kinship network, and what this means in Bengali society, culture, and modern adaptation.

Rahaman's *Kinship Organization in a Village in Bangladesh*, an unpublished dissertation presented to the University of Delhi in 1990, is a study of kinship organization in village Mukhait in Bagerhat district. Mukhait is entirely Muslim populated village and all of them belong to the Hanafi school of Sunni sect. Rahaman examines various aspects of household, family and *gushti*, such as composition, norms, and developmental process of these aspects of kinship organization etc. in the context of Bangladesh society. He also highlights on village economy, social organization and various socio-cultural issues in the village.

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Rahaman discusses household, family and their developmental process, norms of household and family formation, typology of households and families, interpersonal relationship in households and families etc. The kinship and residential groups, their differences, the marriage including an account of its several dimensions, the network of relatives, its norms and values, relationship patterns among kinsmen etc., role of kinship organization in different sectors in society are also discussed. Thus, this dissertation is concerned with kinship and its basic units (i.e., household, family and lineage). Unfortunately, he fails to pay due emphasis on declining as well as changing roles of kinship relation in the society. He also does not clarify whether this changing condition is structural or any other kinds. Apart from this, it does not throw sufficient light on social groupings and the mobility system within the village. Therefore, it leaves many dimensions of the village kinship system uncovered. He has not paid adequate attentions to kinship terminological system and various aspects of kin terms in the text. It, too, does not throw sufficient light on widowhood as a familial institution.

Hara's *Paribar and Kinship in a Moslem Rural Village in East Pakistan* (1967) is an unpublished dissertation submitted to the Australian National University in 1967. This is a study of the *Paribar* and Kinship based on fieldwork in a village named Gohira in Chittagong district. Hara, a Japanese scholar, carried out his fieldwork between 1962 to 1964 at that village. The Muslims of the village belong to the Hanafi school of Sunni sect. He has discussed socio-cultural aspects of village Gohira. The specific focus's is on village *Paribar* (family), various groups and categories etc. He has also discussed the villagers' ideas about the 'individual', 'equality', 'sex' and 'prestige'. Furthermore, he states that the knowledge of "philosophy of the villagers" is necessary for an understanding of the social behaviour. Regarding the parental property among Muslims in the village Hara states, " . . . they do not have much attachment to their parental property; the wealth and property of a family do not last for more than a generation; the villagers think that Allah decides everything; they are not bothered about their past and many of them can not even tell the name of their

father's father" (1967: 30-44). On the other hand, he found tenancy system in agriculture in Gohira village. The tenants are often related to the landowner, and the relatives are consulted at the time of the sale of landed property. If they are not in a position to purchase that property, it is sold to outsiders. In this connection he has mentioned the right of pre-emption in Islamic laws inheritance (*ibid.* 56-74). This is, however, to his statement that the people of that village do not have much emotional attachment to their parental property. If it is so, why do they want to keep their property among their relatives?

Regarding kinship system in the village Hara states in his book, "kinship system is individual centered" (1967:200). This statement suggests that there are no organized kin groups, such as lineage, in the village. Further he states, "Although the parental side is emphasized, there is no tightly united group of agnatic kin" (*ibid.* 204). In Srirampur, a village under study, I have studied the group of patrilineal kinsmen, which is called *gushti* whose members have a number of activities in common. But he has not mentioned such a group in Gohira village.

Hara finds out kinship composition of the family and deals with their interpersonal relations. As regards *paribar* he states, ". . . *paribar* is fairly loosely organized. . . . it is not a segment of larger kin group but rather stands as a kind of obstacle to the formation of such groups, as men tend to give preference to the interests they share with their wives rather than those shared with consanguine, should these conflict" (1967:203-204). According to Hara *paribar* is in fact a household. Therefore, it is difficult to agree with his statement regarding the family in Gohira.

Bhuiyan's *The Family in a Village in Bangladesh*, an unpublished dissertation submitted to the University of Delhi in 1978, is a study mainly based on household, a dimension of family in a village named Khawjapur in Comilla district. The Muslims of the village belong to the Hanafi school of Sunni sect. Bhuiyan, a Bangladeshi scholar, conducted his fieldwork in Khawjapur in two

phases, covering a total period of eleven and half a months. Bhuiyan has discussed various aspects of household, such as composition of households, norms, values, developmental process, typology etc. He has focused on village economy, social organization, status of women, marriage, *mahar*, death, puberty, wedding ceremonies, and other socio-cultural aspects in the village. All these various aspects regarding household and family studies are certainly an important contribution in the country, especially in rural society of Bangladesh.

Mashreque's *Kinship and Power Structure in Rural Bangladesh: A Case Study* (1980) is a study of kinship and power structure in village Ratanpur in Rangpur district. It is an in-depth analysis of household and lineage segments in the light of mainly political functions. The main focus of the study is on lineage segments, which coordinate the structure of lineage as well as the structure of power in the village society. Mashreque discusses the village leadership pattern, role and functions of kinsmen in dividing people in political groups. He also conducts with marriage pattern in Ratanpur village with due attention. Despite all these, it fails to give due emphasis on some important issues related to village marriages. For example, it does not describe the ceremonies and rituals, and role of kinsmen in marriages. Besides, it makes a passing reference to the codes of marriages. The work, however, becomes lopsided owing to the fact that compared to the *gushti* (patrilineal kin group), other kinship and non-kinship groups of the village have not been given due emphasis.

Khanum's 'Habitus and Its Implications in Constructing Kinship Ties: Data from a Bangladesh Settlement in Britain' (2000), discusses the external conditions which have contributed towards shaping different forms of habitus among Bangladeshis in Britain, first considering the situation in their native country and then focussing on the context of immigration. In this paper, Khanum shows that the construction and maintenance of kin networks are closely bound up with relations to power and dominance in both Bangladesh and Britain, which in their turn, underline gender and class distinctions in both countries. Khanum also evaluates the changing patterns of kin relations among the Bangladeshi women in Britain.

Khanum's another paper, "The Role of Kinship in Perpetuating the Politics of Pregnancy among Bangladeshi Women in England" (2000), seeks to explore the causes of perpetuating normative behaviour during and after pregnancy among the Bangladeshi migrant women. This paper also tries to explain the underlying theme of this ambivalence. The data used in this paper were collected in course of fieldwork conducted in 1991-94 at a small part of greater Manchester. In the present study 140 Bangladeshi migrant women were interviewed and the majority of them are from the most underprivileged social groups. Khanum shows how the Bangladeshis in Manchester suffer both from British racist bias and the sneer of Bangladeshi professionals with whom they come into contact. She also shows how the small number of educated professional migrant Bangladeshis prefer to keep a distance from the majority of the less educated, working class/unemployed Bangladeshis and thus the latter group is the subject of the present paper.

Khanum's paper, "The Household Patterns of a 'Bangladeshi Village' in England" (2001), deals with the changing pattern of household composition among Bangladeshis in England. This paper is based on ethnographic research conducted from 1991 to 1994 in a small district of Manchester. Khanum describes typical/differential household patterns in a Bangladeshi community in England and seeks to show the extent to which they differ from prevailing household types in Asian societies. Thus Khanum gives an account of the different patterns of households existing in Bangladesh and in some Asian countries, which serves to provide a context for her attempt to map the different types of households existing in Bangladesh community in England. She also outlines the process involved in the development of new types of households that she has opted to call 'circumstantial households' and explores the ways in which kinship organisations contribute to form these specific household patterns.

Rahman's paper, "The Use of Kinship Terms in Bengali" (1983), is an account of the Bengali kin terms used to address several categories of relatives. At the same time, he examines the significance of the use of kin terms in Bengali and

also shows how the Bengali-speaking people see their kin universe. This work covers around twenty Bengali families residing in Leeds and London in Great Britain. Thus, the investigation was limited to the kinship terminology used by the educated Muslim middle class of Bangladesh. Apart from identifying the patterns and significance of the use of kinship terms, his work deals with family structure, relationship and some other aspects of kinship. Although the discussion regarding various aspects of kinship is very brief, it is noteworthy.

Khan's paper, "Role of Fictive Kinship in the Network of Exchange Relationship of the People of Bangladesh," (1984) is a work dealing with fictive relationship in the rural society of Bangladesh. This is a description of establishing the role of fictive kin, the nature of establishing relationship among the people and their exchange relationship factors. It is a basic and in-depth study to the understanding of fictive kinship in rural society of Bangladesh. Khan also examines the significance of the fictive kinship in the Bengali kin universe. The study also deals with the socio-economic factors as well as its role and functions of the fictive kinship in the society. In his paper, Khan shows how fictive relationship is established among Bengali people. But the discussion regarding various aspects of fictive kinship is brief. Though he does not give an elaborate discussion on socio-economic factors of fictive kinship, his work is noteworthy.

Mayer in his book, *"Cast and Kinship in Central India: A Village and Its Region"*, (1960) deals with the caste and kinship system in central India. While putting emphasis on caste as a pervasive feature he also attaches importance to kinship as the internal structure of the sub caste. The inter-personal relations among kin are reflected in the behaviour, roles and duties of the relatives in an annual cycle of ceremonial occasions. The kinship groups that make up the internal structure of a caste bring out the importance of understanding the segments in the total peasant political organisation. From his study it is also clear that the accretive office of headman contributes much to the preservation of old values and traditional power structure. Mayer's study also focuses on the pattern of marriage as a mechanism of extending affinal relations and creating kin ties-an

aspect very important for the study of the pattern of marriage in Srirampur. In the study village the significance of the political marriages for enhancing the circle of the kinship group is obvious.

Bessaignet's, "Family and Kinship in a Hindu Village of East Pakistan: An Illustrative Analysis" (1963) is an article based on information collected through fieldwork from a small village named Shahabad in Dhaka district. He presents an account of the family and kinship in Shahabad, a Hindu village in Dhaka district. This is a preliminary survey of kinship and family in the village. The village Shahabad is entirely Hindu populated village and the village is unique in the sense that the people are completely Hindu and single caste. The villagers call themselves Sudra, but the author questions their claim to Sudra status. He thinks they have elevated their status from a lower caste.

Bessaignet uses the term 'family' to refer to "a household group having a common residence in a *bari* (homestead) and sharing a common kitchen, this being the principal determinative criterion" (1963:71). So, the term 'family' is used in the sense of household. He has also classified the "families" in Shahabad as (i) Nuclear, (ii) Extended, and (iii) Truncated. Thus, Bessaignet discusses different aspects of family and kinship in Shahabad village, such as family structure, agnatic and affinal groups, socio-economic etc. But the discussion regarding various aspects of family and kinship is very brief. Therefore, his article suffers from dearth of in-depth data because he had not had sufficient time to complete his work in the village. In fact, the author himself states, "inquiry having been cut short by the author's unexpectedly early departure from Pakistan" (1963:71). Although the information is brief, it is worth mentioning.

Alavi in his book, "*The Politics of Dependence: A Village in West Punjab*," (1973) focuses on the institution of the *biradari* that constitutes the core of social organization in the west Punjab villages. He speaks of three sets of *biradari* e.g. *biradari* of descent, *biradari* of recognition, and *birdari* of participation. Of them the last one is the most important for it echoes the solidarity of the fraternity

and the contemporaries in participation in a ritual of exchanging goods and other materials, known as *vartan bhanji*. His study reveals interpersonal relations among the members of the households included in the lineage. From this study we may properly understand how the kinsmen interact with one another during festivals and how they complement one another by mutual help on the eve of important occasions, such as birth, marriage, circumcision, and funeral. The study is important since it analyses *biradari* working as a body that performs economic, political and ritual activities. It gives us an idea about a cohesive kin group. The politics of domination and subordination is also vivid in the study.

"Changing Marriage Transactions and the Rise of the Demand System in Bangladesh" (1986) by Ahmed and Naher, is focusing on traditional marriage transactions and the changes taking place in these transactions in Bangladesh. The fieldwork was done in a village named Taruni in Dhaka district. The area is Christian dominated and one of the oldest centres of Christianity in Bangladesh (1986:72). The data was collected from this village through a variety of methods: participant observation, survey, case studies etc. The study covered 195 Christians and 90 Muslims (29 and 13 households respectively). Therefore, marriage practices among the Muslims and Christian communities in Taruni village have been examined in it. It also makes very good presentation of the change of customs, rituals and ceremonies, which have been taken place in both the communities in comparison with previous studies in the country. They examine the impact of dowry and demand in Bangladesh society. Despite all these, the study omits some important aspects connected with marriage practices among the Muslim and Christian communities in the country and it makes no mention of the application of codes in the marriage institution. Moreover, it fails to trace the socio-economic factors causing break down of the alliances.

In his book, *The Village Culture in Transition* (1970), Zaidi describes the socio-cultural life of the people of Ramnagar and Alipur, two villages in Comilla district. The main focus of the book is the changes occurred in the lives of the villagers due to the impact of modern forces, such as urbanization, industrialization and

modernization. Zaidi discusses the "life cycle" of the people of these villages, their attachment and faith in the beliefs as well as customs, which still generate rituals and beliefs. The author discusses the socialization process of the children in the family, interpersonal relations, selection of spouse for children, and various rituals observed in connection with birth, circumcision, marriage and death. He also describes the powerful groups of these two villages, namely, family, *gushti* (patrilineal kin group), and *para* (word). The role and functions of these groups are also discussed thoroughly. However, there are several shortcomings regarding the above mentioned groups. The important point is that he has neither defined family nor made a distinction between household and family. He does not even discuss the kinship composition of families in these villages.

However, Zaidi's discussion on the family reveals that it is of general nature of the family. Actually, the author makes simplistic statements about the family as he states, "The village family is generally an extended one in which sometimes two or three generations live together" (Zaidi; 1970:41). But unfortunately, he does not make it clear what is meant by living together. Regarding this statement about family, several questions may also be arised. For example, do the generations live in the same household? Or do they live in different households but in the same homestead? Therefore, it seems that he has used the term extended family in the sense of property holding groups in these two villages. Moreover, he conducts about social structure, factionalism in the villages which make mention of the position of influential families, such as *Qazi bari*, *Munshi bari*, *Mazumdar bari*, etc., which indicate the lineages with aristocratic background. It should be mentioned that although he recognizes the principle of kinship in social organization in the hinterland, but he does not treat it exhaustively in relation to power structure in the village society.

About village marriage Zaidi comments, "Marriage tie is established normally between two families of equal rank and status, but in a few cases, the bride's family is slightly better off financially than the groom's family. In no case the situation is reversed (1970:52). He also observes a number of cousin marriages

in these two villages. Regarding the marriages he argues, ". . . Muslims encourage marriage between cousins because they believe that similarity of background guarantees stability of the marriage and the family and because of economic reasons" (1970:49). By economic reason Zaidi focuses on the daughter's entitlement of a share in her paternal property. If she is married outside the family, she may take away her share of paternal property to her conjugal household. But the economic reason mentioned by Zaidi for the occurrence of cousin marriage is subject to question because in many cases the sisters surrender their share of paternal property to their brothers. Finally, Zaidi does not examine kinship groups, their deference from other groups and also from other aspects of the kinship universe as well.

Bertocci's "Community Structure and Social Rank in Two Villages in Bangladesh" (1972), is an article on rural social stratification. This article is also based on information gathered from two villages, namely Hajipur and Tinpara, two neighbouring villages in Comilla district. The main focus of this article is on the community organization and social structure in these two villages. However, it provides some information on kinship while discussing various village groups, such as family, lineage, ward etc.

"Islamic Institutions in Bangladesh" (1972) by Ellickson is an article based on her experiences in village Shaheenpur in Comilla district. She presents an account of the Muslims Family Law Ordinance of 1961 as well as village social institutions dealing with perception and practice of Islamic institutions in village life. In this connection the authoress discusses how far the Muslims Family Law Ordinance of 1961 is implemented in social institutions i.e., (marriage, inheritance etc.) of Shaheenpur village. In this context, Carrol's paper "The Muslim Law Ordinance 1961: Provisions and Procedures "(1979) finds out major shortcomings in the work of Ellickson. Carrol states, "Ellickson unfortunately seems to have approached her study in total innocence of any knowledge of either Hanafi law or the ordinance itself; in the result the essay totally marked by gross inaccuracies" (1979:279).

A Bangladesh Village: Conflict and Cohesion (1974) by Islam is a book based on survey data. Islam examines the link between national ideologies and local values. This study offers a detached anthropological viewpoint, informed by historical and political knowledge. He draws upon interviews with villagers and other sources of unwritten material. Islam also shows the changes in the formal political organization of the village. He analyses the conflicts at each stage and the processes of village factionalism and decision-making. As a result, one can see the relationship between changes in the formal organization and changes in the process of political action. Islam shows that increasing economic contacts with the outside world have opened up possibilities for new groups of people to become "brokers" or intermediaries between the villagers and the outside. The addition of new brokers to the village situation has meant that local political entrepreneurs have had to work harder to achieve majority support; and in doing so these local politicians have caused ordinary people to become politically involved in the village and to learn about a wider range of issues. Islam shows that village politics is a matter of competitive struggles for retaining influence and power on the village level. What has changed with economic development and political modernization is that those struggles have become clearer; more open and subject to resolution by more objective means than was possible in the traditional society.

A Bangladesh Village: A Study of Social Stratification (1978) by Chowdhury is a book based on fieldwork conducted in a village, fictitiously called Meherpur, in the district of Dhaka. Fieldwork was done in two phases, covering a total period of ten and a half months. Chowdhury discusses the social life in the village with a focus on its social stratification pattern. The main concern of the book is to show the pattern of social stratification by an analysis of class, status and power relations in Meherpur. Because, he thinks that stratification pattern in the village can best be analysed by the analysis of these three dimensions. Chowdhury shows how class, status and power relations in the village may be affected by various measures initiated by the occurrence of events like the Partition of India

and creation of the Muslim state of Pakistan of which Bangladesh became a part, land reforms, movements for autonomy and liberation of Bangladesh and the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation. He also shows how the changes in the wider Bangladesh society and changes initiated by the wider society of Bangladesh had affected the pattern of relationship in small communities like Meherpur.

Mukherjee's *The Dynamics of a Rural Society* (1957), is a book based on statistical data from both East and West Bengal, and consequently, with the two types of social organizations found among the Hindu and the Muslim. It stresses the difference between the Hindu and the Muslim, but it recognizes the fact, based upon empirical evidences, that the economic, if not actually the social structure, is by and large the same for both. Although this book concerned with pre-partition Bengal, it is directly relevant to the study of social structure in Bangladesh. Mukherjee, in his book, making use of the empirical evidences and statistical data secured through various surveys, undertakes to demonstrate that the social structure and the life of Bengali villages cannot be understood unless one takes the economic structure into consideration. This is the central theme of the book around which his study is built. While explaining the dynamics of rural society, Mukherjee deals with the economic aspect only, omitting the dominant role of the socio-cultural factors. Moreover, things have changed in a great deal since his period of study as he was dealing with the pre-partition era. However, the study of Mukherjee can best be taken as a model for analysing the present society.

Six Villages of Bengal (1971) is other major work of Mukherjee. This book is based on data collected from Bogra district in northern part of Bangladesh. In fact, this is the study in which Mukherjee makes first attempt to study rural Bangladesh by studying six villages in the district of Bogra. Mukherjee, one of the first scholars to make a systematic study of Bangladesh society with a view to have an intensive study of socio-economic life of rural Bangladesh. Mukherjee's *Six Villages of Bengal* provides much of the materials relating to the social structure, which are very much helpful in studying contemporary

Bangladesh. Taken together, these two works (i.e., one, *The Dynamics of a Rural Society* and other, *Six Villages of Bengal*) of Mukherjee have, therefore, much to provide to the social scientists of Bangladesh regarding both objects and methods of the study.

Jahangir's book on *Differentiation, Polarisation and Confrontation in Rural Bangladesh* (1979), is based on data collected from two villages at Savar Thana in Dhaka district during the turbulent period covering 1974-75. The book has, however, the distinguishing feature of attempting to apply Marxist modes of analysis to the concrete reality of rural Bangladesh. The book is important from the viewpoint of kinship and for its several aspects. The village social structure, ecology, economy, families, social groupings, marriage, inheritance, social honour system, social control and the village *samaj* have also been discussed in the book. Thus, the author makes an attempt to show the significance of kinship organization for the study of village institutions and its total social structure. Regarding the importance of village institutions Jahangir comments, "A variety of institutions emerge in the economic, political and kinship area; and they shape the multiplicity of ties between persons. Some ties are based on reciprocity and equality as in *samaj* or in kinship; others are based on unequal relationships as in land and property relations. These diverse ties arise out of various structures economic, political, kinship-and affect peasants' political, kinship-and affect peasants' modes of action and behaviour" (1979:3-4). Despite all these, he fails to put due emphasis in presenting a systematic discussion on several aspects of kinship organization in village society of Bangladesh. Unfortunately, he does not make distinction between household and family. Likewise, he does not make the difference of kinship groups from other groups and other aspects of the kinship universe. Regarding the limitation of this book, we may raise an important point that his work is restricted in both its temporal and territorial coverage. However, it may be mentioned here that conversely a more general body of scholars as well as practitioners of rural development can evaluate the significance of class based analysis of rural society to see how far such an approach appears more relevant to an understanding of rural society and the development experience.

"The Role of Women in Rural Bangladesh" (1979) by Nath is an article based on information gathered from a village in Rajshahi district. The main foci of the paper are the marriage pattern of the village and women's position in as well as outside the household. It also deals with marriage practices among the villages and makes a good presentation of customs, rituals and ceremonies of village marriages. Regarding the village marriage Nath comments, "The girl or boy has to seek permission from the village *samaji* before finalizing the agreement" (1979:431). But seeking permission before finalizing the agreement of marriage mentioned by Nath is subject to question because the *samaj's* permission is not always necessary for finalizing a marriage. Some other studies in Bangladesh have also shown the decline of *samaj* authority regarding the village marriage (Bhuiyan 1978, Arefeen 1986, Rahaman 1990). However, this custom may be a regional variation. Despite all these, Nath's paper does not pay adequate attention on the 'life cycle' of women in the village situation.

In the article, "Popular Beliefs, Rituals and Religious Practices in a Bangladesh Village" (1981), Ahmed discusses the popular beliefs, rituals and religious practices of the village people. The article is based on information collected from a village named Bizna in Comilla district. Ahmed confines his discussion on the beliefs, rituals and religious practices among the Muslims. It also presents a good discussion on birth of a child in a Muslim family. Ahmed shows how a newborn baby is welcomed and what rituals are performed by the kin groups on this occasion. (Ahmed 1981:141). He throws light on marriages and also shows how various ceremonies are performed on this occasion by the relatives' network. Finally, the paper outlines the rituals performed by the kin network at the time of and after the burial of a Muslim.

Karim's, "*The Pattern of Rural Leadership in an Agrarian Society: A Case Study of the Changing Power Structure in Bangladesh*" (1990) is a work based on

survey conducted in two villages of Puthia Union of Rajshahi District in the North Western part of Bangladesh. In his book Karim conducts a probative account of modern patterns of leadership in rural Bangladesh. He examines two villages in order to understand their patterns of traditional political leadership as exercised through a non-governmental organization known as *samaj* and the new organizational patterns of modern institutions. However, looking at both patterns of traditional leadership and leadership in newer governmental arenas such as cooperatives and the Union Parishad, he demonstrates that there is no major change in leadership patterns in the recent past. This study also reveals a change in the institutions through which leaders can exert power due to government-funded programmes and projects, but the basic structure of leadership remained unchanged. The educated sons of old leaders are the present leaders in these new programmes. However, the study of Karim is a valuable account for those seeking to understand community organization in Bangladesh and South Asia more generally.

Mizanuddin's paper, "The Nature of Family Life and Kinship Networks in the Selected *Bastees* of Dhaka' (1996) analyses the kind of traditions and customs in relation to family and kinship that are prevalent among the *bastee*-dwellers and the way these are being practiced in different life situation in the urban milieu. At the same time, it highlights the significance of family and kinship in the social organization of the *bastee*-dwellers. Apart from identifying the nature and significance of family and kinship, the author shows how the *bastee*-dwellers, having predominantly rural background change many of the rural traditions and customs relating to their family life and kin relation in the *bastee* (slum).

Arefeen's *Changing Agrarian Structure in Bangladesh* (1986), is a book based on data collected from Shimulia, a village near Dhaka city situated within in the site of D.N.D irrigation project, which transformed its agriculture from traditional

broadcast to intensive wet-rice cultivation. Although the author presents the agrarian problem, yet it throws significant light on several aspects of kinship system in Bangladesh society.

The book aims to provide the principal units of the village social organization. In this connection, it describes village lineage, homestead, family etc. Arefeen defines *gushti* and *bansa* in referring to the lineage, a larger unit of kinship organization. These terms are used as synonyms and defined as, "a group of people who are agonistically related to each other" (1986:65-66). It is difficult to agree with his definition regarding the lineage in the village. This is rather confusing. A large number of studies refer that the terms *gushti* and *bansa* each has a different meaning (Ellickson 1972, Bhuiyan 1978, Mashreque 1980, Rahaman 1990). It could be mentioned that the term *gushti* is used by the villagers in a very common manner. *Bansa* is indicated by them as a patrilineal lineage bearing the characteristics as well as norms and values of a noble *parivar* (family) or *gushti* (patrilineal kin group). However, the discussion on *bansa* within the village shows a close applicability of the following observations by Mashreque.

Bansa used more by those belonging to the noble families. The people of these groups frequently use this term by saying 'we are the members of the *ucco bansa*' (high lineage) while tracing their relationship to a common ancestor who may have been a landlord or a rich man, some two or three generations ago. They try to keep up their aristocratic background (*khandan*). The poor families or families of lower status do not have such sentiment. They do not use the term *bansa*, having no *ucco bansa garba* (pride). Making frequent reference to *bansa* is the expression of higher status in the village. Even also a rising family having lower family background, tries to hide its connection with its ancestors. On the other hand, a poor family with higher lineage background, may boast of its hereditary background, and may refer to its *bansa* frequently (1980:100).

Arefeen discusses the family structure of Shmulia village. He also divides all families of this village into two types, such as nuclear and joint family. At the time of categorizing the families in Shimulia, the author uses a very common typology of family structure. As mentioned above, he uses the term "joint

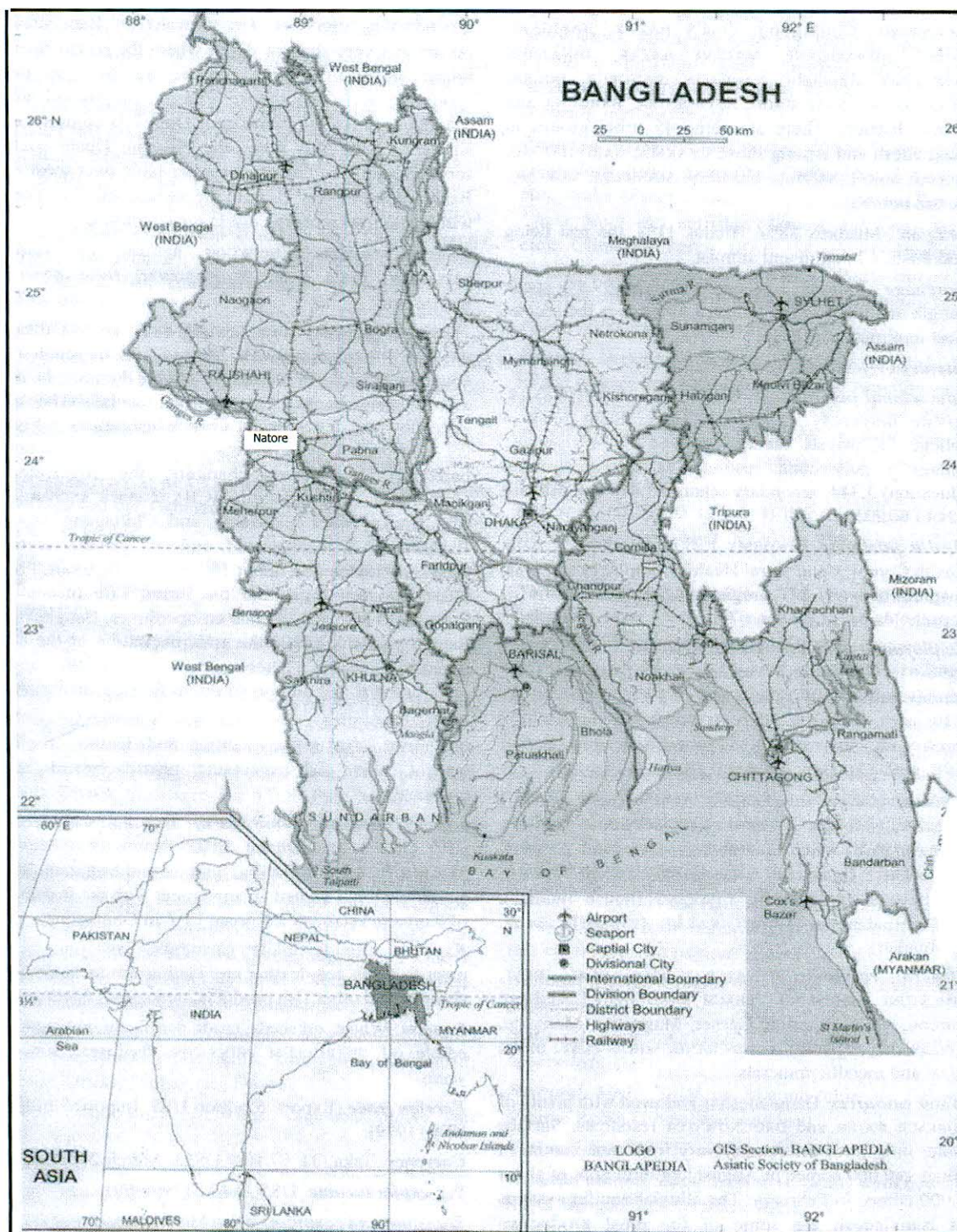
family" as a typology of family, but it is not clear. Moreover, the study does not discuss the developmental process of families, and no distinction has been made between 'household' and 'family'. The confusion regarding the typology of families could have been avoided if he had distinguished between household and family. Arefeen analyses various aspects of marriage practices, such as arrangement of the marriage, spouse selection, transactions of the marriage, hyper gamy, hypo gamy, isogamies etc. A few case studies of such marriages are also presented. All these case studies regarding the marriage as well as divorce are not in-depth and satisfactory. About the marriage arrangement in the village, Arefeen states, "Arranged marriage is the dominant form in Shimulia. Normally, a father takes the initiative in arranging the marriage of his sons and daughters and he is the final arbiter in this matter. In selecting a marriage partner a family puts utmost importance on the good *bansa* (high status lineage), referring to the *khandani* status of a family" (1986:95). The above statement is, however, different from the findings of other such village studies (Bhuiyan 1978, Naher 1985, Ahmed 1987, Rahaman 1990). The author also provides ethnographic data on marriage practices in a peri-urban community of Bangladesh. Simultaneously, he highlights some of the emerging practices with regard to marriages following the overall changes with the penetration of market economy in the country.

Arefeen discusses the relationship among the *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) members. He also classifies *gushti* relationship into two categories, such as one wealthy members' relationship and other less wealthy members' relationship. Regarding the nature of *gushti* relationship, he comments, "while most of the families of the *gushti* are economically well off, kin relationships are often very close" (1986:64). About the *gushti* relationship, this statement seems to be partial because wealth is not the only determining factor in measuring closeness of the *gushti* relationship. The shortcoming of the study is that it does not describe the

sector of joint activities among the *gushti* members. Therefore, a question may be raised, i.e., how can a *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) be regarded as a group? He also fails to distinguish between kinship and other units. Moreover, all the village units, such as family, lineage, and *bari* (homestead) are not described as kinship units, which create vagueness about kinship units.

The present study aims to find out the socio-economic role of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh. The above reviewed works deal with various aspects of kinship related phenomena but in fact, no work is found, which has been especially conducted on socio-economic role of kinship organization in this contemporary period. However, the reviewed articles, books and dissertations have been found relevant and useful source of data. All these works have also brought out newer knowledge about the structural and functional aspects of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh. But it is clear that there is a knowledge gap to evaluate the socio-economic role of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh and it is the main focus of the present work.

Map 1
Map of Bangladesh



1.4 General Description of Bangladesh and Natore District

Bangladesh is an independent and sovereign state, which achieved independence on December 16, 1971 after nine months' War of Liberation against the Pakistani army and thus, it appeared on the world map as an independent and sovereign state. Bangladesh lies in the north-eastern part of South Asia between 20°34' and 26°38' north latitude and 88°01' and 92°41' east longitude. The country is bounded by India on the west, the north, and the north-east and Burma on the south-east and the Bay of Bengal on the south (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002: XIX.) The area of this country is 1,47,570 square kilometres, and the total population of the country is 12,31,51,246, of which 6,27,35,988 are males and 6,04,15,258 females, respectively with a sex ratio of about 103.8, i.e., males per 100 females (Preliminary Report of Population Census, 2001:4&7). Its population is presently growing at the rate of 1.47 per cent per annum (*ibid*: 7). At present, the literacy rate of the country is 32.4 per cent, of which male literacy rate is 38.9 percent and female literacy rate 25.5 percent respectively (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:352).

The limits of territorial waters of Bangladesh are 12 nautical miles and the area of the high seas extending to 200 nautical miles measured from the base lines constitutes the economic zone of the country (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002:XIX). However, Bangladesh is the 9th populous country in the world (except some island countries) with less than 1/3000th of the total landed area of the world (Barkat and Hawlader, 1997:154). Ours is also a rural-based developing country where 9, 43,42,769 (76.61%) of the total population live in rural areas while only 2,88,08,477 (23.39%) in urban areas (Preliminary Report of Population Census, 2001:6).

The economy of Bangladesh is predominantly agrarian. Agriculture plays a vital role in the growth and stability of her economy as is indicated by its major share to Gross Domestic Products (GDP), employment generation and export earnings (Mian, Part II, 2001: 3). Bangladesh has got one of the most fertile lands but due to paucity of capital and lack of knowledge of new inputs and techniques its yield per acre is one of the lowest in the world. The per capita cultivated area of the country is 0.15 acres (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:167). Agriculture is the main occupation of the people employing 68.5% of the labour force. This sector directly contributes around 25% to the gross domestic products (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002:XXII).

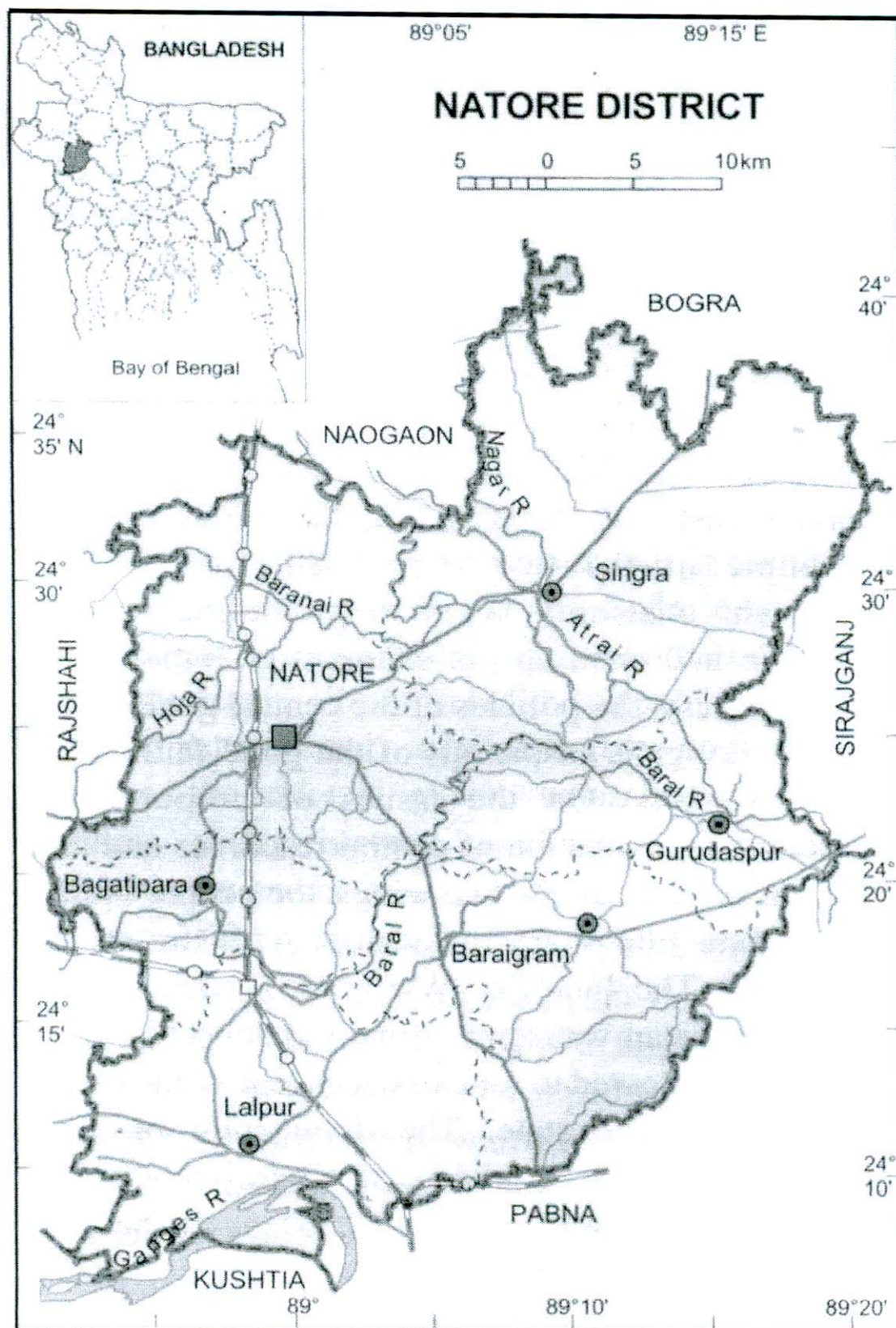
Bangladesh is endowed with favourable climate and fertile soil for the production of various crops throughout the year. The winter crops are major crops in respect of number and cropped area than the summer monsoon crops (Mian, Part II, 2001:19). The main seasonal crops and fruits in the country are rice, wheat, jute, potato, sugarcane, tobacco, pulses, oilseeds, banana, mango, coconut, jackfruit, betel nut, betel leaf, litchi, etc. Among all the main seasonal crops and fruits, the rice dominates the country's agricultural scenario with respect to both cropped area and the production. Rice alone covers about 75% of the total cropped area and accounts for about 70% of the value of crop output (FFYP, 1997-2002:225). Various kinds of vegetables and spices are also produced in the country. The country produces about 51 million kg of tea per year, a sizeable quantity of which is exported to foreign markets after meeting the internal demand. Bangladesh produces about 1057 thousands M.Ton of superior quality jute annually and 16% of the export earning come from raw-jute manufactures (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002:XXII-XXIII). Whatever divisions are made; crops are grown for supply of food, nutrition, earning incomes and generation of employment. The agro-ecological environment of

Bangladesh is very much conducive to and favourable for cultivation from the standpoint of growers' interest.

Bangladesh enjoys generally a sub-tropical monsoon climate. While there are six seasons in a year in Bangladesh, of which three seasons are main, such as: Winter (November-February), Summer (March-June), and Monsoon (July-October), and also the climate variations of these seasons are: Winter temperature average maximum 29°C and minimum 11°C, Summer temperature average maximum 34°C and minimum 21°C, and in Monsoon, average rainfall 1194 mm to 3454. This country has also 230 rivers (including tributaries), of which Padma, Meghna, Jamuna, Brahmaputra, Teesta, Surma and Karnaphuli are the principal rivers (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2002:4).

Administratively, Bangladesh comprises six divisions namely, Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet and Barishal. There are 64 districts grouped in different divisions, 254 municipalities (*Pourashavas*) excluding city corporation) and 4 city corporations, i.e., Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:3). Each district has a number of upazilas, 507 in all in 64 districts. Each upazila consists of several Union Parishads. The total number of Union Parishads in Bangladesh is 4,484 (*ibid*).

Map 2
Location Map of Natore District



Natore is one of the sixteen districts of Rajshahi division. Until 1984 Natore was a sub-division of Rajshahi district, which was a part of Rajshahi division. Natore subdivision was established in 1845 under Rajshahi district and it was turned into a district in 1984 (Banglapedia, Vol. 7. 2003: 266). Since 1984 it has made a separate district within Rajshahi division. After the administrative re-organization carried out by the then Government of Bangladesh the number of districts has risen from 23 to 64. It should be noted that the newly created districts in the country are basically former sub-divisions. The administration of each zila is headed by a Deputy Commissioner who is assisted by other officials (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002:XX). However, nothing is definitely known about the origin of the zila name. In the remote past, the present zila headquarters was within "Chandrabati Bill". There are two views about the origin of the zila name. the first view is that previously the present place of the zila headquarters was neither a high land or a low lying area. It was not (means *Na* in Bengali) high enough for movement on foot (means *Tar* in Bengali). The opinion is that the zila might have originated its name from the name of the Narod River, which was flowing by the side of the zila headquarters. The zila is bounded on the North by Bogra and Noagaon zilas, on the east by Sirajganj and Pabna zilas, on the south by Pabna and Kushtia zilas and on the west by Rajshahi zila. The total area of the zila is 1896.05 Sq. km (732.07 sq. miles) of which 17.35 sq. km. (6.70 sq. miles) revering. The zila has no forest area. The zila lies between 24°25' and 24°58' north latitudes and between 88°01' and 88°30' east longitudes (Zila Series, Natore, 1996:1). However, there are 10 rivers in the district and most noted of which are Atrai, Baral, Narod, Nandakunja. The Chalan Beel is notable also.

According to the Population Census of 2001, the total population of Natore district is 15,21,000, of which 7,74,000 are males and 7,48,000 females. The sex ratio is 100 females against 104 males (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:82). The average density of population per square kilometer in the district

is about 802. The percentage of literacy in the district is 27.0; for males and females 33.0 and 20.5, respectively (*ibid*: 352). The great majority of the population is Muslims (90.47%). Numerically, the next important religious group in the district is the Hindus (8.47%). Besides, there are a few Christians (0.61%) and others 0.45% in the district (Banglapedia, Vol. 7, 2003:266). There are a good number of government and non government educational institutions in the district, such as government collage 5, non government collage 17, government high school 3, non government high school 206, government primary school 407, non government primary school 281, *madrassa* 30, teacher's training collage 1, nursing institution 1 (*ibid*).

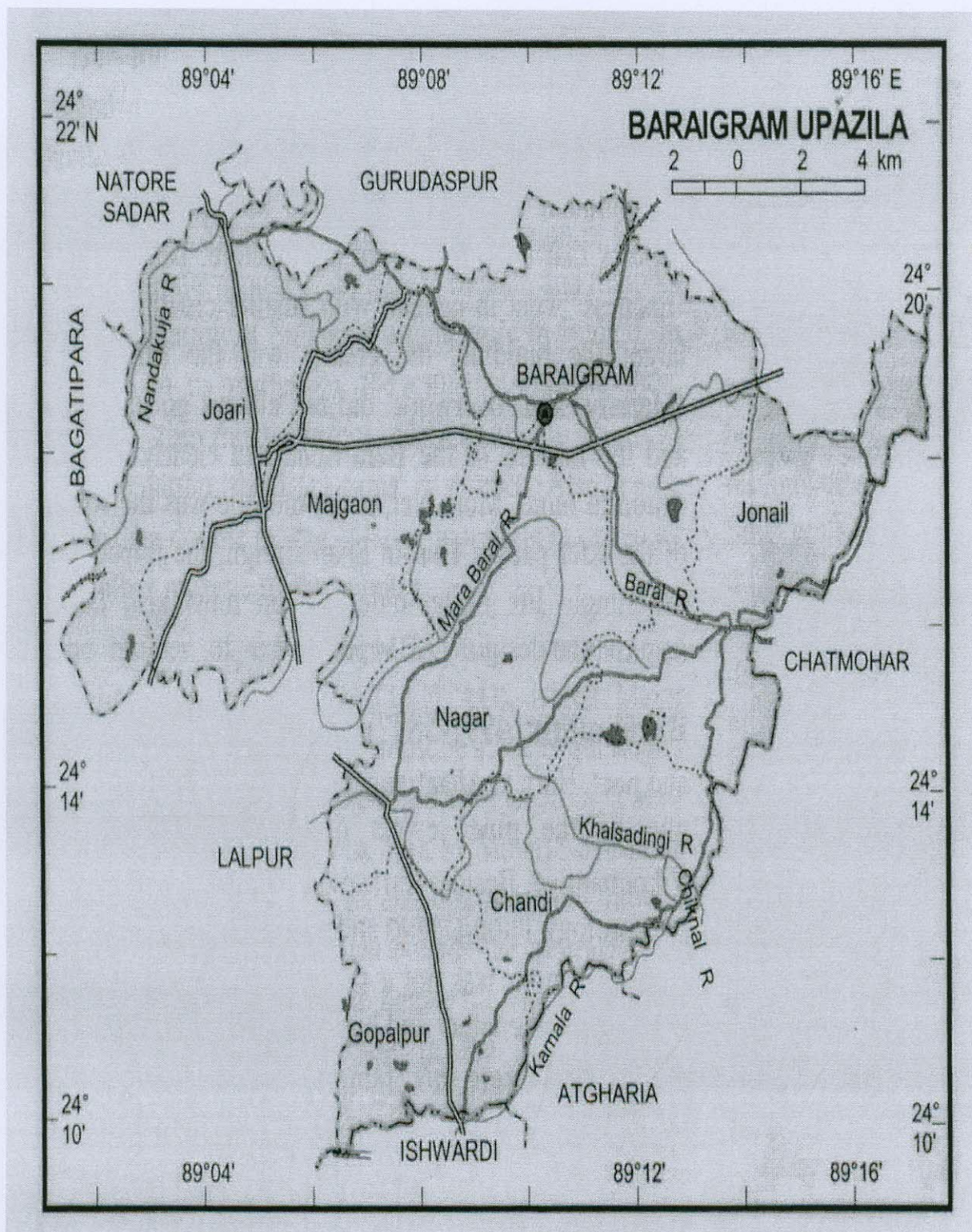
Natore district is a vast plain. The plains of the district are alluvial and the soil consists of sandy clay, sand and silt. The whole district enjoys generally a sub-tropical monsoon climate. It has also sultry summer as well as moderately winter. Summer starts from March and lasts up to June, Monsoon starts in July and stays up to October, and winter that is quite pleasant begins in November and ends in February. The maximum average annual temperature usually recorded 37.8°C, while the minimum temperature 11.2°C (Banglapedia, Vol.7. 2003:266). The average rainfall in this district is about 1862 mm. a year. The economy of the district is mainly agricultural. Therefore, a wide range of crops, such as rice, jute, wheat, mustard seed, sugarcane, pulses, betel leaf, chillies, watermelon, potato betel nut, coconut etc. and a number of vegetables are produced in the district. Besides, a lot of varieties fruits are produced in the district. Mango, banana, papaya, litchi and guava are some of the important varieties. Except coconuts, bananas, and papayas, which are grown and available throughout the year, others are seasonal.

Natore is the principal town and the district headquarters. It was well known in undivided Bengal for its education and cultural activities. It should be noted here that 'Indigo resistance movement were held in this district during 1859 to 1860. During the war of Liberation in 1971, a direct battle was fought between the Pak

army and the freedom fighters on 29 March...' (*ibid*). The district is well known for its archaeological heritage and relics also. For example, Natore Rajbari and Dighapatia Rajbari (Uttara Ganabhaban), Dayarampur Rajbari (Bagatipara) and Budpara Kali Mandir (Lalpur) are notable in this regard. A highway connects Dhaka and Rajshahi via Natore. Natore is also connected with other towns as well as cities in Bangladesh by roads and railways. All these aspects, however, give Natore enormous industrial potential, but unfortunately, the district is not well developed in industries. Only two sugar Mills, namely, North Bengal Sugar Mills Ltd. and Natore Sugar Mills Ltd. have been established in Natore district, while a few hosiery, oil-processing mill, flour mill, printing, biscuit factory, ice factory, wood-cutting, rice mills industries, etc. have been established here on private initiative. Apart from this, there are some activities, such as potteries, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, mat making etc. which are regarded as cottage industries. The district is also developed in different trade activities.

For administrative purposes Natore district is divided into six upazilas, namely, Bagatipara, Baraigram, Gurudaspur, Lalpur, Natore *Sadar* and Singra. A *thana*, literally, is a police station where a contingent of police is stationed to maintain law and order. But, in fact, a upazila is an administrative unit which is headed by upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). Each upazila consists of several Unions. Local government in urban and rural areas is entrusted to bodies elected by the people. Such bodies in the urban areas called Municipalities or *pourashavas* and in rural areas these are called union parishads (Union Councils). There are also zila parishad and *Thana* parishad at the zila and *thana* levels, respectively (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002:XXI). However, it consists of 6 upazilas, 4 municipalities, 36 wards, 93 *mahallas*, 52 unions, 1272 *mouzas* and 1377 villages (Banglapedia, Vol. 7, 2003:266). It is mentionable here that a union, the smallest electoral unit of rural area which is comprised of *mauzas* and villages is known as Union, while the smallest electoral unit of urban area is called a ward. A union has a union parishad and a ward has a ward Parishad (council) respectively (Zila Series, Natore, BBS, 1996:5).

Map 3
Location Map of Baraigram Upazila



Srirampur, a village under study, is located in Baraigram upazila, which is one of the six upazilas of Natore district. Its area is 299.61 square km, is bounded by Gurudaspur and Natore sadar upazilas on the north. Atgharia and Ishwardi upazilas on the south. Chatmohore upazila on the east, Lalpur and Bagatipara upazilas on the west (Banglapedia, Vol. 2, 2033:60) and its total population is 2,64000, of which 1,34000 are males and 1,30000 are females, respectively (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:112). The average literacy rate of the upazila is 25.3%, for male 30.6% and female 19.9%, respectively (Banglapedia, Vol. 2, 2003:60). There are 51 km. *pakka*, 10 km. semi *pakka* and 360 km. mud roads in the upazila (*ibid*). However, a highway connects Bonpara to Jamuna Bridge via Baraigram upazila. This upazila is also connected with other towns and cities in Bangladesh by roads.

Baraigram *Thana* was established in 1869 and it was turned into an upazila in 1983 (Banglapedia, Vol. 2, 2003: 60). For administrative purposes Baraigram upazila is divided into 7 unions and each of them has a union *Praishad* separately. This upazila comprises 179 villages, in rural areas 174 villages and in other urban areas 5 villages, respectively (Zila Series, Natore, 1996:47). And the total number of households in accordance to census 1991 (enumerated) is 41000 in Baraigram upazila (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh, 2002:112).

The economy of Baraigram upazila is primarily agricultural. The majority of the people of this upazila live in villages. The main crops produced here are : rice, jute, sugarcane, wheat, potatoes, oilseeds, pulses, chillies etc. Besides, betel leaf, coconut, betel nut and a number of vegetables are also produced in this upazila. Some seasonal fruits, such as, mangoes, bananas, Jackfruits, guavas, plums, litchis etc. are grown in Baraigram upazila. However, among all these agricultural products rice is the most important which occupies the prime place by covering at least 85% of the total land cultivated in the upazila.

The great majority of the population of this upazila are Muslims and among them the vast majority is the Hanafi school of Sunni sect. Numerically, the next important religious group is the Hindus. Besides, there are some Christians and a few Buddhists as well as tribal people in this upazila. According to Banglapedia, the exact figure of population in the upazila is Muslims 90.78%, Hindus 5.83%, Christian and ethnic nations 2.83%, and others 0.56% (Banglapedia, Vol. 2, 2003:60) The density of population in Baraigram upazila is 880 per square kilo meter, which is very high as against 834 people living per square kilometre in the whole country (Population Census, Preliminary Report, August 2001:7). However, the people's standard of living in this upazila is average quality.

1.5 Research Methods and Techniques of Data Collection

The intensive study of a village or a community is a complex task, which involves the method of intensive fieldwork and through going observation of all aspects of life for a long time. But the method of data collection depends to a great extent on the information that is required, the respondents, the time reference, and quality or quantity of data (Abramson, 1990:31). Also to be considered are the need of personal skill, time, equipment, and other facilities in relation to what is available; the acceptability of the procedures to the subjects- the absence of inconvenience or onward consequence, and the probability that the method will provide a good coverage. However, the information regarding genealogy, family typology, age, sex, marital status, marriage network, education, exact relationship with the head of the household, land and other assists have been obtained through intensive fieldwork. Actually, the intensive fieldwork enhances the gathering of experience of the rural life yields abundant information about the villagers as well as their various cultural aspects. In this connection Srinivas rightly says, "intensive fieldwork by trained men is the only, the best, and the cheapest method of accruing intimate knowledge of our villages, and that carrying out such studies is an urgent and important task" (1960:14). Thus, this is the approach, which plays a significant role to the understanding of their rural lives as well as the cultural factors including a strong

feeling of belongingness to the same people. But fieldwork as an efficacious method of data collection involves training. It should be noted here that the study of a village regarding with the specific objectives requires a solid theoretical background. My one-year involvement with the theoretical training in the Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Rajshahi University, with full course work covering various social science disciplines encouraged me to study a particular problem relating to the village society in contemporary Bangladesh. As a result, I became interacted to identify the facts about rural life, particularly relating to socio-economic role of kinship organization in rural society. Taking into consideration all the concerned factors I selected a particular village named Srirampur of Baraigram Union under Natore district, comprising a reasonable number of households that presented socio-economic features, which would be found in the district and region at large, with some variations of course. The another reason is that Srirampur as a study village has also been selected in considering that it would present a profile of interactions among the people under the existing social structure that is more or less common in other villages of rural society in Bangladesh. Therefore, I selected a single village, which could be used to serve the present purpose.

The study of kinship organization in relation to its socio-economic role of this selected village was really a complex task. Because some issues, i.e., marriage, *mohar*, divorce, separation etc. were quite sensitive, which demanded a good deal of circumspection on the part of the field observer. Since the aim of the present study was to identify the various types of kinship in rural community of Bangladesh and see how effectively kinship organization playing the socio-economic role in rural society by presenting data with sociological outlook. For this purpose, not single method rather a combination of different methods have been used for collecting information regarding kinship relation and its socio-economic role. It has also included case study, genealogical study etc. in getting the socio-cultural identity of the study area and an insight of many things related to kinship and its several aspects i.e., marriage networks, divorce,

separation, reversal, conflict, land distribution etc. In fact, a mix of methodology, instead of any one method, is sometimes necessary to fulfil a task. In the field of qualitative explorative research, quite frequently, a mix of methods is necessary to draw out the information and facilitate analysis. This is known as 'methodological mixes'. In this regard Patton (1990) says that an important way to strengthen study design is through combination of methodologies in the study of phenomena. Referring to Denzin, Patton (1990) also states that there are four basic types of methodological mixes such as: (i) data triangulation- the use of a variety of data sources in a study; (ii) investigator triangulation- the use of several different researchers or evaluators; (iii) theory triangulation- the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and (iv) methodological triangulation- the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. The term 'triangulation' is taken from land surveying. Knowing a single landmark only locates one somewhere along a line in the direction from the landmark, whereas with two landmarks one can take bearings in two directions and locate oneself at their intersection. Patton quotes the logic of triangulation by Denzin:

"No single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors.... Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This is termed triangulation... multiple methods should be used in every investigation. " (Patton, 1990: 186 – 98)

It is ideal to mix different methods for collecting data. Studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method than studies that use multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross-data validity checks. Methodological mix is a powerful solution to the problem of relying too much on any single data source or method, thereby undermining the validity and credibility of findings because of the weakness of any single method. Such methodological mixes are usually employed to decipher or unveil the past. Sociologists and social anthropologists all over the world agree that in behavioural study like this a single method sometimes not enough to collect necessary data. The present study has attempted to employ methodological mixes.

The particular set of procedure for accomplishing a task keeping in mind the objective and the resource available is named methodology. Kaplan says that the word 'methodology', like other words 'physiology', 'history', and 'logic' is used for both a certain discipline, and for its subject matter. Methodology is thus an explanation, and the justification of methods. Further Kaplan (pp.18-21) states that often methodology is concerned with technique, the specific procedure used in a given science, or particular context of inquiry in that science. For example, there are certain statistical techniques or techniques for conducting an interview. Methodology is again used as honorific for the scientific method. Again methodology is indistinguishable from epistemology or philosophy of science or the most basic question that may be raised concerning the pursuit of truth. Finally, method includes such procedures as making observations and measurements, performing experiments, building models and theories, providing explanations, and making predictions. On the other hand, Abramson (1990:31) states that the method of collecting data may be broadly classified as observation, interview, and document review. Each of these may have further classification. It should be made clear that each of this method has its own tools or appliances to collect data. However, in the present study, both survey and participant-observation methods have been used to collect information. For survey method, the questionnaire schedules have been used to collect basic information from every household of the village by interviewing the head of every household. The participant-observation method has helped me in observing the norms and their implication regarding formation of kinship as well as other groups, their relationships, socio-cultural roles and many other things. So, at the entire period of data collection emphasis was given on participant-observation method to ensure the reliability of the survey data. Actually, it is one of the recognized methods in social anthropology or sociology, especially for the study of societies hitherto neglected.

Malinowski (1884-1942) and Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) were the pioneers of the participant observation method. But social researchers all over the world

have been using this method from the beginning of the twenty century and gradually, it has also been proved to be the most effective as well as fruitful for studying rural societies in different parts of the world. However, about participant-observation Wilkinson and Bhandarkar rightly state, "Participant-observation has a reference to the observer sharing, to a greater or lesser degree, the life of the group he is observing. This sharing may be intermittent but active contacts at close proximity do afford an intimate study of persons" (1984:177). Kovit also states, "Participant-observation is a constructed method requiring first hand involvement in the social world under study, in order to create analytic description relevant to a specific problem, a set of hypotheses or the creation of an ethnographic account" (1975:26). As this is a constructed method requiring first hand involvement in the social world under study, it has been very common among social anthropologists and sociologists in India (for more details, see Young 1955, Srinivas 1960, Shah and Ramaswamy 1969, Kovit 1975). Similarly, in Bangladesh a large number of scholars have followed the participant-observation method in their studies (Bessainet 1963, Zaidi 1970, Bertocci 1970, Bhuiyan 1978, Sarker 1983, Chowdhury 1985, Arefeen 1986, Rahaman 1990, Karim 1990, Ahmed 1981, Khanum 1994). High lighting the importance of this method Bhuiyan states, "It seems to me the most useful method for the study of village communities in contemporary Bangladesh, because one can gain insight into the life, society and culture of the people one studies, through living with them for a considerable period of time" (1978:72-73). Regarding this matter, Rahaman rightly says, "A researcher who uses this method goes close to the people of the community or group under study. He participates in the life and cultural activities of the people of the community in order to have a first-hand knowledge of their norms, values, and behaviour in day-to-day life" (1990:50). Regarding the nature of the participant-observer Young also states, "The participant observer is an outsider who temporarily becomes an insider. He thereby secures a better insight into the situation he is investigating as he is not personally involved and can remain detached, while at the same time taking part in the group's activities and sharing their feelings and

prejudices" (1955:30). In fact, every fieldworker is to develop his own technique of collecting data in his field, in addition to the techniques used by other researchers. Although I have followed mainly the participant-observation method, I have adopted other techniques for collecting data, such as (i) obtaining general background data for the study village and gross data for the upazila and district; (ii) making a complete household census for the village; (iii) conducting structured and unstructured interviews with the head of all households living in the village; (iv) obtaining case studies and case histories; (v) attending formal and informal religious as well as socio-cultural functions that happened in the village.

I have conducted an intensive fieldwork in Srirampur in two phases, covering a total period of about one year, for the purpose of present research. I lived in the village from the beginning of September 2001 to the end of February 2002, and again from the middle of May 2002 to the middle of November 2002. I did not require any reference to get entry into my study village for the purpose of intensive fieldwork as I passed three years together in this village for educational purpose. My former involvement in the study village provided my access to the village as well as to the locality. Many of the people whom I knew before greeted me warmly. In the course of my stay in Srirampur, I was introduced to several persons when I reached at the village for the purpose of research. I managed accommodation to the house of Zahid Hossain, one of my former friends in Srirampur and stayed there during the period of my entire fieldwork. Zahid is a teacher of Dhighalkandi *Madrasha*. I reached at his residence for the purpose of fieldwork in Srirampur on the morning of the first of September 2001. When I reached, he and his father received me cordially. My stay at Zahid's house was initially disadvantageous to some extent, as he belongs to the *Bhadrolok* category as well as being the son of an influential *pradhan* (chief) from *Uttarpara samaj*. His father was also the former member of Baraigram Union Parishad. Consequently, some peasants of the village who belong to *Grihestos* (a category of people who own and cultivate moderate

amount of land and lead an average life). The *Garibloks* (poor people) categories tried to maintain some social distance from me. I tried to overcome this situation by making frequent visits to their houses and by dining with them on several occasions. On the other hand, I was not indifferent to people from *Bhadrolok* or *Barolok* families of the village. It could be noted that Srirampur was visited previously by a few outsiders on a few occasions. Sometimes, NGOs workers and the representatives of Upazila Health Complex (UHC) also visit the village off and on in connection with their work. But never before had anyone from outside lived in the village for such a long-time and that too for the purpose of research.

When I reached at the village for the purpose of intensive fieldwork, I made several rounds in the village before starting my fieldwork. I started the first phase of my fieldwork very soon with a structured questionnaire. It was a household census in Srirampur, which covered all people living within the village jurisdiction. The questionnaire was used to record information relating to family size and compositions, age, sex, education, occupation, marital status, *mohar*, divorce' separation, genealogy, land-holding, income and expenditure, relationship with head of the household and other particulars of the members of each household. The responses of the respondents were recorded in the pre-set questionnaire with great attention. In formal interview, the questions that were asked and their sequence and wording were worked out beforehand with the aim to conduct the interview in a uniform way. The questions were cognisable, and hopefully aroused the right motivation on the part of the respondents to answer accurately. The questionnaire was in Bengali, this I did to gain the confidence of the villagers. Some villagers took my questionnaire off and on in their hands and went some portions of it attentively. The household census was a complete enumeration in the sense that each and every individual living in the 724 households in Srirampur was covered by this questionnaire. Information regarding the inter-household, intra-family as well as inter-family relationships in a *bari* (homestead) was also collected from these households. Before embarking on the interview with the heads of all households, I introduced myself to them,

states the purpose of the interview, sought their consent for cooperation and informed them that if they desired, they could discontinue the interview any time. Politeness mixed with curiosity, hopefully, went a long way to bring out all the necessary information. This satisfied the conditions set forth by social scientists Moser and Kalton to conduct social science research (1993:327).

The household census with my structured questionnaire proceeded smoothly. But very soon I found that people were reluctant to give me information. Some of the villagers suspected me to be an agent of the government and that I had gone there to make an assessment of the socio-economic aspects of their lives. They also suspected that I wanted to know about their illegal practices regarding land, marriage, etc. Some persons in the village also suspected me to be someone of Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board who had come to verify the mal-practice of using electricity. Therefore, they became reluctant to give me correct information.

When some of the villagers began to suspect me, I stopped conducting my household census. Instead of going ahead, I tried to develop my rapport with the people in the village so that I could overcome their suspicions. I used to move freely in and around the village and talked more with those people who suspected me as an agent or any other officials. I tried to discuss on issues of general interest of the villagers, such as weather, rain, season's harvest, their well being etc. Soon after using this technique, the villagers who suspected me became closer to me. On the advice of my host Zahid, I also used to join the village gatherings, sittings and social functions performed by the villagers. I always tried to clear out the misconception about me whenever I got the opportunity. Zahid and other educated persons of the village whom I knew before also helped me to convince the villagers that I was not an agent of any government department. Thus, they helped me in developing rapport with the villagers of Srirampur. On several occasions, I also told the people that I needed information from them to write a book on their village. Gradually, the people became convinced of my academic purpose. My efforts paid finally and it was a

pleasant matter for me that by applying some techniques I was able to convince the villagers.

When I was able to make good rapport with the villagers, I started conducting the household census once again. After the census was over, I visited the households to gather information on several aspects of their lives. As stated earlier, the head of every household of the village has been taken as respondents, I interviewed all the male heads of the households of the village directly but I could not interview all the female heads of the households because they observe *purdah* (veil) and do not come out in front of a male outsider. My interviews with those women whom I got were always in the presence of some adult male member of the concerned household. As I could not interview all the female heads of the household in Srirampur, a gap remained in my data regarding the situation in the households as well as kinship relations of the villagers. It is one of my limitations, but there was no alternative for me. Therefore, I had to proceed with the analysis of this information keeping the limitation in mind.

Generally, I used to start filling the questionnaire with an exchange of greetings. After filling my questionnaire, I asked about some things, which were not included in my questionnaire. When I used to start my unstructured interviews without any schedule, I kept notes of important information in my field notebooks. To collect data through unstructured interviews on the customs of inheritance, division of households, marriage, divorce, separation, and rituals in the family, village history, culture, kinship relations, and social functions and so on. Usually, I used to get information on these aspects of life from the head of household or of the family. If a family in the village was divided into different households, I generally talked to the family head especially to collect information on property.

After finishing the household census I left the village at the end of February 2002. It took me about six months to complete the household census through structured interviewing. At the middle of May 2002, I went to the village for more intensive

fieldwork and was accommodated in the same house where I had stayed earlier. During this time I started my work by cross-checking the information that I had received during the first phase through unstructured interviewing. I found that some wrong information was also recorded earlier in my field notebook and I made corrections after a thorough checking. Once this checking was over, further I used to start in collecting further information. There was a great deal of flexibility in the questions asked and the sequence followed. In fact, with the help of interview schedule, an interviewer administered questionnaire, some information on universal variables as sex, marital status, education, income and expenditure etc. of the respondents. The responses of the respondents were recorded in the pre-set questionnaire by the interviewer. In formal interviewing the questions that were asked and their sequence and wording were worked out beforehand with the aim to conduct the interview in a uniform way. The questions set were cognisable and hopefully aroused the right motivation on the part of the respondents to answer accurately. In this context, Moser and Kalton states, "in-depth interview is more of a causal conversation that draws out the information from the respondents" (1993:299). However, to make the respondents communicative, more than one probing techniques, as outlined by Bernard was used. These techniques are as follows (Bernard, 1988:211-216):

- Silent probe - this technique consists of just remaining quite or occasionally making some positive verbal sounds, and waiting for a respondent to continue after the initiation.
- Neutral probe - this technique of probing consists of simply repeating the last thing a respondent has said, and asking him/her to continue. This is helpful when the respondent describes a process or event.
- Grand tour - asking long question that requires continuous response or to make the opening question such as to help to "break the ice" is used in this technique.
- Leading questions - this technique, though discouraged, is necessary with certain respondent to coax them into talking.

- Phrased assertion - this consists of acting as if the interviewer already knows something to get people open up.
- At times garrulous and glib respondents have to interrupted gracefully and direct them to the main theme of the topic under investigation.

During the second phase I wanted to collect in-depth data on the various aspects of villagers. That is why, before going to the village for this phase I had drawn outlines of the work to be done during the entire period of second phase. The information, which I wanted to collect during this phase, were various aspects of property distribution, kinship network, marriage, divorce, separation, kinship terminology, genealogies of village *gushtis* (patrilineal lineage) etc. During my stay in Srirampur, I visited its neighbouring villages a number of times so that I could get wider knowledge regarding inter-village kinship and marriage networks as well as relationships by mixing with a large number of people. I visited Lakshmikol about seven kilometres from the study village several times. The office of Baraigram Union Parishad is located in Lakshmikol. The *tehsil* office (i.e., the office of the revenue collector) of this union is also located there. I visited the Union Parishad office to see the records of the Marriage Register, and to that of the *tehsil* to gather information about landholdings of the village households. I got almost all the information regarding landholdings from the *tehsil* office, but unfortunately, I could not get all the information about the marriages in the village. One of the *mohila* (woman) members of Baraigram Union Parishad, Rani Khatun suggested me to go to Baraigram upazila (sub-district) office to collect data on marriage registration. The upazila office in Bonpara was of much help to me in getting information regarding data on marriages in Srirampur. However, I compared those marriage data with my data collected from the study village, all these secondary data from Lakshmikol revenue office Baraigram upazila office regarding landholdings and in Natore district. Almost all these sittings helped me to gather valuable knowledge on the life of the people of the northern part of Bangladesh in general and of Srirampur village in particular.

I faced some difficulties in getting information on different aspects, such as age, (both males and females), marriages and divorce of men of the study village, distribution of property, genealogies of village *gushtis* (Patrilineal lineage) etc. It was found that most of the respondents could not tell the exact date of birth of their household members. Similarly, when I wanted to know about the size of landholdings and distribution of parental property, the villagers could not always give correct answer. As regards marriages, some of the villagers were not willing to tell the exact number of their marriages, especially if the secondary marriages were after divorce of their existing wives. They thought that disclosure of such information before an outsider would damage their prestige. I had to confront the same difficulties while dealing with issues, i.e., divorce, *mohar* (bride's money), marriage registration, separation etc. In order to overcome these difficulties and to record correct information in my field note books, I had to cross-check the data on marriage and divorce from various sources, such as office of the Union Parishad, The Marriage Registrar of the village, Bariagram upazila office, and my key informants.

During my stay in Srirampur I was also invited to various socio-religious ceremonies that happened in the village. I attended four marriage ceremonies. Two of them were of the sons of the village, and the other two were of the daughters of the village. On this marriage occasions, I was always served food with *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks*. Once I attended the *musalmani* (circumcision) of a boy in a household. In addition, I also participated in one *milad*, one *wazmahafhil* (religious campaign) and one *jarigan* (folksong). I also attended two "Eid punarmilanianusthans" (Festivals after *Edul-Fitre* and *Eidul-Azha*). One of them was arranged by the members of *Shahid Nazmul Haque Sreete Shangha* after a day of *Edul-Fitre* at *Purathan hat* (old village market) and the other was arranged by "Habibabad Tarun Shangha" after *Edul-Azha* at the foot ball play ground near *natun hat* (new village market). During my stay at the

village, one adult man died and I attended his *namaz-e-zanaza* (pre-burial prayer). I did not face any difficulty in communicating the local terms used by the villagers because I had previous acquaintance with the local terms of the village people. During the informal discussions the villagers expressed themselves on various issues connected with valuable in-depth experience of rural life, which has been very much useful for my analysis. G. W. Shaffer and R. S. Lazarus (1952) state that in-depth interview, as means of evaluating personality and attitude, lays somewhat midway between observational behaviour study and self-report techniques. The interview is more flexible because the examiner can respond to the subjects in terms of what has been said and may vary the approach or question to suit the reaction of the subjects. The interviewer is also able to note the expression of emotion and the inconsistencies of the interviewer is also able to note the expression of emotion and the inconsistencies of the interviewer is also able to note the expression of emotion and the inconsistencies of statements that suggest something deeper than the superficial information which the subject provide with his/her words. As stated earlier, there are two *hats* (village markets) in the village where a number of tea stalls have been set up. I visited these two hats, whenever I got an opportunity and gossiped with various sections of people at the tea stall. My open discussion with the people of tea stalls generated some important information about the past and present of the village. In this connection Bhuiyan rightly observes, "Gossiping with the people in tea-stalls and other places was also of much use, because in gossips people were more open minded than they were in other situations. If I have developed any insight regarding the life of the people in the village, the contribution of gossips and informal discussions was more than that of anything else" (1978:83). However, the difference of opinions among various sections of people participating in

group discussion about any even or issue of their lives, helped me a lot in discovering a large number of secret things about the village as well as its people respectively. In fact, the natural group exists apart from the study within the natural context of the research setting. Because of the embeddedness of the respondents in on going life, discussions with natural group often do not allow the regulated format and procedure of focus group and they depart from the focus group tenet that participants should not know one another. It is mentionable that an interview guide is loosely followed but deviations and omissions often occur and responses are usually recorded by note and not audiotape. In this context, I agree with Coreil when he states, "the information gathered by informal natural group discussion can validate, complement and supplement the findings gathered by other methods. It was expected that the findings from natural group discussions would validate, complement, and supplement some of the findings from both interview methods" (1995:193-196). Therefore, behavioural scientists often use the natural group discussions in their studies. In my study, I have also conducted natural group discussions in several times. It should be noted that at the time of conducting the natural group discussions non-probability sampling technique was followed to select the participants. Any member (male or female) who found the conversation interesting joined in these discussions. After taking the informed verbal consent of the respondents, a conversation or discussion was initiated on the variables of the study interest.

However, all the necessary steps have been taken to be specific about the concerned issues and about the participation of kinsmen with the community affairs and at the same time, it is fair to admit here that since the present study is dealt with on several sensitive issues, sometimes the fictitious names of the informants have been used to protect the interests of the villagers.

1.6 The Structure and Organization of the Study

The present study is an endeavour to explore socio-economic role of kinship organization in a Bangladeshi village. The village kinship organization and its socio-economic role (i.e., social, political, religious and socio-cultural roles) as well as the several related aspects have been discussed in this study. However, the study has been divided into seven Chapters: The first Chapter deals with a discussion on the introduction of the study including the research methods. The description of Bangladesh and Natore district, objectives of the study, the structure and organization of the study and limitation of the study have also been included in this chapter. Then a short description of the study village, its regional surroundings, the ecological as well as socio-cultural background information on the village has been provided in Chapter 2. The landownership pattern, the land distribution and other facilities prevailing in the village have also been discussed in this Chapter. The nature of kinship organization in rural Bangladesh is discussed in Chapter 3, which covers kinship and its several dimensions including residential groups. It also includes the formation of kinship relations in the society. The marriage practice in the village is discussed in Chapter 4, which is one of the important aspects of social life. An attempt has been made to discuss the pattern of kinship terminologies and addressing as well as referring forms prevailing in rural Bangladesh in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 is a discussion about the major role of kinship organization and its impact on some socio-economic sectors (i.e., economic, political, religious, socio-cultural sectors, etc.) in the society. This Chapter also shows the importance of kinship relationships in various sectors of rural social life. And finally, Chapter 7 is the conclusions in regards to the summary and findings of this research.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

An attempt has been made to find out the socio-economic role of kinship organization in a village in Bangladesh. Kinship organizations have been dealt in relation with three basic concepts i.e. household, family and lineage. The socio-economic role of kinship organization has also been dealt in relation to economic, political, religious and socio-cultural sectors. On the other hand, an attempt has also been made to exercise the popular beliefs, rituals, religious practices as well as the relatives' network and its impact on their socio-cultural changes. It is beyond doubt that a study cannot cover all aspects of a problem hence all the

functions of kinship organization have not been included. The present study was done covering about one year fieldwork- a period of observation that cannot allow a researcher to present a detailed analysis of the kinship network, a vital aspect of the society, in relation to its socio-economic role.

Srirampur, a village under study was entirely a Muslim populated village and, therefore, I limited myself and emphasized much to studying the Muslim community as regards kinship and its socio-economic impact in the society. At the same time, however, during the field investigation between 2001-2002, I had to face the necessity of gathering information from records. But records and documents required for constructing the history of the village overtime were in short supply in the Union Parishad, *tehsil* office and the district collectorate.

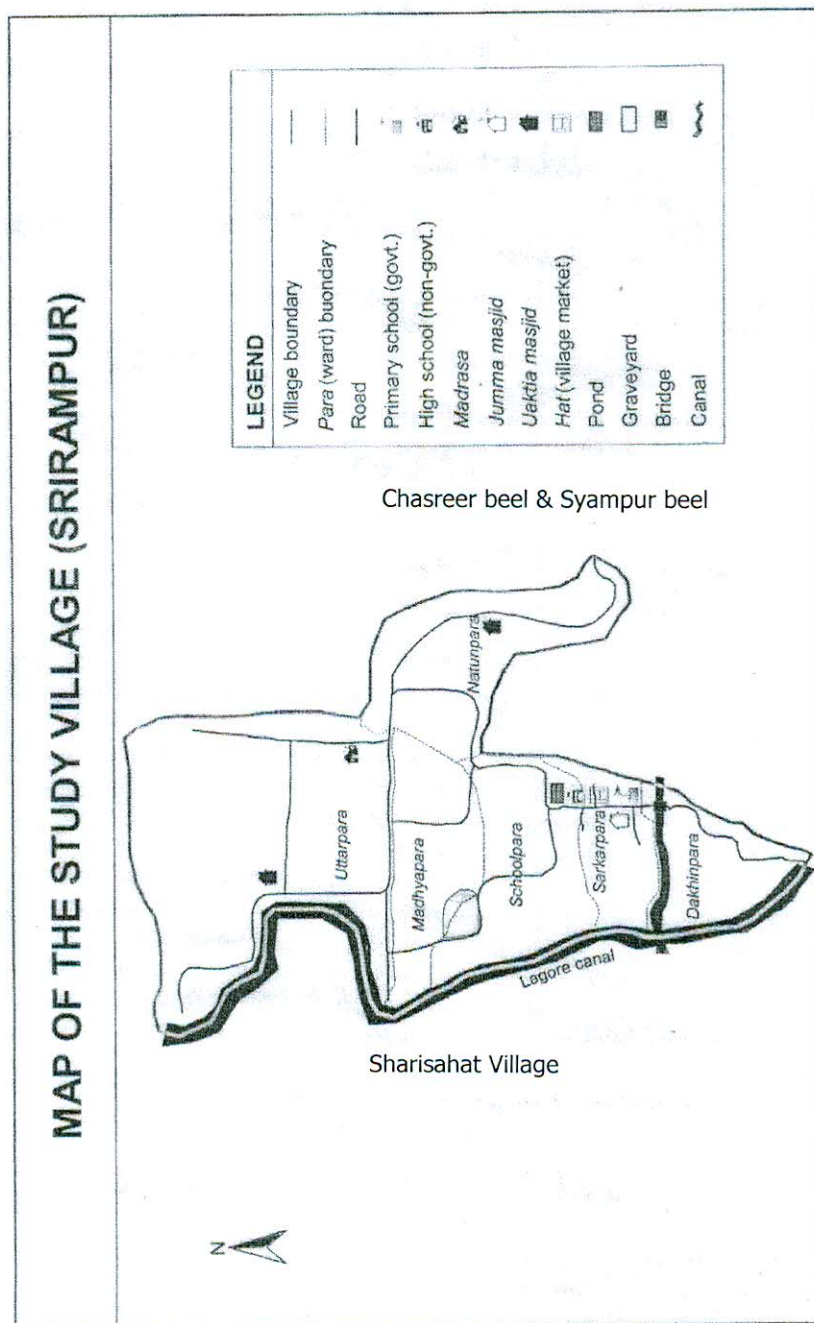
Since the present study is especially dealt with kinship and its socio-economic role covering on several sensitive issues, such as marriage, *mohar*, divorce, separation, politics and with other community affairs, I had to travel and gossip with victimized couple and with the leaders on several occasions following 'the strategy of neutrality'.

In spite of the above limitations, the present work is a humble attempt to study the kinship and its several aspects as well as to investigate their socio-economic role in rural Bangladesh.

Kinship system of rural Bangladeshi community is always coincided with the culture of its people, which gives expression to various kinds of social institutions, such as the institutions of family, marriage and inheritance. In this way, kinship system always gives a description of a social group of lexical items and their relation to the cultural and social patterns of the rural society in Bangladesh. In fact, the social institution and organization like kinship has considerable social significance for the betterment of rural community in Bangladesh society. It is also very much helpful in strengthening each other and protecting themselves in times of needs and crisis. However, in this Chapter, a brief description of kinship and its types have been presented from social anthropological and sociological point of view for getting clear sense on kinship and its several aspects. Other inevitable things i.e., objectives of the study, methods and techniques of data collection, review of some works on kinship, marriage, household, family etc., scope and limitation of the study have also been included at this Chapter.

Map 4

Location Map of the Study Village (Srirampur)



Chapter 2

The Study Village, Ecological Settings and Socio-cultural Background

2.1 General Description of the Study Village

Srirampur, the selected village is a big village in size, located in the north-eastern corner of Baraigram upazila. The study village is surrounded by *Lagore* (canal) on the west, *Chasreer beel* & *Syampur beel* on the east. Dighalkandi village is on the south and a highway (Bonpara-Hatikumrol Road) is on the northern part of the village. Of the several unions that make up Baraigram upazila, Baraigram is one of the biggest unions of the upazila. It consists of 36 villages or *mauzas* including the study village. Administratively, Srirampur is under the jurisdiction of Baraigram union in Baraigram upazila in Natore district. It should be mentioned that the union forms the lowest level of civil administration in our country and its formal structure is composed of one chairman, nine male and three female members. However, the Chairman and the twelve members are directly elected by adult franchise by the common people.

A *gram* (village) has no official recognition and thus has no clear-cut boundaries. Whereas the *mauza* and census village are recognised by the government and their boundaries are clearly demarcated. The boundaries of Srirampur and of all nearby villages or *beels* are not officially demarcated. The villagers recognise the village boundaries by using their own landmarks. The village has no metalled road by which the villagers can easily communicate. A *katcha* road through Dighalkandi village goes in the village and linked with the highway (Bonpara-Hatikumrol Road) and also a *katcha* road from western part is connected with the village. Srirampur is about 7 miles east from Baraigram *thana* headquarters. Manikpur-Srirampur *katcha* road and Lautir *moore* (turning point of road) -Srirampur *katcha* road are practically the only means of communication by land to and from the village. Most of the villagers go through the road on foot, as the roads are *katcha*. Sometimes, van-rickshaws and

bicycles play on those roads. When the villagers want to communicate with the *thana* headquarters, they have to reach to Baraigram-Gurudaspur Road or Baraigram-Jonail Road on foot or by van-rickshaw or by bicycle then they get the facilities of auto-rickshaws, bus etc. The village is situated in a low-lying area and water comes from eastern region of the country during the monsoon. But during the rainy season the village is connected with Baraigram-Gurudaspur metalled road particularly with Manikpur *moore* by boat service. It is mentionable here that during the rainy season or monsoon (May-July) the boat is very important means of communication and the village becomes connected with several places by boat.

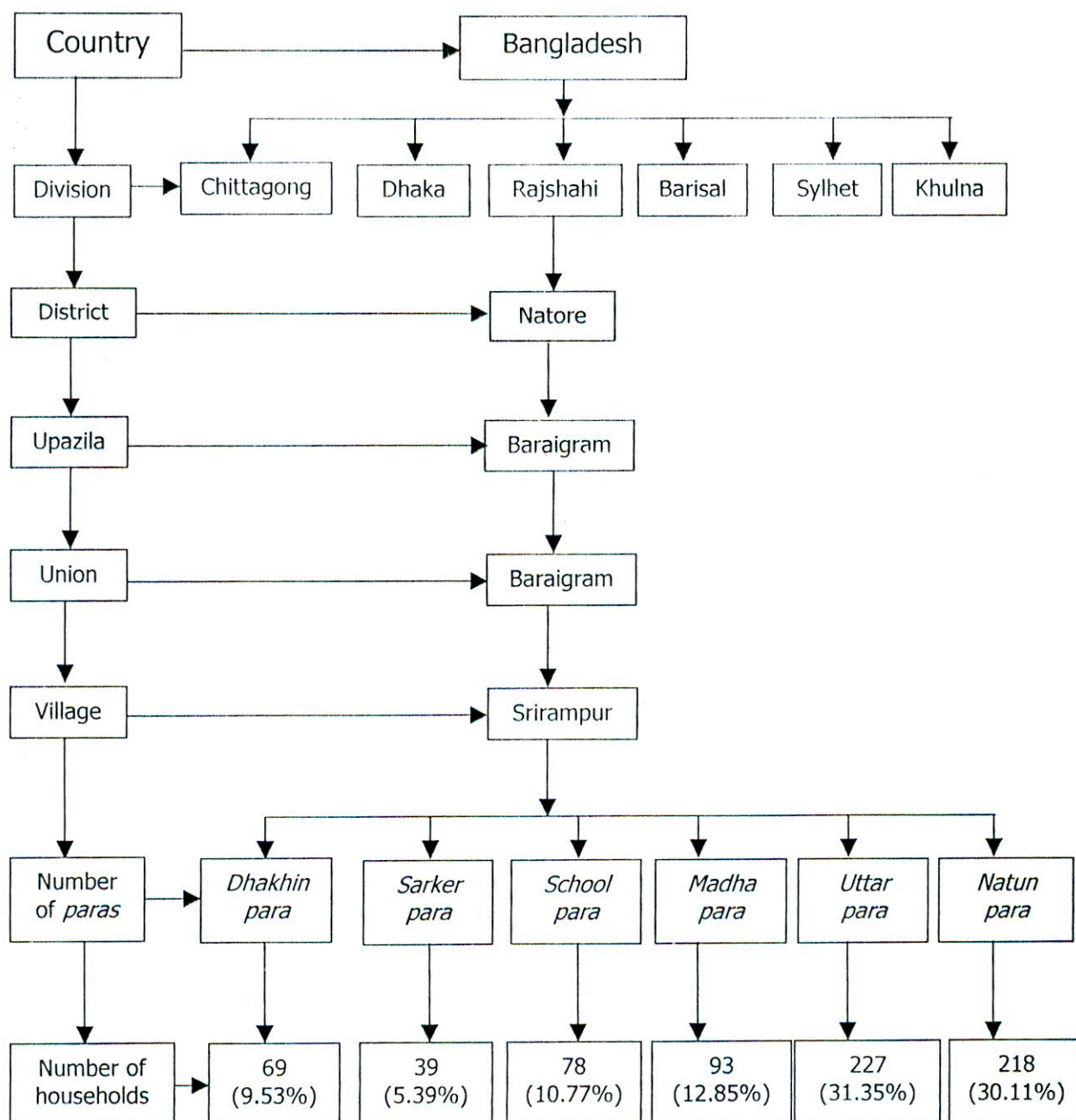
The climate of the study area is subtropical. There are traditionally six seasons in Bangladesh (Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, 2000:XX). Among all the seasons summer and winter are the two popular seasons, which bring the married daughters to their parental homes for enjoying mangoes as well as rice cakes respectively.

The villagers are Muslims. The language of the people of the village is mostly a dialect of Bengali. Only the educated and modern people use standard Bengali language during the time of speaking among themselves. It should be noted that in the realm of kinship vocabulary the people of the study village have built up over their main dialect structure - a fine super structure with word-elements borrowed from a number of languages including Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi and Arabic.

The main occupation of the people in Srirampur is agriculture while fishing, business etc. are the minor occupations of the villagers. But agriculture, fishing and other means of earning have not been technologically developed here. The land of this area is flat and fertile also. During the monsoon most of the cultivable land goes under water and the *katcha* roads become muddy. The housing pattern of Srirampur is dispersed and the village consists of six *paras* (wards) namely, *Dhakinpara* (South Ward), *Sarkarpara*, *Schoolpara*, *Modhapara* (Middle Ward) *Natunpara* (New Ward), *Uttarpara* (North Ward). The

administrative structure of the country has been presented in the following page on a chart, which clearly gives explanation the details structure of the administration.

National and Regional Administrative Structure of the Study Village



Dhakhinpara (South Word) is on the southern part of the village and it touches Dhighalkandi village. It is also dispersed by a small canal, which is linked with

Lagore (canal) to Sayampur *beel*. A few people of the village have constructed their settlement in this *para*. It should be mentioned here that most of the people of this *para* (ward) migrated from nearby villages and most of them are fishermen. The others are in different occupations. The houses of this *para* are scattered in small groups, such as some houses are located beside the *Lagore* canal covered by a dense network of foliage or by another materials, some are also near the paddy field that touches the Sayampur *beel* to the east. There are 69 households in this *para* and the total number of people living here is 306.

Sarkarpara is small in size, inhabited by 156 people in 39 households. The land level of this *para* is high as well as plain. Though this *para* is small in size, peasants, doctors, teachers, shopkeepers and other government and non-government officers inhabit here. The dominate kinship groups of this *para* play a vital role in the village social structure. The government primary school, *jumma*-mosque and *hat* (village market) are situated in this *para*. *Sarkerpara* is comparatively developed to its proximity to the forces of modernisation and the leaders of this *para* maintain direct links with the development officers as well as representatives. The leaders of *Sarkerpara* are also key figures in the community as a whole and they constitute the cardinal force for village development. Thus they are very influential in the *gram samaj* (village council). It is mentionable that *para* is a core *samaj*, the leaders of which maintain a village defence for the security of life and property of the village people. Since 1973 under the initiative of the *para* leaders, "*Habibabad Tarun Sangha*," a club had been established nearby school field, thus giving the scope for games and sports to the village people.

Schoolpara is medium in size inhabited by 303 people in 78 households. The land level of this *para* is not too low, but during the monsoon the floodwater invades some *baris* of this *para*. It is popularly called *Schoolpara* but previously its name was *Jolapara*. This is because at one time some *karigor* (weaver) families made their settlements here. Subsequently, the others of the village called that *para* as a *Jolapara*. But later on it has been changed into *Schoolpara*.

The settlements of the *para* lie on the west side of the *katcha* (non-metalled) road. There is a village graveyard on the western side of this *para* and a large *beel* on the east.

Madhapara is medium both in respect of population as well as territory. The total number of people living in this *para* is 422 by 93 households. The land level of this *para* is not low but somewhere its roads are not so high, yet it is invaded by floodwater during monsoon and the people living here face difficulty to move on the road. There is a *uaktia* mosque (the mosque where the pious Muslims offer their daily prayers) but they go to *Sarkerpara jumma* mosque to attend the *jumma* prayer (weekly congregation payer held in *jumma-masjid* every Friday). However, the settlements of the *para* lie on the both sides of the *katcha* road and it is linked with *Natunpara* on the east.

Uttarpara is the biggest *para* in size, where reside 955 people in 227 households. It is inhabited by peasants, weavers, teachers, doctors, shopkeepers, Union Parishad members etc. *Uttarpara* has two parts. One part included 87 households collected together in the closest settlements and thus constituting like a hamlet. People call this area as Gauripur. This section of *Uttarpara* is situated on the northern side of *Puratan hat* (old village market). The settlement pattern is a reflection of their distinct social organization. This section of *Uttarpara* is also called *phagalpara* (mad ward/*para*). Another part of *Uttarpara* consists of 140 households that are grouped into several *baris* and thus dispersed in a larger settlement. It has been observed at the *para* level that the dominant kinship group of this section owning the farm and occupies a large portion of the settlement. However, the *Puratan hat* (old village market) separates *Uttarpara* into two parts, which has also been discussed earlier.

Natunpara (new ward) is the second largest portion of the village, which has 218 households. The total number of people living here is 896. It should be noted that at the early stage a few people of the village constructed their settlements here as it is a low-lying area surrounding the large paddy field but

gradually due to the increasing population of the village they have developed their settlements here and they named it as *Natunpara*. No records or documents about the settlement history of this *para* are available in the Union Parishad or in any local government offices. The information about the settlement in *Natunpara* has been drawn from conversation with elderly people of both *Natunpara* and another *paras* of the village. It appears from their statements that many people from other *paras* of the village constructed settlements here and they named it as a *Natunpara* (new-ward). However, the houses are scattered on the both sides of *katcha* road that touches the barrage to the east on the both sides of the *para*. That is why; the settlements of this *para* lay in two lines of the *katcha* (non-metalled) road that links with *Madhapara* to the west.

There is only one playground of the village, which is located by the side of this main *katcha* road. The government primary school in the village is on the northern side of this playground. Recently, a *hat* (village market) has been settled on the same side of this playground. The high school is also located by the side of this road. Besides these two main roads, the village has also some other narrow *katcha* roads around households, *baris* as well as *paras* for the use of the people of the above mentioned groups. It is mentionable that these roads are mostly used to go to the pond, canal, garden, paddy field as well as other houses.

2.2 Housing Pattern of the Village

The housing pattern of the village defers from one *para* to another. In *Dhakhinpara* it reflects the low standard of most of its dwellers. The houses are mostly huts with thatched roofs of straw and the families maintaining a low standard of living find it hard to build their houses with tin roofs. But one part of *Dhakinpara* is enough develop in housing pattern. It is found that a handful of wealthy kinship groups have their houses brick built construction with tin roofs.

However, among the people of small and solvent lineages in *Dhakinpara*, the size of the courtyard containing houses is small and the rooms are also small there. This type of household is a clear indicator to the poverty of the household owners, in marked contrast to the large courtyard and rooms of well-to-do families. There are many brick built houses in other parts of the village, belonging to the families having high economic as well as political status. In most places of the study village the houses are situated around a square courtyard and surrounded by wall. In many places one household is separated from another by wall successively around the house. Some *baris* maintain a *Baithakkhana* (sitting room), which is open to any new comer. The dominate *baris* maintain a big *Baithakkhana* including the room for lodging, the *jaigir* (house tutor) and for the servants. Sometimes the important meeting of the *samaj* and *darbar* (gatherings of people to mitigate the conflict/dispute) are held in the *Baithakkhana*.

Both *katcha* (non-metalled) and *pakka* (metalled) houses are found in Srirampur. It is found in the village that the *katcha* houses are made of wood, bamboo and different types of thatches. *Chapra* (one roofed), *dochala* (two roofed) and *chouchala* (four roofed) *ghars* (houses) are also found in the village. A *chapra* is a weak house, which is usually made of bamboo and thatches or tree leaves. Sometimes, iron corrugate sheets are used instead of thatches or tree leaves for making *chapra ghar* (house). The *dochala ghar* is a hut of bamboo posts, bamboo frame and thatches or tree leaves. Now a days, the villagers also use iron corrugate sheets to make *dochala* house. A *chouchala ghar* is generally made of wooden posts and frame, covered with iron corrugate sheets or thatches. On the other hand, the *pakka* (metalled) house is made of bricks, cement and iron rod. The villagers call it *dalan* (building) *ghar* and consider it as a high quality house. The floor of this house is laid with bricks and the brick walls are plastered with cements and sand. Sometimes, the wall is coloured with white or in any other colours. In most cases a *pakka* (metalled) *ghar* has more than one rooms.

A household (both *katcha* and *pakka*) may have one or more than one houses, which belong to a housing complex consisting of two or more houses. The house/houses may be used for different purposes, such as residence, cooking, cattle keeping, poultry rearing, store room, waiting room etc. The number of houses in a household depends on some factors such as-marital status of the inmates, their social status, wealth, numerical strength of the household etc. For the above cases the villagers need more houses in their housing complex. It should be noted here that a housing complex is composed of two or more houses, which has a demarcation of boundary for clear differentiation. Table 2.1 shows the classification of houses by house types and *para* (ward) wise demarcation in Srirampur.

Table 2.1
Classification of Houses by House Type and *Para* (Ward) Wise in Srirampur

Name of <i>Para</i> (Ward)	No. of Households	<i>Katcha</i>	<i>Pakka</i>	Total Houses
<i>Dhakinpara</i>	69	151	6	157
<i>Sarkerpara</i>	39	123	8	131
<i>Schoolpara</i>	78	213	10	223
<i>Madhapara</i>	93	268	13	281
<i>Uttarpara</i>	227	574	42	616
<i>Natumpara</i>	218	449	27	476
Total	724	1778	106	1884

A large number of households possess each more than one *ghar* (house). Since the head of the household may own one or more *katcha* or *pakka* buildings, the total number of household own 1884 houses. Out of the total houses 157 are in *Dhakinpara* of which 151 are *katcha* and 6 *pakka*. In *Sarkerpara* out of 123 houses 8 are *pakka* and 131 *katcha*. In the *Schoolpara* there are 223 houses of which 213 are *katcha* and 10 are *pakka*. Similarly, in *Madhapara* 268 are *katcha* and 13 are *pakka*, in *Uttarpara* 42 are *pakka* and 574 are *katcha*. In *Natunpara*, out of 476 houses 449 are *katcha* and 27 are *pakka*.

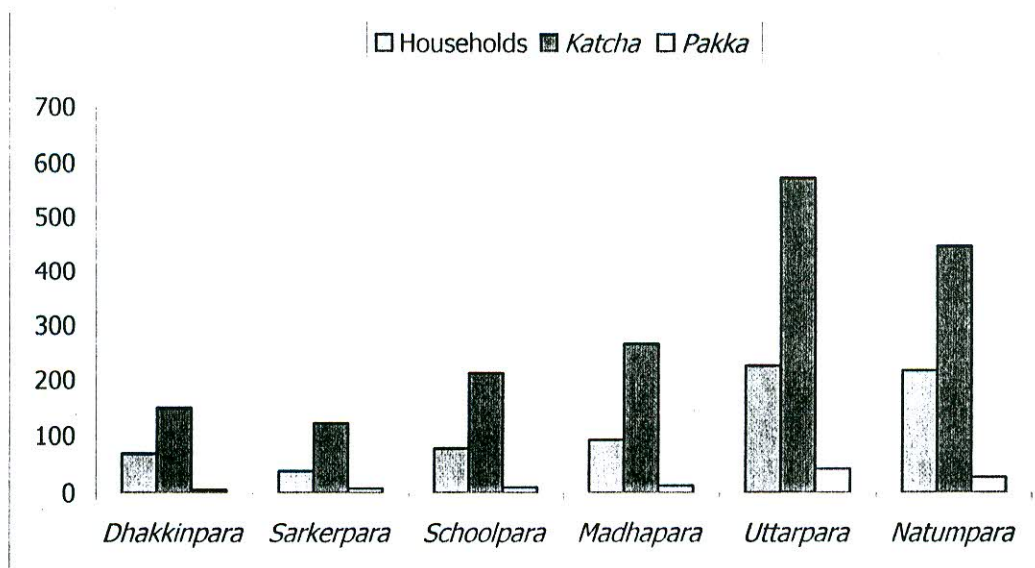


Figure 2.1 : Bar diagram for Table 2.1

2.3 Some Information on Village Population

During the fieldwork in 2002 the study village had a total number of population 3035. Of the total population in the village, 1564 (51.53%) are males and 1471 (48.47%) females respectively. It is mentionable that all the people in the study village are Muslims. Like other villages of the district, Srirampur is densely populated. The size of an average household in Srirampur is 4.2 whereas the size of an average household in Bangladesh is 4.8 (BBS; 2001:7). So the average number of household member in Srirampur is almost equal to national average. The total number of households of the village is 724.

Table 2.2
Distribution of the Population of Srirampur by Words/ *Paras* & Sex

Wards/ <i>Paras</i>	No. of Households	Males	Females	Total
<i>Dakhinpara</i>	69	161	145	306
<i>Sarkerpara</i>	39	83	73	156
<i>Schoolpara</i>	78	157	146	303
<i>Madhapara</i>	93	218	204	422
<i>Natunpara</i>	218	458	435	896
<i>Uttarpara</i>	227	487	468	955
Total	724	1564	1471	3035

Of the total population in the village, 306 (male 161 and female 145) live in *Dakhinpara*, 156 (male 83 and female 73) in *Sarkerpara*, 303 (male 157 and female 146) in *Schoolpara* whereas 422 (male 218 and female 204), 896 (male 458 and female 435) and 955 (male 487 and female 468) people live in *Madhapara*, *Uttarpara* and *Natunpara* accordingly. So, the highest number of population belongs to *Uttarpara* while *Natunpara* is second, *Madhapara* third, *Dakhinpara* fourth, *Schoolpara* fifth and *Sarkerpara* is the smallest *para* in terms of the size of population.

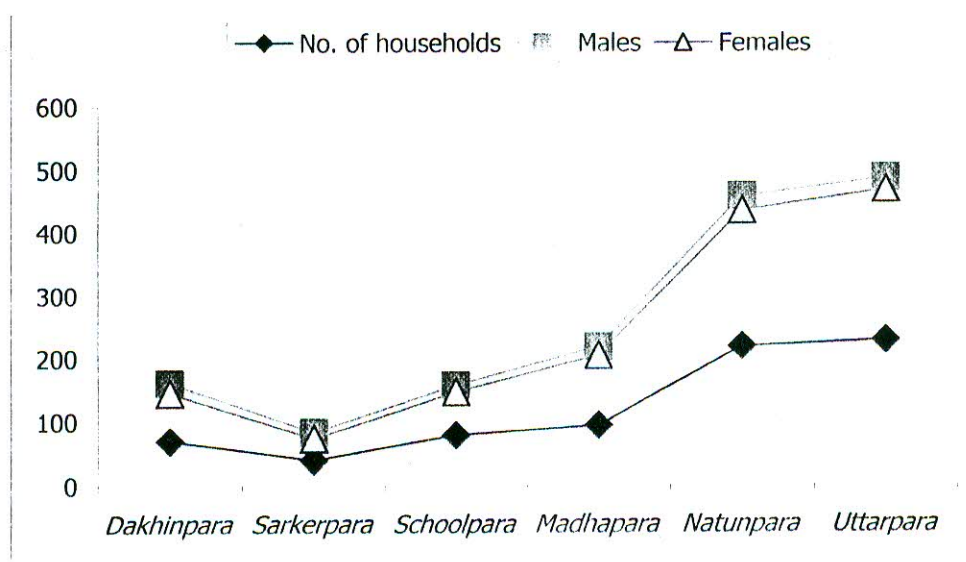


Figure 2.2 Line graph for Table 2.2

However, the number of males per 100 females in Srirampur as well as the wider regional units in Bangladesh is showed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3
Distribution of Males per 100 Females in Srirampur and Wider Units in Bangladesh

Units	Sex Ratio (M/F)
Bangladesh	103.8
Natore District	104.00
Srirampur	106.32

Sources : Population Census, Preliminary Report, August, 2001 for Bangladesh; Banglapedia, 2003 for Natore district and Fieldwork, 2002 for Srirampur.

Table 2.3 shows that the number of males per 100 females in Bangladesh is 103.8 whereas in Natore district is 104.00 and in Srirampur is 106.32 in 2002. The sex ratio in Srirampur is thus, considerably higher than that of Bangladesh and Natore district.

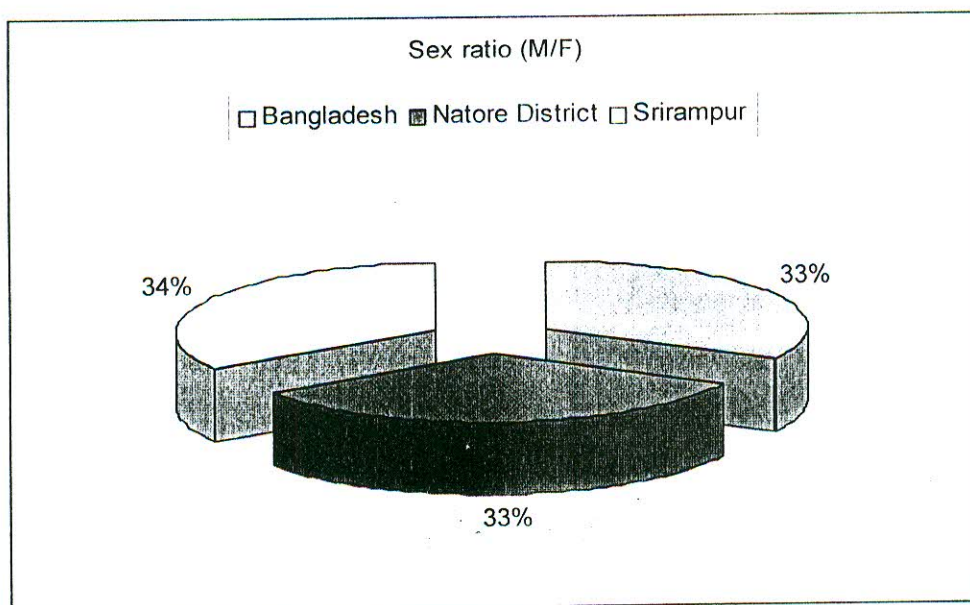


Figure 2.3 Pie chart for Table 2.3

2.4 Corporate Institutions of The Village

Srirampur is a *mauza* as well as a census village. It's J. L. No. is 138 and Geo-code No. is 955 (viz., Base Map, *Thana* Baraigram, Natore). The village is a part of the local self-government institution named Baraigram Union Parishad with 36 other villages (The Union Parishad Office, 2002). The Union Parishad is the lowest level of government administrative unit in the country.

There are two schools and one *madrassa* in the village. Out of these two educational institutions, one is a government primary school and another is a high school. These are functioning with the co-operation and the help of the people of Srirampur and nearby villages. The managing committee of the three educational institutions consists of members from the villagers. Besides, there are four schools, which are run by BRAC playing a vital role in educating the poor children of Srirampur. There are four *punjana masjids* (the mosque where villagers offer their daily prayers) and one *jumma masjid* (where villagers offer their special weekly prayer on Friday in addition to their daily prayers). The *jumma masjid* is located in *Sarkerpara*. The inhabitants of this *para* (ward) and some from *Madhapara* and *Schoolpara* come regularly to offer their daily prayers. But the villagers from all *paras* come here for offering their weekly prayers. Other three *punjana masjids* are situated in *Dhakkinpara*, *Uttarpara* and *Natunpara*. The inhabitants of the individual *para* offer their daily prayers at these *punjana masjids*. The villagers also use those *masjids* (mosques) as a *maktob* (religious learning centre). The children of the village come to those *maktobs* or *masjids* in the morning and at the afternoon for learning the Holy *Quran* (the Holy book of Islam) and other religious rules.

There are two registered clubs in Srirampur, one is *Habibabad Tarun Shangha* and the other is *Najmul Haque Sreetee Shangha*. The first one is situated near government primary school and the second one is near *Puratan hat* (old village market). These two clubs are very important organizations for the development of the youth of Srirampur. The village has a playground, which is located on the

southern side of government primary school. Many matches as well as cultural functions are arranged throughout the assistance of nearby villagers including the people of Srirampur.

Srirampur has several joint institutions as well as activities with nearby villages, e.g., Sharishahat, Taranagar, Dhighalkandi and Rameswarepur. Among the joint institutions 'Dhighalkandi Aleem Madrasha', 'Taranagar Madrasa', Rameswarepur High School are mention worthy. Many students from Srirampur study at these institutions. The managing committee of these institutions is constituted from the people of Srirampur and surrounding villages. The people of Srirampur eagerly co-operate in the functioning of the institutions. Dhighalkandi Madrasa is well known to the people of the nearby villages. The annual religious discussion is arranged at the *madrassa moydhan* (field). The villagers of Srirampur and other nearby villages come here to participate in this religions event.

Regarding economic institutions, no big, small or cottage industries is found in Srirampur. But it has two *hats* or *bazars* (village market) one is *Puratan hat* and the others is *Natun hat*. These two *hats* cannot fulfil commercial needs of the village people. So the people of Srirampur mainly depend on other village markets, especially for selling and purchasing food grains and others necessities.

2.5 Roads and Communications

The study village is located in Baraigram Union. It is situated in the eastern part of the union. The communication system of the village is backward. There are two main *katcha* (non-metalled) roads for inter-communication in the village. These two main *katcha* roads originate from the two different roads, one from the Baraigram-Gurudaspur Road and the other from the Lautir *moore* (turning point of the road). The first passes through *Uttarpara* (North Ward) and the second one runs through the borderline of *Dhakinpara* (South Ward), *Sarkerpara*, *Schoolpara* and *Madhapara* and lastly through *Uttarpara* it reaches to the highway (Bonpara-Hatikumrol Road). No metalled road or herringbone

road crossed the village. During the rainy season, a waterway through *lagore* canal from Manikpur *moore* (turning point of road) to the west and through the Sayampur *beel* with the eastern sides becomes effective. No telephone facility prevails in Srirampur village. But now-a-days Grameen Phone (GP) mobile facilities are playing a vital role for communicating within home and abroad. A temporary sub-post office is located in the study village. As the village is under rural electrification, there are some TV sets and are a large number of Radio sets. So, the villagers get enough facilities to enjoy the programmes, broadcasts through both TV and Radio. A few number of newspaper readers are found in the study village.

2.6 Health and Sanitation Facilities

The public health facilities in the village are not satisfactory at all. There is an 'Upazila Health Complex' (UHC), which is located near the Union Parishad Headquarter but the health complex is about 7 miles away from the village. There is also a community clinic in the village. The health visitors are hardly seen in the village. The Health Assistant of the Upazila Health Complex visits the community clinic once or twice in a week. So many people of the village mainly depend on the quacks and *kobiraj* (a person who practices ayurvedic medicine). However, there are several dispensaries in two *hats* and the villagers may take primary treatment and medicine from these dispensaries. It should be noted here that there are several NGOs, which offer health and family planning services to the villagers.

Sanitary latrines are hardly found in the village. Most of the households in study village cannot afford water-sealed latrine for defecation because of their poor socio-economic condition. The well-to-do villagers use sanitary latrines. Most of the villagers still use *katcha* latrines. Moreover, many people are seen leaving

faeces on both sides of the roads during the rainy season. The type of toilets being used by the members of every household is actually an important indicator of assessing health care facilities. Many houses in the study village do not have bathroom facilities where they can take bath and wash their clothes, they use ponds or tube wells for the same purposes.

Table 2.4
Distribution of the Households on the Basis of Various Toilet Facilities

Types of Toilets	Number of Households	Percentage
Sanitary Latrine	48	6.63
<i>Katcha</i>	308	42.54
Pit Latrine	223	30.80
Open	145	20.03
Total	724	100.00

Table 2.4 shows the type of toilets used by the respondents in the study village. It was observed that *katcha* and pit latrine were the predominant place for human waste disposal of the village households. Some other households (20.03%) use open fields, which include jungle, buses, crop field etc. for evacuation of bowel and for similar purposes. Table 2.4 shows that very few (6.63%) people in the study village have sanitary latrine in their houses. Majority of the respondents (42.54%) told that they use *katcha* latrines. The pit latrine users are 30.80%. Thus, majority of the households in Srirampur village are deprived from sanitary latrine facilities. However, the over all health and sanitation condition of Srirampur are poor and not good enough.

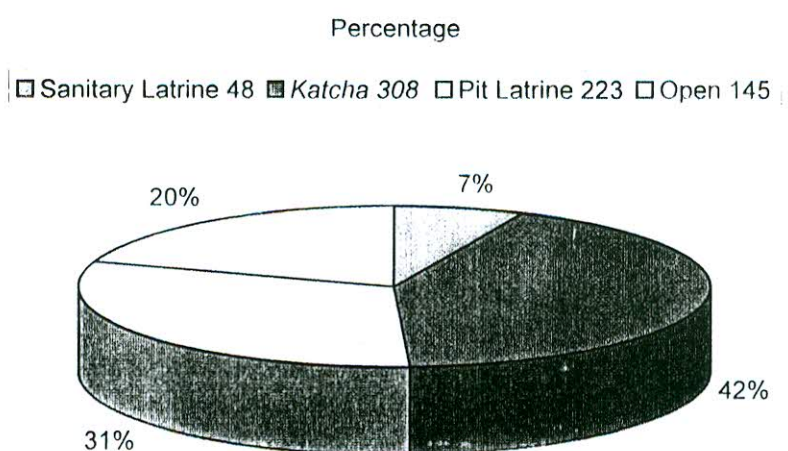


Figure 2.4 Pie chart for Table 2.4

Most of the villagers use tube-well for fresh drinking water, which indicates that they have access to pure drinking water. There are a number of private as well as public tube wells in the village for drinking water. A few *indaras* (well) have also been used for drinking and washing purpose. Most of the villagers drink tube well water but use pond's water for cooking or washing purposes. Most of the tub-wells are sunk by the villagers while a few of them are sunk by both the 'Upazila Public Health and Engineering Department' (UPHED) and the local Union Parishad. There are many ponds or swamps, which are usually used for fish production and washing.

Table 2.5
Distribution of the Households in Srirampur by the Source of Drinking Water

Sources of Drinking Water	Number of Households	Percentage
Tube well	688	95.03
Well	27	3.73
Others	9	1.24
Total	724	100.00

Table 2.5 shows that most of the people (95.03%) in Srirampur drink tube well water. Only 3.73% respondents reported that they use well-water while only 1.24% respondents reported that they use of other than tube well water and well-water, which includes, shallow machine, river, ditch etc.

2.7 The Use of Inputs, Fertilizer and Irrigation in Agriculture

There is heavy pressure on land and a great effort to utilize the land rather intensively. But most of the farmers of the study village still use traditional agricultural technology due to lack of proper knowledge on modern cultivation practices, inadequate training facilities, deficient input supply and shortages of necessary fund for investment. Cows and bullocks are used in the village as draught animals, but all cultivating households do not possess them. It is also possible for the peasant households of Srirampur to have the field preparations done by hired plough, where a few households are having this ability as a major source of income, i.e., ploughing other peoples' fields against payment.

The most important implements are *langal* (a wooden plough) with an iron, *joal* (yoke) for furrowing and cultivating the soil, *moyee* (a leveller of wood) for levelling and filling the soil, the *hasia* (a sickle) for cutting the crops and *daoli* (a hoe) and *kodal* (spade) for removing the weeds. There is no registered motor pump in the village. A good number of farmers purchased shallow tube wells and others hire them for irrigation from those persons who own them. Some other modern implements, such as harrow, sprayers etc. are owned by some villagers and those who did not own can use on hire-basis.

The farmers of Srirampur have traditionally been using organic manure called *paosh*, which is made of cow dung. In addition, chemical fertilizers like *mured* of *patash* (MP), triple super phosphate (TSP), and the Urea are used in the plants. But the bulk of chemical fertilizer used is Urea. Chemical fertilizers are now available to the villagers through the authorized dealers. These are also available in the open market due to privatisation. Along with the modern equipments many traditional and inefficient practices in the cultivation of crops persist in Srirampur.

2.8 Cultural Aspects of The Village

As mentioned earlier, Srirampur is a complete Muslim inhabited village. The villagers practice much common and ordinary folk culture with the traditional beliefs and ideas, which correspond Islamic codes of life. All the villagers of Srirampur closely live side-by side, and the relation among villagers is indeed an important factor in the rural social life. It is found in Srirampur that there are many cultural aspects, which are common among all villagers. In food habits, rice is common to all the villagers but there are significant differences in other respects. The *Baroloks* take three meals in a day and rice is the common items in all these meals. Usually they can afford fish, beef, chicken, *dal*, several varieties of vegetables etc. at their menu and during the winter season they manage the flesh of certain birds. A few of them are accustomed to take tea outside their homes, usually in the tea stalls. The villagers who are *Bhadroloks* (gentlemen) are the habitual consumers of tea. They regularly take tea both at homes and outside. The *Grihestoloks* live a simple life. Usually they cannot afford rich food i.e., fish, meat, chicken etc. at their menu. They can manage three meals a day with a simple menu, including *dal* and vegetables. They do not generally take tea. A few of them take tea outside their homes. The *Garibloks* (poor men) cannot afford rice for three meals a day. They live from hand to mouth. Most of the *Garibloks* are day labourers and they live on their daily earnings. *Pantha-bhat* (rice soaked in water which is usually cooked at the previous night) with chillies and onions is a typical breakfast for them. Generally they do not take tea. A few of them are accustomed of taking tea in the evening outside their homes.

In addition to the above mentioned eating habits, both the *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* commonly have the same style in clothing. Generally, they wear *lungi* (a cloth like skirt) as lower garment and on the upper part of the body

they combine it with *ganji* (vest) and half or full-shirt when they stay at home. When they go out from their homes usually they put on *pajama* (trousers), pants as lower garments. Some people also wear expensive *lungi* when they go outside the homes and as upper garment they put on *punjabi* (kurta) or shirt with *ganji* (vest). Sometimes, the elderly of the *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* also wear *tupis* (caps). They put on different types of shoes, *panch-sandal* (shoes with ribbon) etc. The *Grihesto* men put on *lungi* of average quality as lower garment and wear *ganji* and hang *gamcha* (a cotton cloth like towel) on the shoulder as upper garment. At the time of going outside the village, they usually put on *lungi*, *punjabi*, half or full shirt with *ganji* and wear shoes or *panch-sandal* of low quality. The *Garibloks* put on *lungi* of poor quality and combine it with low quality *ganji* or shirts. When they work on agricultural land, or on boats they hang *gamcha* on the shoulder or gird up their lions with *gamcha* but their upper body usually remains uncovered during the working hours. Apart from this, the religious leaders, such as the *mullas*, *maulavis* and *madrasa* teachers put on *tupis* (caps), *pajama* (loose trousers), *punjabi* (kurta), *lungi* as their daily dress.

The women in Srirampur commonly put on *saree* (long cotton cloth) but there are differences in the use of other garments, such as blouse, petticoat etc. The women of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* always put on *saree* with blouse as well as petticoat as their upper and lower garments respectively. Among the *Grihesto* women, some do not put on petticoat regularly but most of them always put on *saree* with blouse and petticoat as their common garments. The women who belong to the *Gariblok* wear *saree* of low quality but they do not always wear blouse and petticoat. The young girls among the *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* have the significant difference style in clothing than the aged women of the same categories. They put on a *salwar* (long loose trousers) as lower garment and the

kamij (long kurta) as upper with *orna* (scarf). It is mentionable here that the young girls of *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* sometimes wear *saree* with petticoat and blouse at home but they put on *salwar*, *kamij* and *orna* (scarf) when they go outside the village particularly to their relatives houses, educational institutes and near by towns like Baraigram, Gurudaspur, Natore, Rajshahi and so on. At the same time they use shoes, sandal and various footwear. The young girls among the *Grihestos* and *Gariblooks* usually put on *saree* and blouse, but the girls of *Gariblooks* category could not wear any footwear due to their economic hardship.

There are also differences in the use of ornaments among the women of four categories. The women of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* wear various types of gold ornaments of latest designs, such as necklace, bracelet, earrings, nose rings etc. On the other hand, a few women of *Grihesto* afford to gold ornaments. Usually they wear silver ornaments. The *Gariblok* women cannot afford the ornaments. A very few of them can use small gold and silver made ornaments. Generally, they use the ornaments made of plastic, bronze, glass etc.

As mentioned earlier, Srirampur is completely a Muslim inhabited village. Muslims give the *azan* (a public call for Muslim prayer) five times a day before the prayers. When a baby is born, the *azan* is also offered in a loud voice for the well being of the newborn baby. The Muslims also use the Persian term *khoda* in addressing God, as it is equivalent to *Allah* (God). Similarly the Arabic ward *assalamu-alaikum* is specifically used for greetings when they meet each other. At the time of greetings they raise their right hands and sometimes they shake each other hand. The villagers also try to maintain the religious code of life in their daily lives. They usually do not urinate and sleep or lie in bed with their feet in a western direction because all Muslims believe that *Qaba* (the house of God) is in the west. The Muslims choose most names from the Arabic and Persian languages because of the preference of *Perso-Arabic* wards. But

now a day, a good number of modern educated couples prefer western names for their newborn babies. Most of the women observe *purdah* (veil) by using *burqah*, *chata* (umbrella), long *orna* (scarf) etc. Aziz has also stated, "women are encouraged by religious leaders to observe seclusion form strangers" (1979:19). Women of all status try to maintain *purdah* but there are differences in the range of *purdah*. It has been observed that most of the women of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* wear *burqah* while the *Grihesto* and *Gariblok* women use *chata* (umbrella) instead of *burqah*. Some of them maintain *purdah* by covering their heads with *orna* (scarf) only.

2.9 The Village Economy

The village economy mainly depends on agriculture, as it is the main dominant economic factor of the village. Other village studies also support that the agriculture is the main occupation of villagers in Bangladesh (Bhuiyan 1978, Chowdhury 1978, Jahangir 1979, Ahmed 1983, Arefeen 1986, Rahaman 1990). It may be pointed out that apart from agriculture the village economy depends on business, fishing and on other seasonal activities, such as trading on boats during rainy season, making the fishing gears etc.

However, agriculture is the major occupation of the villagers. In Srirampur, most of the farmers cultivate several varieties of IRRI rice. Only a few villagers cultivate *aus*, *aman* and *boro*, varieties of paddy. It should be noted here that most of the cultivable land of the village is in Chasreer *beel*, Syampur *beel*, Shingir *beel*, which are also low marshes. The Chasreer *beel* is located in the east; Syampur is in the east-north corner of the village whereas Shingir *beel* is located in the west (see village map). *Aman* is one of the popular types of paddy. Some villagers cultivate it either by transplantation (*roa* sowing) or by broadcasting (scattering the seeds direct in the field). As already mentioned, all the marshes are deeply water laden the farmers cultivate the *aman* paddy

under the *chita* pattern. On the other hand, the *aus* paddy is cultivated on the upper land in the study area. This type of paddy requires marshland at considerable height and for the want of enough considerable land a few village farmers cultivate *aus* paddy. There is a small quantity of land near *Dhakkinpara* as well as *Uttarpara* of the village where *aus* paddy is cultivated. There are some places in the above mentioned marshes where a few village farmers cultivate the *boro* paddy. As a transplanted variety *boro* is planted in the month of *Agrahayan* (mid-October to mid-November) and paddy is harvested in *Chaitra* month (mid-March to mid-April).

Jute is also produced in the village to meet the domestic need as well as for cash crop. Oil-seeds, pulses, wheat etc. are also cultivated in the village. All these varieties are called *buna-fashal* (broadcasting crops). A good number of winter crops are produced in the village. The villagers call the winter crops *rabi-fashal*. Among them garlic, onion, and potato are the principal *rabi-fashal*. There is a good number of date-tress in the study village and some of the villagers make date-molasses from the date-juice. After meeting up their domestic need, rest of the molasses is also sold in the nearby markets.

Table 2.6
Distribution of Village People on the Basis of their Occupation

Occupational Category	Village People		Total	Percentage
	Male	Female		
1 Farmers	527	0	527	17.36
2 Sharecropper(s)	38	0	38	1.25
3 Agricultural Labourer	180	0	180	5.93
Agricultural Sub-total (1-3)	(745)	(0)	(745)	(24.55)
4 Small Traders (including shopkeepers)	47	0	47	1.55
5 Service Holders	53	13	66	2.17
6 Village Doctors	7	0	7	0.23
7 Tailors	8	2	10	0.33
8 Seasonal Boatmen	29	0	29	0.96
9 Rickshaw-Van Pullers	6	0	6	0.20
10 Carpenters	7	0	7	0.23
11 Fishing Gear Makers	40	12	52	1.71
12 Barbers	6	0	6	0.20
13 Fishermen	57	6	63	2.08
14 Household Workers	0	954	954	31.43
Non-agricultural Sub-total (4-14)	(260)	(987)	(1247)	(41.09)
15 Children below Five Years	254	232	486	16.01
16 Students	246	203	449	14.79
17 Beggars	5	8	13	0.43
18 Disabled	30	24	54	1.78
19 Unemployed/Elderly	24	17	41	1.35
Non-Productive Pursuits (15-19)	(559)	(484)	(1043)	(34.37)
Grand Total	1564	1471	3035	100.00

Table 2.6 presents the distribution of villagers according to their main economic activities. Out of the total population (3035), 745 (24.55%) persons are engaged in agricultural sector and the rest is in other occupational category while 1043 (34.37%) persons in the non-productive pursuits. Table 2.6 also shows that among the male working persons the highest number of persons, 745 (24.55%) are involved in agricultural sector while the rest 260 (25.87%) persons are in non-agricultural activities. In the productive category 745 (24.55%) persons are involved in agricultural sector, 47 (1.5%) persons are small traders (including shopkeepers), 66 (2.17%) persons are servicemen, 7 (0.23%) are village doctors, 10 (0.33%) are tailors, 29 (0.96%) are seasonal boatmen (during rainy season only), 6 (0.20%) are rickshaw-van pullers, 7 (0.23%) are carpenters, 52 (10.71%) are fishing gear makers, 6 (0.20%) are barbers, 63 (2.08%) are fishermen whereas 954 (31.43%) women earn their livelihood from household functioning. Out of the rest productive persons 13 women are in service holders in educational institutions and government or non-government offices. It is important to note that out of the women workers 2 women are tailors, 12 women are fishing gear makers and 6 women are living on fishing. However, in the non-productive pursuits category 486 (16.01%) persons are children below the age of 5 years, 449 (14.79%) persons are students attending secular as well as religious educational institutions, 13 (0.43%) persons are beggars, 54 (1.78%) persons are disabled due to the accident or in any other cases and 41 (1.35%) persons are not doing any work either due to their inability to work on account of old age or due to the unemployment. Thus, it is clear that the economy of Srirampur is predominantly agricultural. It is important to note that the villagers have been categorised into three stages such as; (i) agricultural sector (ii) non-agricultural sector and (iii) non-productive pursuits. This categorization is done on the basis of their principal occupation or economic activities. But it should be noted here that the people belonging to non-productive pursuits category also do some economic activities. For example, a farmer's son sometimes helps his father in agricultural lands on different activities, such as ploughing, seeding, harvesting etc.

Similarly, the young sons of traders, boatmen and weavers help their fathers in many ways. On the other hand, the female children also contribute to the household economy by assisting their parents through cattle rearing, taking care of the baby and other household activities. But it should be kept in mind that both male and female children who belong to non-productive pursuits do not contribute much to the total income of the household.

The villagers who are connected with small trading purchase varieties of goods i.e., rice, soap, oil, cigarette, pulses, betel and betel nut, red and green chillies, several varieties of vegetables etc. from the other markets and sell them in retail to the village *hats*. As mentioned earlier, 66 village people (53 males and 13 females) are engaged in salaried jobs and the nature of their jobs is teaching, government administrating, banking and the like. Besides, few people earn their livelihood by providing services as guard, military, police, NGOs workers and providing service in private sectors. There are 7 village doctors who serve in and outside the village. Most of the village doctors have their own separate dispensaries in the village *hats*. There are 10 tailors (8 males and 2 females) in the village. Each of the male tailors has a small shop in the village *hats*. The female tailors make the garments at home and sometimes they supply the readymade clothes to the shopkeepers. It should be noted that some of the tailors sometimes go to the *hats* outside the village looking for customers of their readymade clothes. Twenty-nine villagers are engaged as the seasonal boatmen during the rainy season. During this season they ply both trading boats and passenger boats. The trading boats carry jute, rice, fish, and other goods while the passenger boats carry passengers from Srirampur to other places. Six persons are plying rickshaw-van on the Baraigram-Gurudasapur Road and Baraigram-Jonail Road. Usually, they go out from their homes early in the morning and come back to their homes in the evening with their daily earnings. There are 7 people who are engaged in the occupation of carpentering. Most of the carpenters are associated with the big furniture show room as the contract labourer and some also make furniture according to the order of the villagers or

outside customers. Fifty-two persons (40 males and 12 females) are connected with the occupation of fishing gear making. Generally, they become very busy to make the fishing gears during the rainy season. Some people also make the fishing gears all the year round. Six persons work as barbers. All of them have their own separate small room, which is popularly known as *salon* in the two *hats* of the village. Some of them also go to the nearby *hats* for the earnings. There are 63 persons (57 males and 6 females) in the village who are involved with fishing. Most of the fishermen are landless. They catch fish in the low marshes or in the canal all the year round and sell them in the village *hats* or to the urban areas at a reasonable price. It is mentionable that there are 6 females in the study village who catch fish and sell it in and outside the village. Finally, of the total population of Srirampur, 954 women are engaged in household work and this is regard as the principal activity of the village women. But it is mentionable that the village women perform economic activities including post harvest activities and assisting the male members of their households in respective fields, such as making fishing gears, weaving etc. Thus the village women play a significant role in the economic activities of their respective households.

2.10 Social Differentiation among the Villagers

The differentiation among villagers is clear which is alive in economic, political and social spheres in Srirampur village. In categorising the villagers into different classes and status groups (i.e., social differentiation), it would be relevant to mention the approaches of Marx and Weber on social differentiation.

Karl Marx is the principal architect of the dialectical approach to the study of social differentiation. He propounded a wide structural theory of the society. He also equates class stratification with all the other types of differentiation systems. It should be noted that Marx considered power and status as the products of class but he does not make a distinction between 'class' and 'status'. Marx's theory of 'class' could be understood and sociologically examined as a system of

differentiation in terms of 'domination' and 'subjection' or 'effective superiority-inferiority relationships'. According to the dialectical approach of Marx, classes are basic features of social organization. Classes are the product of the process of the productive system. One class owns means of production and the other supplies the necessary human labour and services. Therefore, the basis of the differentiation system is the basic structure i.e., economy and the resulting concrete classes are Haves and Have-nots (Sharma, 1974: 6-7).

Weber's (1963: 68-70) conceptualization of social stratification started from Marxian premise, but put the Marxian approach into a larger framework by adding political and social dimensions to the discussion. Along with Marx, he recognizes the importance of economic factors as the basis of ranking, but unlike Marx he emphasizes the principle of 'exchange' in the market situation rather than the ownership of means of 'production'. Weber has made a distinction between class and status. He also points out, " It is the most elemental economic fact that the way in which disposition over material property is distributed among a plurality of people, meeting competitively in the market for the purpose of exchange, in itself creates specific life changes" (Weber, 1963). He refers to 'class situation' and 'status situation'. According to Weber, class is absolutely an economic category, a product of the 'market situation'. The 'status groups' constitute the social order based on honour. This is the way in which the social status is distributed and important in understanding the stratification system. Broadening his conceptual scheme, Weber states that, " Stratificationary status may be based on class status directly or related to it in complex ways. It is not, however, determined by this alone" (Weber, 1964:428). Thus, the concept of social status is central to Weberian analysis. According to him:

"The term social status will be applied to a typically effective claim to positive or negative privilege with respect to social prestige so far as it rests on one or more of the following basis: (a) mode of living, (b) a formal process of education which may consist in empirical or rational training and the acquisition of corresponding mode of life, (c) in the prestige of birth, or of an occupation" (Weber, 1964:40).

Weber does not mean that 'classes' and 'status groups' are independent phenomena. In fact, his theory of 'class, status, and party' corresponds with his three 'orders' in the society, e.g., the economic, the social, and the political. Power is keynote to Weberian theory of stratification. Thus, economically determined power is not always identical with the social or the legal power. Economic power on the other hand may be a consequence of power existing on other grounds. Striving for power is not always for economic well-being. It may be for its own sake and social honour. All power does not provide social honour, and power is not the only source of social honour. Thus, status is determined by the social honour one enjoys and the latter is expressed through different 'style of life'. However, it appears then that the economic basis of ranking is not isolated from the social dimension. It is intimately connected with it. This inter-connection suggests that socio-political conditions can also affect the nature of the economic response to a given situation.

Chowdhury (1978) has also mentioned three types of class in terms of ownership and non-ownership of land in a Bangladesh village, such as (i) the landowners (*malik*), (ii) sharecroppers (*bargadars*) and (iii) landless labourers (*kamlas* or *badlas*). He also divided the Muslim villagers into three categories depending on status groups i.e., *khandan* Muslims (high status Muslims), *grihastas* (low status Muslims) and *kamlas* (landless labourers).

As agriculture is the principal occupation of the majority of people in Srirampur, there is heavy pressure on land and there is an effective effort to utilize the cultivate land intensively by the villagers. They are generally pre-occupied with agriculture, land and other matters relating to or deriving from it. Most of the villagers are either entirely or partly dependent upon agriculture. The villagers belonging to different land-ownership groups can be differentiated by the extent of their land-ownership. On this basis of land ownership the villagers are graded in different categories. The Table 2.7 shows the distribution of cultivable land of the village households with average size of land held by them.

Table 2.7
Distribution of Cultivable Land among all Households in Srirampur by
Average Size of Land Held by the Head of Households (in *bighas*)

Amount of Land (in <i>Bigha</i>)	Number of Households	Percentage	Total Cultivable Land with Households	Average Size
<01	94	12.98	00. 00	0.00
01-09	471	65.06	2019.00	4.29
10-19	93	12.85	1289.00	13.86
20-29	27	3.93	721.00	26.70
30-39	15	2.07	513.00	34.20
40-49	09	1.24	395.00	43.89
50-59	07	0.97	383.00	54.71
60-69	03	0.41	190.00	63.33
70-79	03	0.41	217.00	72.33
80-89	02	0.28	165.00	82.50
Total	724	100.00	5892.00	8.14

Of the total 724 households in Srirampur, the households belonging to less than 01 *bigha* of land are 94 (12.98%) and the remaining 630 households belong to the land holding categories. The total cultivable land of the study village is 5892 *bighas*. Thus the average size of landholding in the village is 8.14 *bighas*. Out of total households 471 (65.06%) households own each between 01-09 *bighas* of land, amounting for a total 2019 *bighas* of land. Thus, the average size of land in these households is 4.29 *bighas*, 93 (12.85%) households own between 10-19 *bighas* of cultivable land, their total land amounts to 1289 *bighas* and the average size of land in these households is 13.86 *bighas*. Twenty-seven (3.93%) households own between 20-29 *bighas* of land, their total landholding is 721 *bighas* and the average size of land is 26.70 *bighas*. Fifteen (2.07%) households belong to the 30-39 *bighas* land group and the total land of these households is 513 *bighas* and the average size of the land is 34.20. Nine (1.24%) households own between 40-49 *bighas* of land and their total land is 395 *bighas*. Thus, the average size is 43.89 *bighas*, 07 (.97) households belong to the 50-59 *bighas* land groups and the total land is 383 *bighas*, the average

size of their land is 54.71, 03 (0.41%) households are in the 60-69 *bighas* land groups, their total land is 190 *bighas*. Thus the average size of land is 63.33 *bighas*. Similarly, 03 (0.41%) households also belong to the 70-79 *bighas* land groups amounting the total land 217 *bighas* and the average size of land in these households is 72.33 *bighas*. And only 02 (0.28%) households belong to the 80-89 *bighas* land groups and their land amounts are 165 *bighas*. Thus, the average size of their land is 82.50 *bighas*.

Table 2.7 shows that 94 (12.98%) households belong to the group of less than one *bigha* of land. Of the 724 households 471 (65.06%) households belong to small amount land group (01-09 *bighas*) and the remaining 159 (21.96%) households belong to different land groups and the highest amount of cultivable land 3873 *bighas* is under only 159 (21.96%) households and their average landholding is high. Thus, the difference of owning land is clear.

Most of the people of Srirampur are heavily dependent on agriculture. Among the farmers, there are two major groups i.e., (i) landowner and (ii) sharecropper. But the landowner farmers have no equal amount of land. On the basis of their land property, different researchers categorize several classes or groups from their own perspectives e.g., small farm owner, medium farm owner, large farm owner and so on (BBS 1986; 2002, Osmany 1985, Bhaumik 1993, Jannuzi and Peach 1980). According to Bhaumik (1993) the people of rural Bangladesh do not possess equal amount of land rather there is a remarkable variation in land ownership pattern. So he categorizes the farmers on the basis of their land property in several categories, such as (i) marginal farmers who possess less than 2.50 acres of land (1 acre=3 *bighas* and 8 *chatak*); (ii) small farmers who possess 2.50 to 4.99 acres of land; (iii) medium farmers who are the owner of 5.00 to 9.99 acres of land; while the (iv) big farmers possess 10.00 to 14.99 acres of land and (v) large farmers are the owner of 15+ acres of land. Likewise Bhaumik Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS, 2002) and The Bangladesh Census of Agriculture and Live Stock (1983-84) also classified the farm owners into three categories, such as (i) small farm owner (less than 2.50 acres); (ii)

medium farm owner (2.50 to 7.50 acres) and (iii) large farm owner (7.50 and above acres).

In Srirampur, I have classified the villagers relating to agriculture into three distinguish categories, such as (i) landowners (ii) sharecroppers and (iii) landless labourers. The people belonging to landowner category are further divided into three categories on the basis of the area of their farm holding, such as (i) small landowners (those who own 01-09 *bighas* of land); (ii) medium landowners (those who own 09-19 *bighas* of land) and (iii) large landowners (those who own 20 and above *bighas* of land).

Besides, the landowner farmers, there are some farmers/peasants who cultivate others' land as sharecropping. They are known as sharecroppers. The sharecroppers get the cultivable land from landowners on contract for cultivation. In my study I would like to categorize the sharecroppers into two groups, such as (i) landless sharecroppers and (ii) landowner sharecroppers. Landless sharecroppers are absolutely landless farmers who are fully dependent on others' land. The sharecroppers of this kind may or may not have the implements of production of their own. On the contrary, the landowner sharecroppers are the second category sharecroppers who possess implements of production and around 02 acres of land of their own but they cultivate others' land along with their own land as sharecropping. It has been observed in Srirampur that maximum sharecroppers are landowner sharecroppers and only nominal farmers belong to landless sharecroppers. However, in Srirampur there are 38 (1.25%) persons who sharecrop others' land (see Table 2.6) and majority of them belong to the poor and small landowners' categories. The sharecroppers being landless or small farmers, majority of them do not have access to sufficient land. This economic insufficiency also makes them dependent on the big landowners for tenancies as sharecroppers. In most cases, the sharecroppers pursue multiple activities, such as tenancy cultivation, sharecropping and also sometimes working as an agricultural labourer.

Landless labourers are categorized into two groups, such as (i) seasonal labourers and (ii) daily labourers. Seasonal labourers are those who are engaged for either the period of transplantation or of harvesting in the village. Seasonal labours have alternative source of earning as it is observed that during the dull season they earn their livelihood from their petty business, cattle rearing as they have owned capital but the daily labours are observed capitalless and they have no alternative means of earning. That is why; they have to fully depend on daily earnings by providing manual services although the wages are too poor. Usually they do not have cultivable land in their possession but they may have a homestead only and engaged to the economic activities as the daily labourers. The landless agricultural labourers are less apt to be sharecroppers. They are engaged for work on the land or in any other economic activities either by landowners or by sharecroppers. Landless villagers, however, work as agricultural labourers (*pait*s) and also often as wage labourers in or outside the village. In my study village seasonal agricultural labourers work on the land of the landowners on the basis of seasonal wage contract that are locally called *hailas*, while the daily agricultural labourers are called *kamla* or *pait*s. The agricultural labourers who are called *kamlas* or *pait*s work on the owner's land on a daily meal and cash wage contract or on cash wage contract without meal. The *kamlas* or *pait*s are typically hired for transplanting as well as weeding and their employment is dependent on the cropping cycle. They mostly depend on the landowners of the village. However, they work on agricultural land from early morning to till sunset and leave the home with little to carry over into the periods of slack activity. In this context, Karim (1990) also observes in rural Bangladesh that this inequality of land distribution leads us to believe that land polarization is the basic source of power.... And it is the members of the land rich lineages who are able to distribute land in the form of share-cropping, lending gain and cash, or to employ the landless labourers to work as *pait* (Karim 1990:41). The members of other occupation (i.e., servicing, trading, weaving, tailoring, labouring and others) categories in the village earn their livelihood by providing goods and services to the villagers.

As mentioned earlier that during the rainy season some villagers become involve in trading on boats. The villagers who engaged with the passenger boats or in trading boats most of them do not have their own boats. The non-owners of the boats hire boats on rent from the boat owners. However, the people who are associated with these economic activities are divided into three categories, such as boat owners, traders on boats and labourers on boats. Labourers on boats are further divided into two categories: boat pliers and general labourers who are engaged in the work of loading and unloading of goods.

Social status is also the important determinant of social differentiation among the villagers. It is a complex character because so many elements of village social life (wealth, education, power, socio-cultural etc.) are connected with the social honour and status, which also help the villagers to enter into the new political structures and attain leadership in the formal organizations in a society. According to Weber, "mere economic 'power' and especially 'naked' money power is by no means recognised basis of social honour. Nor is power the only basis of social honour. Indeed social honour or prestige may even be the basis of political or economic power, and very frequently has been so" (1974: 64).

However, in my study the village households have been classified into four status categories in accordance with the above mentioned elements of the social life. The categories are: (i) *Barolok* (rich men) (ii) *Bhadrolok* (gentlemen) (iii) *Grihestolok* (average landowner farmers) and (iv) *Gariblok* (poor men).

- (i) The *Barolok* are the most powerful and wealthy persons in the village in terms of ownership of large amount of land for handling the business and the annual income. Kotalova reported that a *Barolok* is a person who, "besides having plenty of land, ... originates from a family with *uccho bongsho*, feeds many people, keeps his wife from productive work and daughter from school" (1993:152). Usually, the *Barolok* people of the village have more than 30 *bighas* of cultivable land on average. For having the big amount of cultivable land, for economic status and total annual income they have more power and influence in the village. In this context,

Eglar rightly comments, "A landowner with large holdings has more power, prestige and influence, because he has more tenants and Moeens who are attached to the land, work for him, depend on him" (1960:44). Further he argues, " He can entertain more people, can make more connections, can extend his influence further in the official circles; and therefore, he can command more people and command more respect; in this way he increasingly requires power, influence and prestige" (*ibid*). The status of an individual is largely determined by the amount of land he possesses. Even today, there is a belief in the village that birth in a family of land owners will ensure that a person will grow up to be a respected member of the village community. Subsequent acquisition of land would very materially affect the social position even of a person of humble birth (Ahmed, 1983:16). Bertocci (1972) pointed out that it might take three to four generations for a family to increase or decline family status after experiencing dramatic economic change in the family concern. He also correlated socio-political status with land ownership because in rural Bangladesh the members of the land rich lineages are traditionally the power wilders and the leaders at the intra-village level. But their life style is not always considered to be superior to that of the persons of *Bhadrolok* category. However, the overall proper ownership situation of the *Barolok* reflects the power and influence in the village social structure. The rural power structure is also distributed by arable land in our rural society. That is why; power structure exists between landed as well as landless households and landlord and tenant households. Thus land is an important element of our rural society. In this context, I agree with Sarker when he states, "...land is an important factor for sources of earning and employment for rural people in Bangladesh. It is also considered as important in attaching socio-economic status to the rural households. As Bangladesh is mainly an agricultural country, ownership of agricultural land is a key factor of economic solvency of a person or of a family" (1999:48). Thus, land is the most important resource for the villagers and the possession of land means prestige and economic position. In this regard, Khanum also rightly points out "... in rural Bangladesh land is not only the

principal means of production but also the main determinant of social status" (2000:204).

In fact, the ownership of large amount of land is one of the important bases of social, political and economic power in Srirampur as well as in other parts of the country. The above discussion on the land holdings in rural Bangladesh obviously reveals that land is not only the major source of a person's prestige, but it is also one of the most important source of influence, power and authority.

- (ii) The *Bhadrolok* status category in Bangladesh society has been discussed in other social studies (Bhuiyan 1978, Murshid 1983, Rahaman 1990, Kotalova 1993, Khanum 1994, 2000). According to their findings, persons belonging to this category are generally not owners of large amounts of land or wealth, but they bear other extra qualities, which differs them from other categorisations. The villagers' assessment towards the *Bhadrolok* that they bear such characteristics as an urban life style, good moral character, education, social 'values', a socially conscientious out look and humanistic attitude etc. In this connection Rahaman states, "... the *Bhadrolok* is one of the status categories in the village signifying a particular life-style" (1990:59). Kotalova (1993) used the term *boro lok/bhodro lok* and *choto lok/gorib lok* (poor). Thus based on family background people are classified into two groups, namely *choto lok* (low status people) and *bhodro lok* (high status people) (Chakrabarty 1985; Hartmann and Boyce 1983; Van Schendel 1981). Bertocci (1972) accounted status as one of the basic criteria of social classification and pointed out family tradition, landed aristocracy, affiliation with the colonial administration and military services etc. as the indicators of family status. The *Bhadrolok* have also the tendency to communicate with urban people. At the same time, they may adapt the changing situation of the world. Most of the members of this category spend a considerable amount of money for maintaining their standard life style. They usually try to maintain a link with urban areas and make them accessible to urban occupations, facilities as well as other services. These two categories may overlap each other. Therefore, the term *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* are sometime interchangeable yet Chakrabarty (1985) and McGuire (1983) viewed *Bhadrolok* from the cultural point of view rather than the class. According to them family background is

essential to claim the membership of *Bhadrolok*. Besides the landed aristocracy, involvement with business of the earlier generation is also a criterion to include in the *Bhadrolok* group. From this point of view, they encountered bourgeois and petty bourgeois in the *Bhadrolok* category. However, among the Bangladeshi rural Muslims such family background reflects in everyday living pattern. Kotalova (1993) emphasises on the life style to show the demarcation between *choto lok* and *boro lok/bhodro lok*. In this context, she states, "apart from the difference in the wealth and access to public decision making ranking includes assessment of mental skills, involvement with physical labour and various aspects of life style".

- (iii) The villagers who belong to the *Grihesto* category have average wealth, income and amount of land. For their productive purpose they usually utilize family labour along with the wage labour. They cannot save much money during the year after incurring their household expenses. The persons comprising the *Grihesto* category always have to keep balance between their income and expenditure all the year round.
- (iv) The *Garibloks* (poor men) in the study village do not possess wealth and other properties including land. Very few of them have small amount of cultivable land. They cultivate their land themselves, as they are extremely poor. They have either mortgaged their land to other persons or they sharecrop it to others due to their lack of proper tools, draft animals or for the shortage of ready capital. *Kamla, pait* belong to this category. The persons comprising *Gariblok* category face great uncertainties in respect of income and earnings. Since their income is very low and often irregular, they have no option but to exercise almost precaution in allocating their hard earned income in essential expenditure. Most of them are employed by the *Baroloks* in and outside the village. They do physical labour in exchange for very low wages. Though they spend all or most of the income for consumption purposes, they cannot afford regular meals or cloths for themselves. Regarding the life style of *Gariblok* Kotalova (1993) rightly comments, "Neither can a *gorib lok* householder afford to keep his wife ... secluded nor provide her with essential supplies" (*ibid*). Most of the *Garibloks* in Srirampur are illiterate and cannot read and write. The *Gariblokds* in the study village live in poor quality houses consist of mud or

straw wall and straw roof. The persons belonging to *Gariblok* category enjoy no power as well as prestige as the people of other categories always exploit them.

Table 2.8
Distribution of Households in Srirampur on the basis of Social Status

Status Category	Number of Households	Percentage
<i>Barolok</i> (Rich men)	33	4.56
<i>Bhadrolok</i> (Gentlemen)	55	7.59
<i>Grihestolok</i> (Average land owner farmers)	198	27.35
<i>Goriblok</i> (Poor men)	438	60.50
Total	724	100.00

Table 2.8 shows that out of the 724 households in Srirampur, 33 (4.56% of the total households) belong to the *Barolok* (rich men) category, 55 (7.59%) belong to *Bhadrolok* (gentlemen) category, 198 (27.35%) belong to *Grihesto* (average land owner farmers) category, and 438 (60.50%) to the *Gariblok* (poor men) category. Table 2.8 also shows that the maximum number of households belong to *Gariblok* (poor men) category.

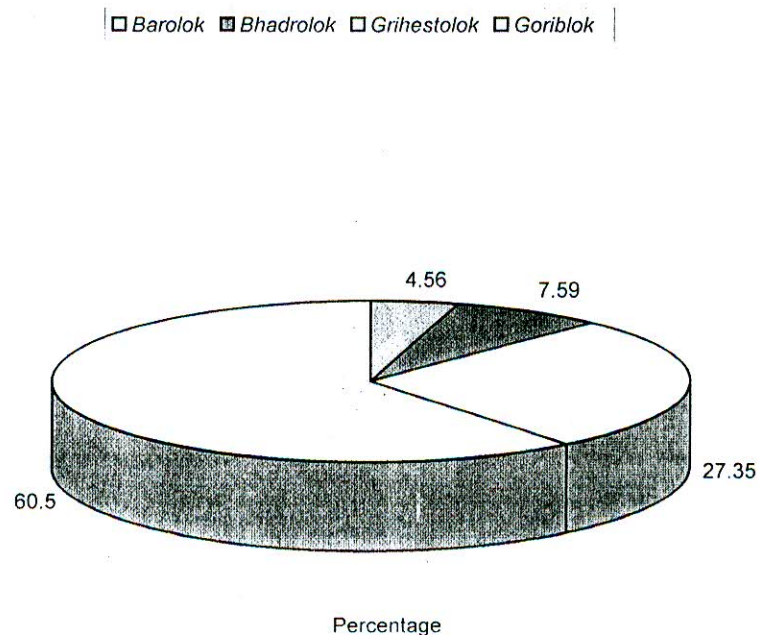


Figure 2.5 Pie chart for Table 2.8

Political power is also another important basis of social differentiation in the village society. Bertocci (1970) observed that within each homestead cluster, the lineages whose members included the most affluent of the community exercised the most social influence and political power. The persons who are associated with rural power structure are most powerful. There are two sources of acquiring power in the rural society of Bangladesh. One is internal source and another is external source (Barman 1988). According to Barman, "Internal sources are those sources that are available in the village itself and the objective properties. The objective properties are very much personal and cannot be separated from the person *per se* –the status or all other attributes of a person like simplicity, honesty and so on" (Barman, 1988:73). Thus, the internal sources of power are mainly education, wealth, individual's reputation for ethical conducts, age, kinship relation, social welfare activities etc. On the other hand, the external sources of power are mainly the socio-political organizational affiliation and involvement in prestigious institutions. Among these institutional sources political linkages, the Club, Committee, Local Government Organization and other socio-religious institutions are noteworthy external sources of power in the rural society of Bangladesh. Regarding the external sources of power in a village community, Barman (1988) also states, "External sources of power refer to factors that help one acquire power and control over community affairs from outside it and stand for two meanings. First, one may engage in an activity or attain a position elsewhere other than his own community and get prominence in the village. ... Secondly, one may also be imposed as a leader by outside body or power though he may not have any influence and acceptance" (*Ibid.*: 77-78). It should be noted that by dint of the qualities of external sources, one can be most powerful persons in the political structure of the village.

Karim (1990:14) observes in contemporary rural Bangladesh that there are two clear power domains. One is the *samaj* an indigenous social-organization whose

leaders may be designated traditional leaders. The other domain encompasses local government organizations, e.g., Union Parishad (UP), *gram sarker* (village government), KSS cooperatives, Rural Social Services (RSS). The leaders who run the UP, KSS cooperatives, and RSS are termed as formal leaders. Rahman (1981) also deals with rural power structure and finds out formal position of authority in various institutions and organizations in rural Bangladesh.

2.11 The Educational Structure of Respondents

Education is one of the basic rights of human beings. But it is a matter of concern that the literacy rate of the country is not reasonable at all. It is estimated that the literacy rate of Bangladesh is only 41 percent. But the adult literacy rate of Bangladesh is 65 percent (*Bangladesh Arthanaitik Shamikkha*, 2002: 105). It is observed in the study village that the literacy rate prevailing in the households is 49.17 percent. The following Table shows the educational structure of the respondents of the study village.

Table 2.9
Distribution of the Head of Total Households on the Basis of Educational Qualification

Educational Attainment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	358	50.83
Primary	242	33.43
Secondary	67	9.25
Higher Secondary	23	3.18
Graduation	29	2.62
Masters	05	0.69
Total	724	100.00

Of the total number of the head of households, primary level includes 33.43% that is not supported by the public examination. On the other hand, secondary and higher secondary level include only 12.43% (secondary 9.25% and higher secondary 3.18%) whereas only 2.62% and 0.69% people are higher educated namely, Graduate and Masters respectively.

2.12 The Occupational Status of Respondents

Bangladesh is basically an agrarian country where 76.61 percent of her populations live in villages (Population Census, Preliminary Report, 2001:6). In fact, the poverty and unemployment along with other complexities characterise the lives of our rural people. The economy of Srirampur is characterised by acute poverty, high rate of unemployment, poor socio-economic infrastructure, lack of adequate capital and inequality in the distribution of income and assets. However, these categorises have been done on the basis of some variables, e.g., agriculture, official job, business, fishing, day labourer and others. In terms of occupation, it is difficult to classify the people categorically in rural society. The difficulty lies in identifying the village people by their actual profession. It is observed that a person may be a peasant as well as a schoolteacher, or he may be a day-labourers and at the same time a sharecropper or a small trader also. But the question is what job or work is taken to be as his principal occupation and what job he does as a secondary one for his survival in the society. The occupation of a man corresponds to his direct involvement in work. That is why; a man's vicarious involvement in a job cannot correspond to his main profession.

Table 2.10
Distribution of the Heads of Households on the Basis of Different Occupations

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	531	73.34
Official Job	31	4.28
Business	44	6.09
Fishing	29	4.00
Day-labourers	57	7.87
Others	32	4.42
Total	724	100.00

Table 2.10 shows the occupations of the head of the households. It also reveals that their affiliation is mainly confined to agriculture although many of them are engaged in different occupations. Data on occupations presented in the Table 2.10 indicates the existence of various occupational groups and of the total 724 head of households are engaged in different occupations and professions. Of them 73.34% are farmers and only 2.28% head of households are service holders. Business, especially small business and shop keeping is another occupation in the village and in this sector 6.08% head of the households are engaged. About 4% of the total head of households are fishermen and 7.87% are day labourers and the remaining 4.42% head of households belong to other occupational groups. Thus, a poor episode of the socio-economic conditions of the study village particularly in respect of occupational distribution of the head of households has been observed.

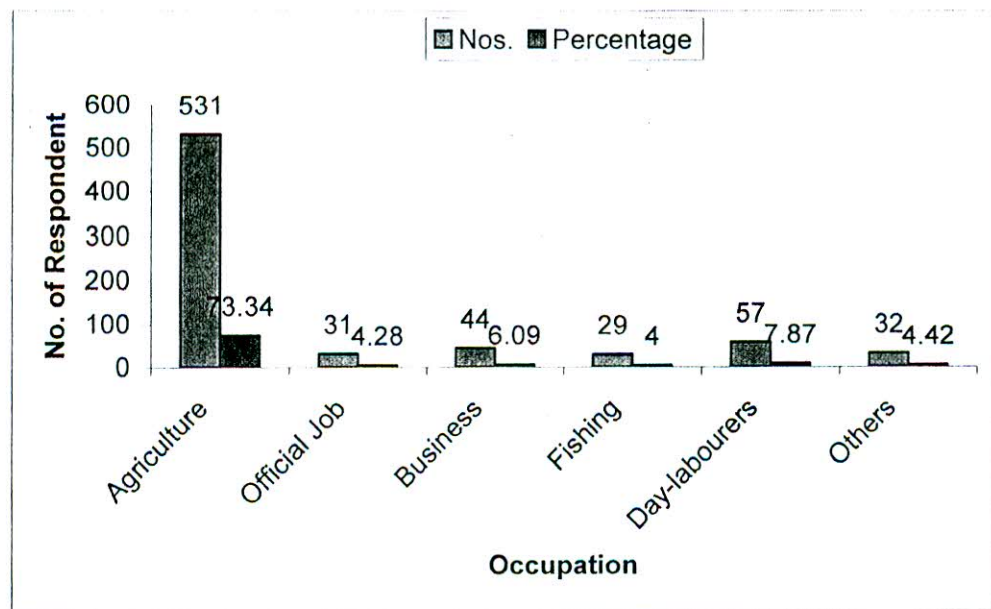


Figure 2.6 Bar diagram for Table 2.10

2.13 Yearly Income and Expenditure of Respondents

In this section, a brief account is given of the households in terms of their distribution by yearly income and expenditure. The following two Tables (Table

2.11 & Table 2.12) provide information on the percentage distribution of households by their annual income and expenditure in Srirampur village.

Table 2.11
Distribution of Yearly Income of the Respondents

Yearly Income (TK.)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
5000-14999	165	22.79
15000-24999	205	28.31
25000-34999	146	20.17
35000-44999	97	13.40
45000-54999	44	6.08
55000-64999	26	3.59
65000-74999	18	2.49
75000-84999	15	2.07
85000-94999	5	0.69
95000-114999	3	0.41
Total	724	100.00

Out of the 724 households, 165 (22.79%) households, which have yearly income in 5000-14999 (TK.), 205 (28.31%) is in 15000-24999 (TK.) 146 (20.17%) is in 25000-34999 (TK.) 97 (13.40%) is in 35000-44999 (TK.), 46 (6.08%) is in 45000-54999 (TK.), 26 (3.59%) is in 55000-64999 (TK.), 18 (2.49%) is in 65000-74999 (TK.), 15 (2.07%) is in 75000-84999 (TK.), 5 (.69%) is in 85000-94999 (TK.) and only 3 (0.41%) is in 95000-114999 (TK.). However, Table 2.11 shows that most of the heads of households are included in the yearly income of three categories such as 5000-14999, 15000-24999 and 25000-34999. But the majority percent of the respondents belong to the income level of 15000-24999 respectively in the village under study. On the other hand, prevailing 208 (28.73%) households belong to different income level. However, the yearly income of the head of households is not satisfactory.

Table 2.12
Distribution of the Head of Households on the Basis of Yearly Expenditure

Yearly Expenditure (TK.)	Number of Households	Percentage
5000-1999	189	26.10
15000-24999	234	32.32
25000-34999	138	19.06
35000-44999	91	12.57
45000-54999	40	5.52
55000-64999	18	2.49
65000-74999	09	1.24
75000-84999	03	.41
85000-94999	01	.14
95000-114999	01	.14
Total	724	100.00

Out of 724 households, there are 189 (26.10%) households which have yearly expenditure in 5000-14999 (TK.), 234 (32.32%) are in 15000-24999 (TK.) 138 (19.06%) are in 25000-34999 (TK), 91 (12.57%) are in 35000-44999 (TK.), 40 (5.52%) are in 45000-54999 (TK), 18 (2.49%) are in 55000-64999 (TK), 9 (1.24%) are in 65000-74999 (TK.), 3 (.41%) are in 75000-84999 (TK.) and 1 (.14%) is in the yearly expenditure of 85000-94999 (TK.) and also the some number of earning members belong to the yearly expenditure level of 95000-114999 (TK.) . So Table 2.12 shows that most of the heads of households have yearly expenditure of 5000-14999, 15000-24999 and 25000-34999.

Table 2.13
Pearson's Correlation between Income and Expenditure of the Head of Households (For Table 9 and 10) in Srirampur

Variable	Particulars	Income	Expenditure
Income	Person's Correlation	1.000	.994
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	.000
	N	10	10

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

It is revealed in the Table 2.13 that the correlation between income and expenditure of the selected households is positively correlated. Since the calculation value of $r=0.994$ and significant level is 0.000. As a matter of consequence, it is affirmed that the income and expenditure of the households are highly consistent.

2.14 Land Use Pattern and Rules of Land Ownership

Most of the people in Bangladesh live on agricultural activities either by owning land or by cultivating it, having obtained right. However, rural Bangladesh is a class-based society hierarchically organized primarily on the basis of ownership and control over arable land. Distribution of social power and income among households is closely related to distribution and control of land. In rural Bangladesh, the household is the primary corporate unit, the focus of production, which mainly depends on the pattern of land holdings.

A few landowning families in Srirampur derive their major income from other sources, some of them are rather well-off, have migrated from the village and settled in Baraigram, Gurudaspur, Natore, Rajshahi or any other places of the country as service-holders or businessmen and quite a few especially those who are not well-off, derive their major income from work outside but retain their families in the village. Almost all land in the study village is in private ownership though some may be disputed as *khasland* or is considered as government property. Roads and canals that cross through the village are government property. The two *hats* (village markets) i.e., one *Puratan* (old) and the other *Natun* (new) and the school playground are considered as the common land for the villagers. There are some *khasland* or government properties in the village, which are cultivated by the big and powerful landowners. This had been going for long but nobody dares to do anything about it. The men themselves regard their ownership to these lands as recognized. It has been observed in Srirampur that in some of the more compactly settled *baries* (homesteads), especially where the households are closely related, the actual ownership to each single sq. feet of land is not known, but it is reckoned that each single household owns so much of the household's plot and ownership to trees, bamboo etc. is recognized. However, the homestead and orchard land in the village is comparatively more expensive since it requires investment of a lot of labours. Normally, homesteads are on land artificially raised than the normal level and

orchards are also often planted on raised land apart from the investment in the trees. Ponds are also dug out in order to get water for domestic purposes as well as to raise the level where houses are to be built.

In Srirampur, the existing tenurial arrangement and the structure of economic relationship between the landowners and the tenant and labours are the reflection of the permanent settlement system. However, the ownership is concentrated in a handful of families comprising wealthy kinship groups. Besides, the other kinship groups also own land in smaller amount. The tenancy situation of Srirampur reflects skewed distribution of land. As agricultural land is the main source of income and living for most of the people in rural areas, its ownership is the sign of solvency and security. It should be noted that land could be, however, acquired by inheritance, purchase, mortgage, temporary lease, sharecropping and so on. But in the present study, land ownership is confined through the inheritance as well as purchasing ability of the individual in every household. In Srirampur, however, purchase of land is quite common among rich families. Even people who are not working in agriculture often invest their money in land in their paternal village. They think that this is the safe investment. While talking with the mass people especially with landless people, I came to know that the households without any land at all have their house built on the land of relatives or are squatting on somebody else's land. They do not pay a rent and the households without ownership rights in a pond can use other peoples' ponds for domestic purposes. Ownership rights apply to productive purposes. Land used for cultivation and water used for fish cultivation or irrigation is paid for if so used by people without ownership rights. However, family life always involves ownership and distribution of property. In fact, distribution of property plays an important role in household, family and social life of the villagers. It is intimately concerned with the various aspects of kinship, marriage and family. For example, if property of a person is not distributed rightly, it affects the relationship in the household, family and lineage. And its proper distribution helps in maintaining intimate relationships. The distribution of property is always accompanied with separation of household. It is important to realize, however, that there are various kinds of property, such as land, house, livestock, pond, jewellery, pots, pans, cash etc. When a married son sets up a separate household from the parental household,

he may get a share of some movable property, like cash, pots and pans, livestock etc., but he may not get a share of agricultural land. The reason is that according to Islamic laws of inheritance, the right of inheritance arises only after the owner's death. There is no recognition of any person's 'birth right' over the property. For example, a man's children can legally inherit his property only after his death, not during his lifetime. The process of partition of land and other movable property always takes a long time. After a man's death his movable and immovable property is divided into numerous fractions according to specific Islamic rules. According to Islamic law, sons inherit equal shares of the parental property and daughters are entitled to half the share of sons in Muslim families. All kinds of land are equally divided so that children obtain shares of homestead land, arable land, and pond land whatever is available. It should be mentioned here that after a man's death, his wife is entitled to get a share of his property. She inherits one eighth if there are children and one fourth if there is none. If a man has more than one wife, all the wives' share one-eighth or the one-fourth share, as the case may be, equally between them.

Regarding the land distribution and land ownership, the kinship system plays significant roles from several points of view. The land is distributed among kinsmen on the basis of their priority base kin relation. Consequently, they take care of their ancestors' land property sincerely. It is found in the rural society of Bangladesh that women usually face many difficulties in getting the share of their parental property. Sometimes, they also feel hesitation to take their share of parental property. Although Islamic laws have granted women the right to inherit their share of parental property, in many cases they do not exercise this right. At the time of fieldwork, I came to know that if the women forgo their share of parental property to their brothers, they usually like to maintain as usual relationship with their sisters and consequently, the normal relationship survives among them. If the normal relationship goes on simultaneously, the brothers extend their helping hand in times of needs and crisis. Thus, sisters get support and shelter by their brothers in many ways. On the other hand, when any kinsman in relatives' network faces the problem regarding the land distribution and to take possession of land, the kinsmen come forward to solve the problem. In this way, relatives' network play a remarkable role regarding the land right protection of their kinsmen.

Chapter 3

The Nature of Kinship Organization in Rural Bangladesh

3.1 Formation of Kinship Relations

Kinship relationships still today vary a good deal from rural to urban communities, from one class to another. In a great many preindustrial and nonindustrial societies, most human activities and relationships have been predicated upon kinship ties of one kind or another (Dyer, 1983:334). The kinship relations between persons crosscut a number of groups and categories and go beyond the household and family. It could be noted that the rights, duties as well as the behaviours of relatives in relation to one another are a part of the kinship system.

In Bangladesh society a person lives within a large network of relatives and there are always native's categories to cluster or group the relatives within this network. The recognition as well as solidarity of kinship relations is based upon the affection originating in consanguinity (genetic relationships under which one should be more helpful toward persons with whom he shares genes than toward others) and affinity (relationships established through marriage). Kinship is a genetic and cultural concept, which refers to the system of human relationships derived from marriage and descent. It is the guiding principle of kinship groups, i.e., household, family and lineage as it includes in it the presence of the household, family and lineage. In fact, 'kinship involves three possible avenues of descent: it can be traced through males, through females, or both. It should be noted that the kinship groups are different than residential groups (i.e., homestead, *malot*, *para*, etc.), because in the case of residential groups kinship relations may be present but are not crucial.

In Srirampur, a person is related with a number of persons by blood, affinity and fictive relationships and there are indigenous categories to group and cluster these relatives. Firstly, a person's relatives are categorized into three principal

clusters, namely, relatives of *nijer bari* (relatives of one's own home, i.e., patrilateral home), relatives of *nanar bari* (relatives of matrilateral home) and relatives of *shasur bari* (relatives of affinal home). Secondly, there are fictive relationships. And thirdly, the villagers categorise their *nijerlok* (one's own people) into *atmiya*, *svajan*, *gyati* and *kutumbu*. However, there are three principal ways in forming kinship relationships, such as (i) consanguinal (based on blood), (ii) affinal (based on marriage) and (iii) fictive (based on religion or addressing). Consanguinal relationship is related through the biological link and the people who are consanguinally related are considered as *swajan*. However, the people who are connected with consanguineal kinship system are segmented into *bangsa* (clan) and *gushti* (patrilineal descent group). Persons who are related through this kinship system help each other during the time of need and distress (Sarker 1980, White 1990). The recognition as well as solidarity of kinship are based upon the affection originating in consanguinity and affinity. In this context, relatives usually mean a consanguineal kinsman or *rokteer samparka* (blood relation), and connection with an affinal one respectively. In fact, in the consanguine kinship relations are the obligatory element in dealing with kin by blood or close kin.

Affinal relationship is related with marital ties. People who are affinally related are considered as affinal kin or *kutumbu* in Bangladesh society. Marriage connection not only binds the lineages concerned by kinship ties, but also binds each lineage with other kin men of the in-laws. Through a marriage relation various lineage members' concerned exchange visits among themselves, an additional help in establishing further marital connections. This relationship offers a greater scope for social visits and it is cordially received and entertained specially for several days continuously on various ceremonial occasions of the year. When affinal relatives visit each other after a long period, they express respect or affection deeply whichever is appropriate. Moreover, the affinal relatives usually offer a wider opportunity of economic cooperation. Through the help of well-placed affinal kinsmen a person may get a job, partnership in business or support for

higher education. It should be noted here that in giving economic favour one always considers one's own relatives with a feeling of priority.

Kinship is one of the most important social institutions in Bangladesh, which interlock the village people in affinal and consanguinal kin-relationship. Besides, affinal and consanguinal kin we have another kin, which may be referred to as fictive kin or *dharma-atmiya*. If a man makes personal and intimate contact with anyone by uttering kinship terms considering age and status, it would eventually result in the formation of intimate bond of union. Such relationship may be referred to as fictive relation (Mashreque, 1980:82). In certain circumstances, kinship behaviour provides a pattern of relations between people who are not relatives (*ibid*). Basically, it is a relationship between two persons a dyadic contract of the society. Persons who are related through this kinship system help each other during the time of need and distress (Anwar 1979, White 1990). As a result this functional aspect of kinship helps to maintain community stability and provides security to all to enhance social solidarity in the village community (Sarker, 1997:9).

However, there are two ways to form fictive relationship in the village. One: on the basis of religion and the other without it. So, we find that there is a convention to establish fictive kin relationship irrespective of religious background. In this way, fictive kinship plays a significant role in the social life of the rural society of Bangladesh. Fictive relations are also stressed in the village where face-to-face relationships exist and in everyday contact one may use kinship terms effectively. Fictive relations are expressed while addressing social friends and neighbours. If any friendly relations exist among the contemporaries of rural society, they use the terms like *dosta* and *bandhu*. According to Rahaman, 'when a person establishes fictive relationship with another person, they decide to use certain kinship or affinity term to address each other' (1994:106). As the villagers are more or less gregarious, friendship as fictive relationship frequently established between two persons affects other persons related to them.

The important aspect of fictive relationship is that it affects the behaviour pattern; duties, obligation, responsibilities and it also related the people of different socio-economic group closely. In this context, we may refer to Sarker who says, 'poor will ask on influential person of the village to set up this fictive relation with them, and sometimes the influential will agree. The poor person will get financial and political benefits, such as land for sharecropping and fertilizer from the agricultural officer' (1980:55). It has been noticed in the rural society of Bangladesh that the patron-client relationship develops into fictive relationship as a result of prolonged association between the persons involved in such relationships.

3.2 Kinship Organization

The basic elements of kinship organization are household, *paribar* (family) and *gushti* (patrilineal kin group). These three basic concepts together constitute kinship organization in rural society of Bangladesh. Each of these concepts has also many types varying in their kinship, size and manner of their common life. On the other hand, kinship organization does not allow homestead, ward, *malot*, close dwelling etc. as its elements because their kinship composition is not always formed through blood or affinity. So, homestead, *para* (ward), *malot* (sub-*sama*), close dwelling etc. are considered as the residential group. Kinship organization includes a set of interacting roles, which is customarily ascribed to various statuses of kinsmen. Thus, the rights, duties and behaviours of relatives in relation to one another are a close part of kinship organization.

Kinship relationships, particularly those in the household, family as well as lineage play a vital role in the socialization of individuals in a society. We may trace the importance of this role at every stage in the entire life cycle of any person. Thus, kinship groups and categories perform an important role in building up the behavioural pattern of a person in the village society. The kinship groups also enlighten a person about the various institutional activities, i.e., economic, political, religious, socio-cultural etc. The kinship groups are the main

pillars of strengthening of a person in the village. The villagers extend their helping hand for kinsmen whenever require. At the same time, the kinship groups act as controlling agencies to prevent its members from the acts that are viewed harmful to the society. Kinship groups act as a school for raising collective values among their members. However, the basic kinship groups are discussed bellow:

3.2.1 Household as a Basic Unit of Kinship Organization

Household is the basic social as well as economic unit in our society. The general explanation of a household being 'a group of kin living together and influenced by economic factors' is inadequate for anthropological purposes, particularly if a need arises to allocate a position to a member of a household who is outside the kin group. It is the most common place where the most people live. That is why; it has received a considerable attention to the social scientists. In Bangladesh, scholars have used the term 'household' in several different senses. Some have commonly used household as *khana*. But there are a lot of differences about the correct use of household in Bangladesh society. The emphasis is also placed on the constitutional aspect of the household in our country. The Land Occupancy Survey of Bangladesh describes the household in the following terms: 'A rural household consists of one or more persons who normally eat at the same kitchen (*khana*)'. Jansen *et al.* also conducted on the constitutional and the conceptual aspects of a household: 'The household is the basic unit of production, reproduction, consumption, and of social, ceremonial and political interaction' (1983:94). Jannuzi and Peach (1980) also emphasised *khana*, i.e., the sharing of a hearth, as the criterion of being a member of the household. According to Shah, "The household is a residential and domestic unit composed of one or more persons living under that same roof and eating food cooked in a single kitchen" (1973:8). Rahaman defines, "Household implies a residential or domestic unit composed of one or more persons normally living in the same house or housing complex and taking food cooked at a single *chula* (hearth)" (1992:120). Mizanuddin defines; "A household is a dwelling unit where in one or

more persons normally live and eat together from common cooking arrangements" (1996:30). Basically a household is not just a group of people who together meet basic needs, like eating and sleeping. In Sharma's opinion, 'the household is ... more than a kin group influenced by economic factor. It is a unit of consumption. Its members budget together for their needs and to a large extent share common rations and lodging' (1980:76).

It is clear from the above definitions that researchers consistently emphasise the need for a common hearth and for economic and labour contributions to define a household but they have not considered the issue of 'mutual responsibility'. In fact, the household is also a unit that binds its members by reciprocal responsibility. In this respect, Khanum interprets 'a household as a group of kin sharing a common hearth and residence and influenced by a sense of long-term mutual responsibilities in terms of economy, labour and emotional support' (2001:493). The term 'household' has been commonly used for *khana*. The literal meaning of the word *khana* is food. But in the social context it is used to mean an eating group. However, in Bangladesh the term 'household' is used in several different senses. Sometimes it is used as synonym of *parivar* (family), *ghar* (house), *bari* (homestead), and the like. The villagers of Srirampur commonly use the term *ghar* (house) as synonym of *parivar*, *bari* without any definite and specific distinction between them. As the villagers of Srirampur commonly use the word *ghar* in the sense of 'household', I would like to refer *ghar* as 'household' in my analysis.

3.2.1.1 Norms of Household Formation and Its Development

There are certain norms governing the formation as well as development of the household in Srirampur. On the basis of the discussion with the village people about the principal norms of household formation and its development, I found that these norms are explicitly stated and also hierarchically ordered by them in the village. Here an attempt has been made to outline these norms:

- (i) Marriage is the first important step in the formation of household in Srirampur. It was found that the village marriage, in general is, however, patri-virilocal, meaning thereby that after marriage, the daughters leave their natal households and come to join their conjugal households (i.e., with the husband, husband's father, mother, brothers etc.).
- (ii) After marriage the married sons, their wives and their children should live with their parents. A considerable number of villagers supported that after marriage the sons' married sons should also live in the same household with their wives and children.
- (iii) After the death of parents their sons should continue to live in the same household together with their wives and children, along with their unmarried siblings.
- (iv) A general conception among the villagers towards the complex household that after the parents' death married brothers as well as the brothers' married sons should also reside in the same household with their wives and children.
- (v) A single man or woman in Srirampur may also form the household, as a matter of fact, in the whole of Bangladesh. For this exceptional criterion, the man may be a bachelor or a married one but become a widower/divorcee without any child, or the divorced wife might have carried his child or children away. Similarly, a woman may form a separate household if she is widowed or divorced or she may be unable to adjust with any of her family members, such as sons, sons' wives (*cheler bau*), and others, and therefore, might have been separated from other members of the household and thus form a separate household. A married woman having no child, whose husband employed at a place far off from, the village household can also form a separate household.

According to the opinion of the villagers in Srirampur, the above mentioned norms have certain implications. Firstly, if a man has two or more married sons, each of them, his wife and children will be residing not only with the son's parents but also with his brothers, brothers' wives and their children as well as unmarried siblings (if any). Secondly, if a man's son's sons get married, each grandparents, parents, siblings, and his father's brothers, their wives and children and also with his married brothers (including his married cousins, i.e., father's brothers' sons), their wives and children. These norms are sometimes practiced in the rural society of Bangladesh as the norms are extended further to include the sons' married sons in the household formation. Thirdly, these norms, however, suggest that such joint living should continue smoothly even after the death of the man and his wife.

The principal assumption behind the above mentioned norms and of their implications is that after the marriage the daughters of the household will go to join their conjugal household. The sons of the household in Srirampur village are not expected to seek separation from their parents. The wives of the household should reside along with their husbands in accordance with these norms of household formation in rural society. It is mentionable here that even after the death of a husband; his widow wife is expected to stay at her conjugal household if she is not young in age. This norm is, however, practised in the village household formation as it strengthens the residential unity of patri- kin in rural society of Bangladesh.

The above mentioned norms are not always practised in the household formation and its developmental process in the village households. However, these norms can also be reversed under certain situations, and further the reversals are hierarchically ordered, and thus, the general norm is that after the marriage the married daughters should join their conjugal households. This situation may be reversed if she has no brothers on the natal side but she may have more sisters. At this situation the father of the daughters may request his one *jamai* (daughter's husband) to join his household or to form a separate household in the wife's father's homestead. In that case, the married daughter

of a man comes back to her natal household or homestead along with her husband and children. Similarly, a married daughter may come back to her father's household along with her husband and children if the father is suffering from some chronic disease or is old enough to look after his property since his children are minor to look after the household affairs. According to the same norm, a widow may also request her *meye* and *jamai* (daughter and the daughter's husband) to join her household. It should be noted that this happens in such a situation when the widow wife of the diseased man has no grown up children (particularly sons) to look after her and the property as well. On the other hand, owing to diverse reasons, i.e., divorce, separation, maladjustment, husband's death etc. the village daughter might come back to her natal household and join here as a member or she may form a new household in her father's homestead if she has children.

In the situation when a married daughter joins her natal household with her husband and children, the husband is called *ghar-jamai* (literally, *ghar* is house and *jamai* is daughter's husband; so, *ghar-jamai* is son-in-law in the house). Though a daughter's husband becomes *ghar-jamai* under the above mentioned certain situations, he normally does not like to become a *ghar-jamai*. The reason is that the *ghar-jamai* and his wife do not receive proper respect in the village. The *ghar-jamai* may also be criticised by the villagers in various ways. But when a daughter's husband joins his wife's natal household as a helper (i.e., to look after the elderly father-in-law or widow mother-in-law and their minor children) rather than as a dependent, the *ghar-jamai* does not lose much respect. Rather he is considered as *bhalo-jamai* (literally, *bhalo* is good and *jamai* is daughter's husband' so *bhalo-jamai* is good son-in-law). During this situation the *ghar-jamai* is also considered as a 'sympathetic person' to his wife's natal household. According to Islamic Laws and village customs a son-in-law, whether he is a *ghar-jamai* or not, he does not have the right to inherit the property of his *shasur* (wife's father). However, it is unusual for a *ghar-jamai* to go back to his natal home, once he has joined his wife's natal household with his wife and child/children (if any).

However, the norms of the household formation and its development, their implications as well as reversal situations have been discussed above but it was found in Srirampur that these norms are not applicable in their totality and vary these norms in different situations. Thus, the villagers describe the deviations from the other norms regarding the residential unity of patri-kin and their wives in the following order:

- (i) Although the general norm is that all the married sons of a household are expected to live in their parents' household at least during the parents' lifetime, the married sons may demand division of the household even during the lifetime of their parents.
- (ii) When married sons of a household get separated from one another and form separate households, at least one of them, with his wife and child/children (if any), should remain with the parents.
- (iii) If a household is divided after the death of the father, at least one of the married sons of that household should stay with the widow mother and unmarried siblings, if any, especially in such a situation when the siblings are minor.
- (iv) If the household is divided after the death of both of the parents, proper arrangements should be made for the unmarried siblings, if any.
- (v) When a male head of the household gets married for the second time and has children (especially sons) by both the wives, adult sons of the first wife may usually demand division of the household.
- (vi) As stated earlier, a widow is expected to stay in her conjugal household even after the death of her husband, particularly, if she has a child by her deceased husband. If she does not have any child and is still in her youth, she may go back to her natal residence.
- (vii) It is mentionable here that nobody in Srirampur opined that married cousins (the male ego and his father's brother's sons) should reside together in the same household.

3.2.1.2 Typology of Household

The anthropological studies on some parts of kinship organization especially on family and household in India and Bangladesh exhibit mainly a common typology. The most common typology of the two structures of family and household are: (i) 'elementary' and (i) 'extended' or 'joint' (Karve 1953, Kapadia 1958, 1959, Madan 1965, Mandelbaum 1984, 1986, Areefeen 1986). Shah (1973) has used the dichotomy of household into two types. One: 'simple household' and the other, 'complex household'. He not only classified the household but also defined separately of these dynamic units. According to Shah, "A simple household may be composed of the whole or a part of parental family" (1973:14). Further he states, "a parental family" is defined as a unit of a man, his wife and their unmarried children" (*ibid.* 13). It should be noted here that the term "parental family" is, however, equivalent to the term 'nuclear family' as well as elementary family. Shah also includes adopted children, ritual children as well as remarried woman's children by her first husband carried to the second husband's home in the category of children. However, Shah defines complex household as, "composed of more than one parental family, or parts of more than one parental family, or of one or more parental family and parts of one or more other parental families" (*ibid.* 14). Desai (1964) proposed a dual classification by using the term 'joint ness'. According to this classification the brothers of a family are, on the one hand, not 'joint' since they do not share a residence, but they are, on the other hand, sharing financial responsibilities and could thus be considered to be 'joint' with the main household. But the interpretations of household made by Desai are not beyond criticism. Therefore, Sharma (1980) opines that this definition does not give enough importance to the key areas of family life, namely, 'joint budgeting' and sharing mutual responsibilities'. Standing also argues that the members of all such households could be regarded as the members of a single household since households are economic units in which commodities and/or services are produced, distributed and consumed and in which labour is organised and allocated through a sexual division of labour' (Standing, 1991:3).

The foregoing discussion also reveals that the joint family is usually considered as a group based on patrilineal descent and virilocal (or patrilocal) residence but this definition does not bring into account of non-virilocal (or non-patrilocal) relatives, which are found in many households in South Asian societies including Bangladesh. The use of the above mentioned dichotomy in the classification of household in Srirampur will, therefore, not be correct.

The above household classification and definitions by Shah (1973) show that effort have been made to take into account every possible type of members of the household in the taxonomy of household composition, and also it recognizes the importance of all types of households that exist in the society. However, I shall follow Shah's classification (i.e., simple and complex household) to analyse the typology of households in Srirampur as this classification can accommodate the taxonomy of household composition in my study village. But I had to make a modification in Shah's definition of "parental family". Because Srirampur is entirely a Muslim populated village. Islam also permits polygyny to the context that a man can have the maximum of four wives at a time (with certain restrictions). In the study village seven men are residing with two wives each, and their unmarried children. The co-wives are living in a single household with the husband. Therefore, such a unit has been treated as a "parental family". Thus, the "parental family" in Srirampur consists of a man, his wife (ves), and their unmarried children. It should be mentioned that the meaning of the other terms in Shah's definition of simple and complex households remains the same for my analysis. However, in the light of the definition of household, I will now focus on various aspects and patterns of household types prevailing in the rural society of Bangladesh, particularly in Srirampur.

Table 3.1
Major Types of Households and the Persons Living in These Households in
Srirampur

Types of Households	Number of Households	Percentage	Population
Simple	593	81.91	2228
Complex	131	18.09	807
Total	724	100.00	3035

Table 3.1 shows that 593 (81.91%) of the total 724 households in Srirampur are simple and the rest 131 (18.09%) are complex. The first category comprises of 2228 persons and the latter 807. Thus, the Table shows that majority of the people are living in simple households.

3.2.1.3 Simple Households

As mentioned earlier, 593 (81.91%) of the total 724 households in Srirampur are simple (see Table 3.1). Table 3.2 also presents the different types of composition of these simple households and the number of persons living in those households. These are also illustrated by a genealogical chart.

Table 3.2
Kinship Composition of Simple Households and Persons Living in the
Households

Kinship Composition	Number of Households	Persons Living in the Households
1. Single man	5 (0.84)	5 (0.22)
2. Single woman	10 (1.69)	10 (0.45)
3. Man and his wife	54 (9.11)	108 (4.85)
4. Man, and his wife (ves) and their unmarried children	458 (77.23)	1894 (85.01)
5. Widowed mother and her unmarried children	46 (7.76)	146 (6.55)
6. Widower father and his unmarried children	20 (3.37)	65 (2.92)
Total	593 (100.00)	2228 (100.00)

Chart 3.1
GENEALOGICAL CHART FOR TABLE 3.2

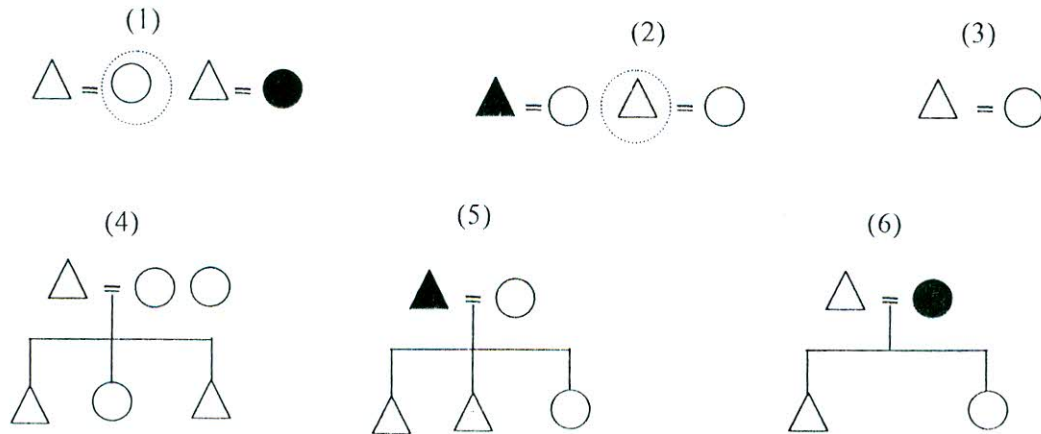


Table 3.2 shows that 5 (0.84%) of the 593 simple households are composed of a single man each whereas 10 (1.69%) households consist of just one woman each. Fifty-four (9.11%) households have a man and his wife, 458 (77.23%) households are composed of a man, his wife(ves) and their unmarried children, 46 (7.76%) households comprise of a widowed mother and her unmarried children and 20 (3.37%) households include a widower father and his unmarried children. So, Table 3.2 shows that the majority of simple households (458 out of 593) are composed of complete parental families, while only 135 households are composed of incomplete parental families. Thus, it is noteworthy that the households composed of the complete parental families form the majority (458 out of 593) of all the households in Srirampur.

However, it is clear from Table 3.2 as well as from the above discussion of kin composition of simple households that they cover a considerable number of socially distinct types of kinship compositions. As stated earlier, the majority of the simple households (458 out of 593) are composed of a complete parental family. On the other hand, only 135 households are composed of one or the other type of incomplete parental family: 5 (0.84%) of only a single man, 10 (1.69%) of only a single woman, 54 (9.11%) of only a man and his wife, 46 (7.76%) of a widowed mother and her unmarried children and 20 (3.37%) of a

widower father and his unmarried children. Thus, 458 (77.23%) of the simple households are composed of the complete parental family as well. So, the majority people of Srirampur live in simple households.

3.2.1.4 Complex Households

It has been mentioned in Table 3.1 that 131 of the total 724 households in Srirampur are complex. But 21 of these 131 complex households are actually different in their kinship composition from the rest 110 complex households in the village through the process of reversal of the dominant norms of household formation. However, these households can be differentiated into two categories, i.e., one normally complex household and the other, complex households through the process of deviation of norms of household formation. Normally, complex households refer those households which are complex normally, i.e., when married son(s), their wives and unmarried/married children join in it, while in the second category, households become complex through the process of deviation of the dominate norms of household formation. For example, a daughter once married reverts back to her parents' household with or without her child(ren) in the case of her divorce, separation or widowhood. These above mentioned cases have been described as cases of reversals of norms of household formation. Table 3.4 shows the kinship composition of complex households of the second category in Srirampur and there is also a genealogical chart for each of them.

As mentioned earlier, of the total 131 complex households in Srirampur, 110 are complex normally. However, the kinship composition of 110 normally complex households in the village is shown in Table 3.3. They can be classified into several types and there are genealogical charts to illustrate all the types of normally complex households in Srirampur.

Table 3.3
Distribution of Kinship Composition of Normally Complex Households
in Srirampur

Composition Category	Number of Households	Persons in the Households
1. Man, his wife, their married son, son's wife and unmarried children	22	137
2. Man, his wife, their unmarried children, two or more married sons and their wives with unmarried children	9	73
3. Man, his wife, their unmarried children, and married son, son's wife and married son's unmarried children	17	106
4. Man, his wife, their unmarried children and his unmarried siblings	15	89
5. Two married brothers, their wives, and their unmarried children and their unmarried siblings	6	43
6. Man, his wife, and their unmarried children and man's father's widowed mother	4	22
7. Widowed mother, her married son, his wife and their unmarried children	9	38
8. Widowed mother, two or more married sons, their wives and their unmarried children	6	44
9. Widowed mother, her unmarried children, one married son and his wife	10	47
10. Widower father, his married son, his wife with unmarried children	7	37
11. Widower father, his married son, son's wife, and married grand son (son's son) with his wife	3	10
12. Two married brothers, their wives and their unmarried children, elder brother's married son and his wife with unmarried children	2	21
Total	110	667

Chart 3.2
GENEALOGICAL CHART FOR TABLE 3.3

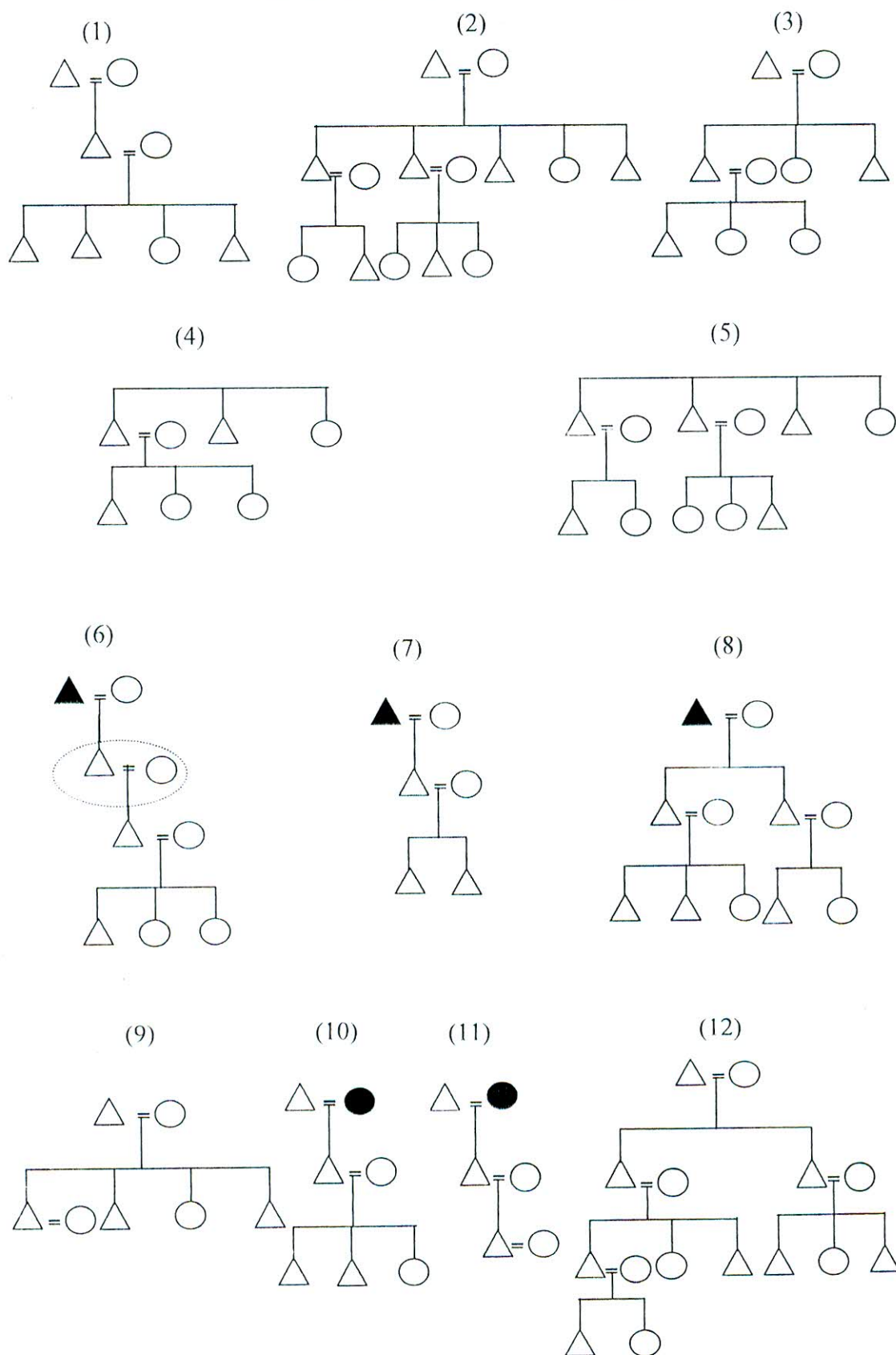
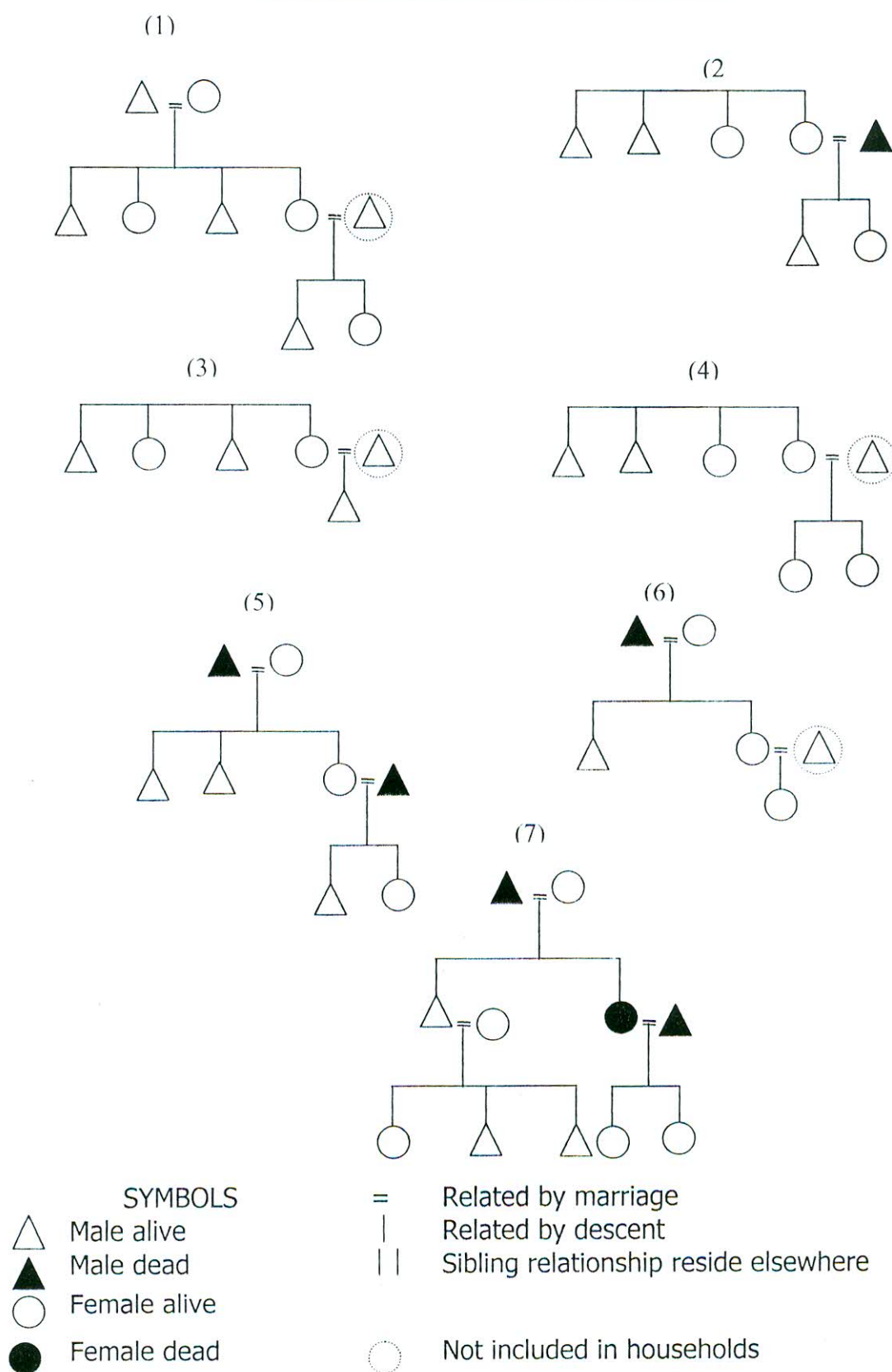


Table 3.3 shows that in 22 of these 110 complex households each there are both the parents and their one married son, his wife with unmarried children. In 9 households each there are both the parents with their unmarried children as well as their two married sons with their wives and unmarried children reside in the same households. In 17 households each there are the parents and their unmarried children and one married son, his wife and son's unmarried children. In 15 households each there is a man, his wife and their unmarried children and his unmarried siblings also stay in the same household. In 6 households each there are two married brothers, their wives and their unmarried children and their unmarried siblings also reside with them in the same households. In 4 households of composition category 6, each there a man, his wife and their unmarried children and his father's widowed mother. In 9 households of composition category 7, each there is a widowed mother and her one married son with his wife and unmarried children. In 6 households of composition category 8, each of them there are a widowed mother, her two married sons, their wives and their unmarried children. In 10 households of composition category 9, each there a widowed mother, her unmarried children, one married son and his wife. In 7 households of composition category 10, each there is a widower father, his one married son, his wife and their unmarried children. In 3 households of composition category 11, each there is a widower father, his one married son, his wife and their unmarried children. And finally, in 2 households of composition category 12, each there are two married brothers, their wives, their unmarried children, and there are also elder brother's one married son, his wife and their unmarried children who are residing together in the same households.

Table 3.4
Kinship Composition of Complex Households on the Basis of Reversals of the
Dominant Norms of Household Formation in Srirampur

Kinship Composition	Number of Households	Persons in the Households
1. Man, his wife and their unmarried children and divorced daughter with her child(ren)	5	40
2. Man, his unmarried siblings and his widowed sister with her unmarried child(ren)	3	25
3. Man, his unmarried siblings and his separated sister with her child/children	2	12
4. Man, his unmarried siblings and his divorced sister with her child(ren)	2	14
5. Widowed mother, her unmarried sons and widowed daughter with her unmarried children	3	18
6. Widowed mother, her unmarried son and her divorced daughter with her unmarried child	4	16
7. Widowed mother, her married son, his wife and their unmarried children and widowed mother's deceased daughter's children	2	15
Total	21	140

Chart 3.3
GENEALOGICAL CHART FOR TABLE 3.4



Out of the 131 complex households in Srirampur (see Table 3.4), 21 households have become complex due to the reversal of the normative principle of complex household formation in Srirampur as well as in other parts of the country (see Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990). However, these households (i.e., households in the second category) have different types of kinship composition as shown in Table 3.4. Thus, the Table 3.4 shows that in five households of kinship composition 1, a divorce daughter with her children (one son and a daughter) is residing with her parents as well as with unmarried brothers and sisters. In three households of kinship composition 2, a widowed sister along with her children is living with her unmarried siblings. In two households of kinship composition 3, a separated sister along with her child has come back to live with her unmarried siblings. In two households of kinship composition 4, a divorced sister is residing along with her two unmarried daughters with her unmarried siblings. In three households of kinship composition 5, a widowed daughter and her unmarried children reside with her widowed mother and unmarried brothers. In four households of kinship composition 6, a divorced daughter along with her child has come back to live with her widowed mother and unmarried brother. And lastly, in two households of kinship composition 7, a widowed mother's deceased daughter's two unmarried daughters are living with their widowed grandmother-in-law and with their *mama-mami* (maternal uncle and aunty) and their unmarried children. It should be noted here that all the households as mentioned in Table 3.4 were simple households. They have become complex after the inclusion of *atmiya-svajans* (relatives) who are not supposed to reside in these households, but whose circumstances have compelled them to join these households (see Table 3.4). Khanum (1994) termed these households as 'circumstantial households.' So, all the 21 households in Table 3.4 have been complex through the process of reversal or deviation of the dominant norms of household formation. However, all the cases of return of widowed, or divorced or separated daughter and/or her children reveal that the natal household of a daughter is a shelter not only for her but also for her children. Even after her death, her children are taken care of by the members of her natal household.

Thus, the above mentioned cases (see Table 3.4) are actually reversal of norms of household formation, but very common in Srirampur village.

3.2.1.5 Inter-personal Relations in Simple and Complex Households

For understanding inter-personal relations within the households, it is necessary to take into account different type of households and the kinship composition therein. So in order to throw the light on inter-personal relations in the village households I shall again refer to various types and kinship compositions of village households. Let us begin with simple households.

3.2.1.5.1 Inter-personal Relations in Simple Households

Fifteen households each of which includes a single person, five of men and ten of woman (see Table 3.2: 1, 2). In such households the questions of interpersonal relations does not arise at all as these are formed of single person. Fifty-four simple households (see Table 3.2: 3) are each composed of a man and his wife. Interpersonal relations in such a household are usually peaceful. As noted earlier, interpersonal relations in the household are not static at all. Sometimes, however, tension may raise between husband and wife over a number of reasons, such as husband's neglect towards wife or wife's neglect towards husband, bad character of either husband or wife or both of them, non-payment of agreed dowry from wife's natal family, long age gap between husband and wife, incapability of wife to bear children etc. Separation or termination of marriage or divorce may also be happened in such cases. 458 simple households each of which is composed of a man, his wife/wives and their unmarried children (see Table 3.2: 4). In seven cases the man has two wives and their unmarried children from both the wives. The situation among them is different from that in the remaining 451 households because all these households comprise each of a man, his wife and unmarried children. However, in all these households, the man is the head of the household and he has to

maintain a balanced relationship between his two wives and their children. Because the presence of two wives in the same households can give rise to tension owing to a number of reasons. In most of the cases, they are jealous and diplomatic towards each other.

In 46 households there is a widowed mother and her unmarried children (see Table 3.2: 5). In all these households, the children are young as well as unmarried. The widowed mother is, therefore, the head of the household and in such a household the property left by the deceased husband is the main source of maintaining the household. A few, of course, depend upon the meagre earnings of their unmarried sons, when they grow up. But a widowed mother without a son can not do so because she will have to get her daughters married when they become nubile. However, the widowed mother usually runs the household with the help and advice of her deceased husband's kinsmen as well as friends. The widowed mother in each of these households has to play the role of mother and father for her unmarried children. Thus she shoulders enough burden and always remains worried about her children's, more so of her daughters well being. The widowed mothers are affectionate to their children and the children love and respect their mothers.

Twenty households (see Table 3.2: 6) have each a widower father and his unmarried children. The widower father in such households is the head of the household. The children including female children get more love and affection from his father. In such a household the widower father has to fulfil many duties for the children since their mother is dead. These households may be, of course, compared the 46 households composed of widowed mother and her unmarried children but the widower fathers have to face much more serious problems with regards to their unmarried daughters. The daughters cannot share their various problems freely with their father because they are not as free with their father as they were with their mother.

3.2.1.5.2 Inter-personal Relations in the Complex Household

There are certain interpersonal relationships in all the households in Srirampur, such as husband-wife, parent-child, brother-sister and among their other *atmiya-svajans* (relatives) in their respective households. These interpersonal relations between members of the household in the village are very important. However, for understanding interpersonal relations in the households, it is necessary to take into account of the different types of households as well as the kinship composition in all households in the village. As already mentioned, 21 of the 131 complex households are very different in their kinship composition from the rest 110 complex households. The kinship composition of 21 complex households, among other things, shows the reversal of the dominant norms regarding household formation. The composition of these households is shown in Table 3.4. So, in order to throw light on interpersonal relations and for a proper understanding of relations in those households, the reversal of norms in their formation has been pointed out. As mentioned earlier, 21 complex households which have become complex through the process of reversal of the dominant norms of household formation (Table 3.4).

- 1) In the first category of these households fall those 5 households each of which includes a divorce daughter and her child(ren) along with her parents as well as with her unmarried brothers and sisters (see Table 3.4:1). In such a case the divorced daughter does not find it difficult to adjust herself with the members of her natal household though it is unusual for a married daughter to stay in her natal households. But this situation has been forced on her because of her divorce. However, this divorced daughter has brought her children (i.e., one is son and the other is daughter) as well. They are called *nati* (daughter's son) and *natin* (daughter's daughter) for her parents while *bhagina* (sister's son) and *bhagini* (sister's daughter) for her siblings. They have joined their mother's natal household along with their mother after their mother is divorced. They get affection not only from her mother's parents but also from mother's siblings. It should be noted here that the

future of such *bhaginas/bhaginis* or *natis/natnis* cannot be normal because they are not being reared under the natural environ of parents. Such a situation may affect them much more seriously. Though the *bhaginis* may join their conjugal households living away either from their mothers or fathers, they cannot enjoy a normal conjugal life after their marriage. On the other hand, the *bhaginas* may stay on in these households or may go back to their father's natal home. If they stay on in their mother's natal households, tension may develop when they grow up and get married.

- 2) In 3 households each of which includes a widowed sister and her unmarried children along with her unmarried siblings, As the widowed daughter has the right to come back to her natal household, in 3 cases they have joined this brothers' household with the children after the death of the husband (see Table 3.4: 2). The children are *bhagina* and *bhagini* for the widow's brothers and sisters, and they have the legitimate right for their affection from their mother's natal side. They get love and affection from their mother's siblings. The unmarried brothers of the widowed sister are, however, tense because of their concern for the unmarried sister's marriage, once she becomes eligible. At the same time they have to bear obligations for the widow sister and her minor children until they become major
- 3) The interpersonal relations in two households each of which composed of an unmarried man, his unmarried siblings, and their one married sister who is now separated from husband. Not only that, one male child has come to live with his mother's natal household (see Table 3.4: 3). The minor child brought by the separated sister is called *bhagina* by the male head and the siblings of this household. However, he receives affection from his mother's unmarried siblings. But it is unusual for a separated woman to stay on in her father's natal household for long. In such a situation tension may develop for the separated sister as well as for her minor child until it is solved. However, the *bhagina* may stay on in his mother's natal home or may go back to his father's natal home

- 4) Two households (see Table 3.4: 4) each of which is composed of a man, his unmarried siblings, their divorced sister and unmarried children. Here the unmarried brothers of the divorced women are the head of the households. In these cases divorced daughters of the main households have come back to stay with their unmarried siblings. In all cases two children have also joined their mothers' natal household along with their mother. However, it is once again a matter of unusual tension for the unmarried siblings of the divorced sister because they have to think about the remarriage of their divorced sister and about marriages of their unmarried sisters in their household. As the siblings of the divorced sisters are unmarried, the women are of much help to the household chores of this household. However, after the remarriage of the divorce sister, she may join the new conjugal household leaving her children behind in her (mother's) natal household
- 5) Three households (see Table 3.4: 5) are composed of a widow mother, her unmarried sons, a widowed daughter and her two children (i.e., one male child and one female child). The widowed mother calls these minor children brought by the widowed daughter *nati* and *natin*. On the other hand, their mother's siblings call them *bhagina* and *bhagini*. They have joined their mother's natal household after the death of their father. It is a matter of concern for the widowed mother of these two minor children that their father is not alive. In such a situation the minor children are the future of the widowed daughter. Similarly, two female children of the two households have joined their mother's natal household after the death of their parents (see Table 3.4: 7). The married son of the widowed mother is the head of the household but the mother is the principal manager of domestic chores. Her married son consults her in taking major decisions. The son's wife has also easy relationship with her *sasuri* but her relationship with her husband's mother is of obedience and respect and the *sasuri* can have also command over the daughter-in-law. All the members of this household have to bear obligations for the minor children of the deceased daughter of the widowed mother until they become major.

In forty-eight of the 110 complex households in the normally complex household category, the father is mainly the figurehead (see Table 3.3: 1, 2, 3) while for all practical purposes the son is the decision maker and its executor. Of course, he consults his father and takes his advice. In such households, the daughters-in-law are also subordinate to their mothers-in-law. Actually, the mother-in-law is the real manager of domestic chores. The relationship between the daughter-in-law and the parents of her husband is that of respect and avoidance. However, tension may develop between them over the management of the household. The daughter-in-law may try to assert herself, which may not be liked by the mother-in-law who may want the former to be subservient to her. The mothers in such households, therefore, have to be very tactful in their dealings with their sons as well as their wives. However, there is a joking relation between *bhabhi* (elder brother's wife) and *debor* (husband's younger brother) and *nanad* (husband's younger sister) in the household. *Bhabhi* should always keep in mind that the latter may complain against her regarding her harsh treatment. However, the relationship between *debor* and *bhabhi* is different from the one between *nanad* and *bhabhi*. The *nanad* usually cannot easily accept the growing importance of *bhabhi* in the household. She never forgets that the *bhabhi* has come from a different family and consequently should not enjoy more love, affection as well as importance from the family members. So, the *nanad* very keenly watches the activities of the *bhabhi* and also frequently tries to find fault with her *bhabhi*. Of course, the *nanad* may change her attitude towards her *bhabhi* in some certain situations. For example, a daughter once married reverts back to her parents' household in case of her divorce or the death of her husband or when she is dependant on her brother who is head of the household. It should be noted here that in such a situation the *nanad* comes under the control and domination of *bhabhi*. Sometimes, such a *nanad* may be, therefore, highly neglected as well as oppressed by the *bhabhi* in the household.

Fifteen households (see Table 3.3: 4) are composed of a man, his wife and their unmarried children and his unmarried siblings. In each of these households the parents have died and an unmarried brother and a sister are staying with their married brother. Therefore, it has become the responsibility of the elder brother and his wife to look after the younger siblings. As noted earlier, in each of these households the unmarried sibling is a sister and in the other a brother. The unmarried sister is expected to join her conjugal household after marriage and similarly a sister-in-law (i.e., unmarried brother's wife after getting married) will join him after marriage. However, the relationship between the *bhabhi* (elder brother's wife) and *debor* is free and frank. It can also be termed as "joking relationship". Though the elder brother is the guardian and he has the right to instruct, discipline and even punish the younger ones, tension may develop in this household for several reasons. It is not unusual for the unmarried siblings that in the absence of their parents they are deprived of the protection from them in the even of any undue harsh treatment either from their elder brother or from his wife in their respective household.

Six households (see Table 3.3: 5) each of which consists of two married brothers, their wives, unmarried children and unmarried siblings. The elder brother is the head of the household and acts as the manager as well as executor of this household. Here the younger brother has to work under the authority of his elder brother. Of course, in the important affairs of the household the elder brother seeks consultation and support of the younger brother. In this household tension may develop among the various members over a number of issues. The younger brother may think that the elder brother's authority over him is detrimental to the growth of his individual personality and status. Not only that, tension may develop between the two brothers for management of household, property, economic function, conduct and so on. On the other hand, the *chotojha* (husband's younger brother's wife) may not agree to accept the authority of the *barojha* (elder brother's wife) as the female household head. Consequently, tension may also develop between the two brothers' wives for management and sharing of

domestic activities, children's affair and regarding other socio-familial affairs. The elder brother's responsibility is, therefore, very great in maintaining the unity of the household. He should not hurt his younger brother in any way, and his wife should be tactful in dealing with the *chotojha*. Thus the elder brother and his wife should play the role of the parents of the younger brother to prevent the likely tension in this form of household.

In four complex households each of which consists of a man, his wife, their unmarried children and a *dadi* (father's mother). The *dadi* is staying with one of her grandsons. This grandmother has chosen to stay her *nati's* (grandson) household even though her own son is alive at present, because it is alleged that her son's wife is quarrelsome. The widowed grandmother is very old and does not interfere in the day-to-day works of the household. Though she is not of much help to the members of this household, her presence is very much valued because of her age and experience. The relationship between the grandmother and her grandson as well as his wife is cordial. The grandson's unmarried children get love and affection from this old woman. There is also a good relationship between the father's *dadi* and the unmarried children of this household but their relationship with her is marked by respect and obedience. Eleven of the normally complex households shown in Table 3.3 are composed of a widowed mother, one married son, his wife and their unmarried children. In these households the widowed mother is the head of the household. The widowed mother generally does not interfere much in the activities of her son and his wife, although she may advice them regarding the matters, which are known to her. She fondles her grandchildren and take cares them and sometimes she assists her daughter-in-law in her domestic chores. However, tension may develop in such a household, especially between two women over the management of the household. If the mother-in-law asserts herself too much, leading to resentment on the part of the daughter-in-law which may not be liked by the daughter-in-law. Similarly, if the daughter-in-law maltreats her mother-in-law, tension may develop between them.

Six households (see Table 3.3: 8) are composed of widowed mother, two married sons, their wives and their unmarried children. In these households the eldest brother is the formal head of the household and the younger married brother is supposed to have a subordinate position under him. Here the younger one has to work under the authority of his elder brother. The widow mother does not interfere much in the activities of her sons and their wives, although she may advise and give her opinion if required. As noted earlier, both the two married brothers have two or more unmarried children, her main function is to fondle her grand children as well as help her daughters-in-law as much as possible in the domestic chores. It is noteworthy that three different subgroups of kinsmen live in this household. Consequently, tension may develop among them into different subgroups, such as (i) between two brother's wives over a number of issues, i.e., quarrel between children, sharing of domestic chores, prejudices against household members etc.; (ii) between widowed mother and her daughters-in-law for depriving and suppressing them; and (iii) between two brothers owing to differences of opinion on household affairs, such as economic matters, conduct, wives' quarrels, widowed mother's preference for any one particular son, etc. In such a household the widowed mother and the elder brother together play a significant role to prevent any likely tension and quarrel. Therefore, the widowed mother's and her elder son's responsibilities are very great in maintaining the unity of the household, using all their wisdom and tactfulness.

Ten households each of which is composed of a widowed mother, her unmarried children, her one married son and son's wife (see Table 3.3: 9). In all these cases the married sons have no children since they were newly married. In all these households the widowed mother is mainly the figurehead, while for all practical purposes the married son plays a vital role and consults his mother as well as takes her advice. However, the mother's command is much authority in such households, since the sons are newly married and their wives have not yet started to assert themselves.

In ten households each of which includes a widower father, his married son, his wife and the children (see Table 3.3: 10, 11). Three of these ten households (see Table 3.3: 11) each of which also includes one married grandson and his wife. However, the widower father is mainly the figurehead in these households, while for all practical purposes the son is the decision maker as well as its executor. In cases where emergency or important affairs are involved, he consults his father and takes his opinion and advice. The relationship between the widower father and the daughter-in-law is that of respect from the latter towards the former from a distance. The daughter-in-law of the widower father is more independent in such a household. She is the manager of domestic chores as her mother-in-law is dead. The widower father does not interfere much as regards domestic chores, which otherwise would have happened had the mother-in-law been alive. In the households where the married grand son of the widower father is residing with his wife, are under their parents' authority. The widower father assists his son in work. His relationship with his grand sons (son's son) as well as with his wife (if married) is cordial. Therefore, the grand children get the love and affection of their grandfather in this household. If any tension may develop in such a household, the widower father tries to mitigate tension and maintain unity of the household by providing advice, suggestion etc.

The remaining two (see Table 3.3: 12) households are composed of two married brothers, their wives and unmarried children, elder brother's one married son, his wife with their unmarried children. Here the elder brother is the head of the household, and the younger married brother is, therefore, supposed to have a subordinate position under him (elder brother). In such a household the younger one has to work under the authority of the former. In the socio-familial affairs and for other management of the household the elder brother is the manager and executor. Of course, he seeks consultation as well as support of the younger brother in most of the important matters of the households. However, tension may develop between the brothers for management of household, property,

economic function, conduct, and so on. It is not unusual for the younger brother to think that the authority of the elder brother over him is detrimental to the growth of his individual personality and status. Similarly, tension may also develop between the two brothers' wives over a number of issues, such as for management and sharing of domestic chores, children's affairs and other socio-familial affairs. In such a household the *barojha* (elder brother's wife) is usually the principal manager of domestic chores, while the *chotojha* (younger brother's wife) is subordinate to her *barojha* and she is expected to obey her (*barojha*). It should be noted here that the *chotojha* may not always agree to accept the authority of the *barojha* as the chief housekeeper. As a result, there is likely to be tension between the two brothers' wives. Moreover, the elder brother has got one married son and son's wife in this household, who are yet to assume any effective role in the management of the household. However, the elder brother is expected not to hurt his younger brother in any way, and his wife should be very tactful in dealing with the *chotojha* and her children. However, the responsibility of the elder brother and his wife is very great in maintaining the unity of the household as well.

3.2.1.6 Non-kin Members of the Household

The members of a household normally belong to the same family but this is not always so. All the inhabitants of Srirampur are not permanent residents of this village. There are a few outsiders who come and reside in this village for various purposes. Thus, in Srirampur, 37 persons who are seasonal labourers, maidservants, students' cum-house-tutors, and others are residing in different households. During the entire fieldwork I found twenty-five male and eleven female outsiders here. Seventeen of them are seasonal labourers (*hailas*), eleven maidservants, and nine students-cum-house-tutors. However, the following Table shows these outsiders along with their respective occupations.

Table 3.5
Distribution of Outsiders who are Residing in Srirampur and Their Occupation

Occupation	Outsiders		Total
	Male	Female	
Seasonal Labourers (<i>hailas</i>)	17	0	17
Students-cum-House-Tutors	7	0	7
Teachers-cum-House Tutors	2	0	2
Maid-servants	0	11	11
Total	26	11	37

Of the 37 outsiders, 17 are working on the agricultural lands of their respective households in which they live. It should be noted that among the seasonal labourers some are engaged in a yearly contract and some in a half yearly contract at their master's home. The seasonal labourers have permanent homes in their own villages where their wives, children, brothers, parents etc. are living. Sometimes, they go to visit their villages in the evening and return to their master's home at the next morning. The seven students-cum-house-tutors in the village are standing in both schools and *madrassa* and teach children of their respective households where they live in for educational purposes. Similarly, two teachers-cum-house-tutors (one in Srirampur High School and the other in Srirampur Dhakhil Madrasa) are teachers and they stay and take food in respective lodgers' households, and in return for this facility they teach the children of those households. The eleven maidservants are working as domestic servants in the respective households where they reside. Most of the maidservants come from the adjacent villages. Among eleven maidservants 8 are quite young and they are about 10 to 13 years in age. They have in their own villages their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters etc. living in their permanent homes. Sometimes, they visit their natal households. Three maidservants have come from the neighbouring villages whose ages are about up to 40 years and all of them are widow without any child. Among the widow maidservants two do not have parents but all of them have married brothers

reside in their natal homes in the neighbouring villages. Their brothers are not in a position to support them. That is why, they work and stay in their master's homes. They also sometimes, visit their natal homes. It should be noted here that although I have counted all the outsiders who resided in Srirampur for different purposes, they have not been counted as a part of the population of this village, because outsiders are not considered to be permanent villagers in the sense that they are bound to go back to their respective villages once their purposes are fulfilled. On the other hand, they may leave their lodger's household in case of the unwillingness of the lodgers to keep them in their respective households.

All these 37 persons have a contractual relationship with the members of the household in which they reside. Though they have no kinship obligation towards them, they are treated as members of the household for certain purposes. All these persons are also the members of their own households in their respective place or origin and at the same time, they are treated as members of the household where they are staying and working at present. In this way, they have membership in two households (one, in their natal households and other in their master's/lodger's households). Some appropriate fictional kin terms, such as *chacha* (father's brother), *mama* (mother's brother), *khala* (mother's sister), *bubu* (sister), *phupu* (father's sister), *chachi* (father's brother's wife) are used to address these persons, especially by the children of the lodger's households in Srirampur village.

3.2.2 Family as a Basic Unit of Kinship Organization

Family is the most important part of the social structure and it is a domestic group, which provides the most intimate needs of its members, a realm of privacy, familiarity and security. The family, on account of its smallness and intimacy, and the constant demands its members make on each other as whole person's is really a small community within itself, within which relationships are bound to be both intense and ambivalent: involving love but also hate; fulfilment

but also restriction; relaxation and confidence but also violence, conflict and enmity (Fletcher, 1981:23). It consists of the allocation of a pattern of rights and duties defining that area of life concerned with material, parental and domestic relationship (Sarker, 1997:7). In the rural society of Bangladesh 'a family normally consists of husband wife/wives, unmarried sons and daughters and dependents, such as parent's unmarried sisters, separated/divorced sisters and daughters' (Mizanuddin, 1996:30). On the basis of some existing social factors regarding membership pattern, living condition, social and economic dependency and so on-the family has been divided into nuclear, supplementary nuclear, joint as well as extended. All the members of those families perform certain functions and also fulfil obligations to each other. The family in the rural society of Bangladesh not only performs functions like sexual fulfilment as well as recreation, it is the fundamental social unit in the village society where all other social activities and earning, eating, child rearing and living pattern and the daily activities are centred on the family. Though the scope of activities in the family has been drastically reduced due to urbanization and modernization still family is the most important social institution of economical, recreational and emotional activities as Chakrabarti (2000) states, "... it is still the family which provides security and emotional succour through inter-personal relations and obligation between members. ...amongst all the support, it is the support from the family that keeps a person satisfied and contented in his or her life. This contentment with life again depends on one's financial and social status, health and activities of daily life" (Chakrabarti, 2000:20). In fact, it is the supreme institution in the social organization in rural society of Bangladesh. According to Aziz, "the family is the only institution so far devised by human society for the preservation of its future generation and its culture"(1979:46). However, all family systems aim to gain common goal and considered essential for the survival of society, which is procreation as well as rearing, and socialization of children. All these activities also interlock the family members into different network relationships for constitute on the social structure.

Although scholars of the concerned subject have defined the family in a number of ways, there is a controversy among them regarding its idea. Thus, there is considerable divergence of views among them on the definition of the term 'family'. However, the term is frequently used to describe more than one social unit. In this connection, I agree with Shah when he states, "family' refers on the one hand to genealogical models, without any definite indication of the activities or functions of the persons composing a model (as in "nuclear family" and "extended family") and on the other hand to social groups having certain activities or functions, without any definite indication of the persons composing the group (as in "family" in the sense of household and in "joint family" in the sense of a kind of property holding group)" (1973:3).

The Bengali word *parivar* is commonly used for the word 'family' in Bangladesh. Scholars have analysed the term from different point of view. Some scholars use the term *ghar* (literally meaning 'house'), *parivar* (family), and *khana* (household) as synonyms implying family as well (see Arefeen 1986, Karim 1988). Islam (1974) also makes a clear distinction between *ghar* (house), *bari* (homestead) and *parivar* (family), which refer to nuclear family, extended family and localized lineage respectively. According to Bhuiyan, "The meaning of the term *parivara* depends on the context where it is used. As the situation may vary from person to person and from time to time, so will the meaning of the term *parivara*. The persons said to be belonging to one *parivara* may not reside in the same household. They may be found spread into two, three or more households"(1978:88). Further he points out that ". . . if a man has five married sons living in five separate households with their wives and children, all these five households taken together will constitute his *parivara*" (*ibid.* 89). On the other hand, "The term *parivara* refers to a set of one's own people taking all living rather than a dead male as its referent. . . . It includes persons related by shared bodily substance to a common living man called *svami* or "master": his wife, his sons, his sons' wives and sons, and perhaps even their wives and sons. The unmarried daughters of these men are included only temporarily. It is

stated quite explicitly that a married daughter belongs not to her father's *parivar* but to her husband's" (Inden and Nicholas, 1977:5).

It is clear from the above discussion that the word "*parivar*" has a number of referents. Therefore, an attempt has been made to elaborate the concerned matter based on my observation in Srirampur. The villagers in Srirampur use the term *parivar* in several senses, such as household and family. The people also frequently use the words *ghar* (house), *bari* (homestead), *khana* (household) and *parivar* (family) as mutually interchangeable ones, but they distinguish between them. In this context, Rahaman rightly states, "A villager sometimes use *ekatra* as a substitute for *parivar* but it is also distinguished from it. For example, frequently an *ekatra* is composed of parents and their married son(s) and their wives and children residing in a housing complex and taking food together cooked on a single *chula* (hearth). On the other hand, the members of his type of group also live in two or more separate *ekatras* (households) but refer to themselves as constituting one *parivar* (family)" (1990:120-121).

However, the *parivar* (family) in Srirampur has the following features: firstly, the maximum extent of constituting the *parivar* (family) in Srirampur that a living man usually includes his wife, their children (sons and daughters), sons' wives and children, and the grand sons (sons' sons), their wives and children. Secondly, after the death of a man (i.e., in the absence of a common living man), his sons (i.e., brothers), their wives and children continue to be the members of the same *parivar*, whether they reside in the same household, or in the same homestead, or in the same village or if those persons reside outside the same *bari* (homestead) or *gram* (village), they do not lose the membership of their *parivar*. Thirdly, after the death of the brothers (sons of a common man who is absent), of course, their sons (i.e., patrilineal male cousins) do not continue a *parivar*, but form a *gushti* (patrilineal kin group). Fourthly, the married daughters in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh enjoy membership of two *parivars*. In fact, they are the members of their fathers' *parivars* as well as that of the husbands'. Therefore, they enjoy social, economic and other rights in

both the *parivars*. It is not unusual in Srirampur that a *jamai* (daughter's husband) does not stay in his wife's natal home with his wife and children. If a *jamai* resides in his wife's natal home with his wife and the children they are not included in wife's *parivar*. Thus, it is clear that the word *parivar* has a several number of referents and, therefore, the loose use of the term is not helpful for any systematic discussion as well.

3.2.2.1 Types of Family

The concept of family and its types have always been a major focus of interest of sociologists as well as social anthropologists in their study of small-scale rural communities (Brown and Forde 1950, Arensberg 1955, Goody 1958, Gore 1961, Orenstein 1961, Bhuiyan 1978, Karim 1990, Rahaman 1990, Sarker 1997). To understand the social and cultural processes in South Asian societies it is essential to focus on structural aspects of the family typology because in such societies the word '*paribar*' (family) symbolises unity and also refers to an economic unit (Karim, 1992:20). However, the type of family is a dynamic phenomenon in nature due to a number of factors, like birth, death, marriage, divorce, separation and migration of its members. The type of family, therefore, depends upon the composition of its membership pattern and the associated development of many kinds, such as conjugal, parental, and filial relationship, which also vary from one society to another or even within the different segments of the same society. Studies on changes in family types are meagre and there is a paucity of historical data in Bangladesh's society. It is difficult to say how far modern economy; spread of education and other civic facilities have changed the types of family in the rural society (Sarker, 1997:48). However, this section is an attempt to present a clear picture about the different types of family regarding its relationship pattern, social and economic dependency and living conditions in rural Bangladesh. In order to understand the nature of family in detail it is necessary to deal with it at two levels, one; at the level of filial relationship (i.e., father-son relationship) and other; at the level of fraternal relationship (i.e., the relationship between brothers). In order to understand in

detail the nature of family in Srirampur further I have classified these two types of family into different types. First of all, I have classified the filial families into two categories such as, integrated filial family and dispersed filial family and considered the remaining families as non-filial family. Similarly, the fraternal family is classified into three sub-sections, i.e., integrated fraternal family, dispersed fraternal family and non-fraternal family. Thus, the types of family are confined to filial families (including integrated, dispersed and non-filial) and fraternal families (including integrated, dispersed as well as non-fraternal) in nature in Srirampur.

An integrated family refers to parents and their married son(s) who live in a single household. Typically an integrated family includes here the parents as well as a married man and woman in the relation of husband and wife with their unmarried children. Such a family is simultaneously a household. However, a common residence, common property, a common kitchen and a system of mutual obligation among the different members are the main characteristics of an integrated family. There are 176 families of this category in Srirampur under study (see Table 3.6). When one or more of the married sons live in separate households from their parents, and thus they constitute a dispersed family. Typically a dispersed family includes here a married man and woman in the relation of husband and wife with their unmarried children. There are 63 dispersed filial families in Srirampur village. Of these families, 9 (nine) have each two households, 5 have three households, 10 have each four households, 8 have each five households, 5 have each six households, and 26 have each seven households. These 63 dispersed families also have a total of 325 households. It should be noted here that there are 325 households each of which is a part of a family, i.e., of a dispersed filial family but 176 families in the village each of which is also a household as well. But there are 258 non-filial families in the village and every one of which is simultaneously a household in nature in Srirampur. It is mentionable that every one of which has no possibility of being even a part of filial family due to demographic circumstances. Of these 258

households, 245 are simple and 13 are complex in nature of these total 258 households. There 232 are male-headed households, both the parents of the male head are dead and he has no married son of his own and in the case of the 26 female-headed households, her dead or divorced husband's both the parents are dead and she has no married son of her own. However, regarding the structure and composition of these households, the question of his/her being a part of filial family (i.e., parents-son(s) relationship) does not arise at all. Therefore, the majority of these households (232 out of 258) belonging to non-filial family/household are not only simple households but also non-filial families in nature in Srirampur. A clear picture about the types of filial families in the researched village is given in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6
Distribution of Filial Families in Srirampur

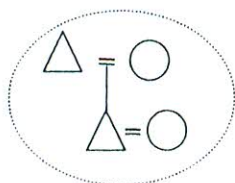
Kinship Composition	No. of Families	No. of Households
1. Integrated filial family composed of a single household	176	176
	176	176
2. Dispersed filial family	63	325
Composed of two households	9	18
Composed of three households	5	15
Composed of four households	10	40
Composed of five households	8	40
Composed of six households	5	30
Composed of seven households	26	182
3. Non-filial family composed of a single household (245 simple and 13 complex)	258	258
	258	258
Grand total	497	759

It was observed that an integrated family does not remain like that for a long time due to a number of factors. Due to increase of these factors as well as the changes in their membership pattern through the different types of family in Srirampur, they start residing separately by establishing several separate households. In this context, Bhuiyan comments, "...all the members of a *parivara* need not reside together in a household. They may reside in different households" (1978:351).

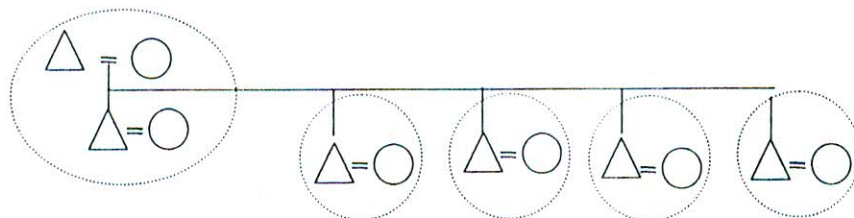
It should be made clear that in the case of households belonging to the dispersed filial families in Srirampur, all are not cases of the total violation of the norm of co-residence of parent(s) as well as their married son(s). It was observed in the village that a few married sons live with the parents while other married son(s) live separately due to spread of education, modernization, increase of civic facilities, the spread of female literacy, women's mobility, participation in economic activities and migration.

Chart 3.4
GENEALOGICAL CHART FOR TABLE 3.6

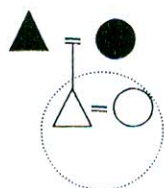
(1) Integrated filial family



(2) Dispersed filial family



(3) Non-filial family



SYMBOLS		=	Related by marriage
△	Male alive		Related by descent
▲	Male dead		
○	Female alive		
●	Female dead		
○	Household		

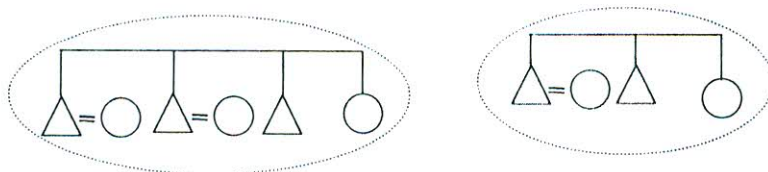
As stated earlier, a man's *parivar* or family includes himself, his wife, their sons and daughters, sons' wives and children and in some cases the grandsons (sons' sons), their wives and children and their married sons, sons' wives and children continue to be the members of the same *parivar* or family. The *parivar* or family relationship is continued between the married brothers' even after the death of their parents. The married sons (i.e., brothers) may begin their marital life in the filial family and after the death of their parents; they may form a fraternal family with different authority structure. In other wards, the filial family with more than one son develops in course of time into a fraternal family. In this way, the family relationship is continued between the married sons, (i.e., brothers) with a different authority structure. The types of fraternal family in Srirampur are given in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7
Distribution of Fraternal Families in Srirampur

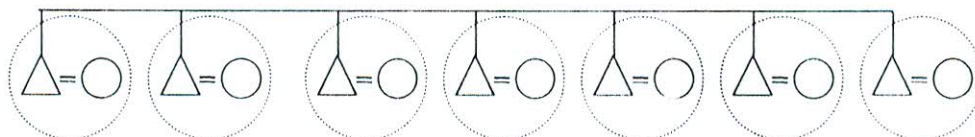
Kinship Composition	Number of Families	Number of Households
1. Integrated fraternal family	28	28
Composed of married brothers' households	11	11
Composed of one married brother with unmarried siblings	17	17
2. Dispersed fraternal family	49	218
Composed of two households	5	10
Composed of three households	8	24
Composed of four households	14	56
Composed of five households	9	45
Composed of six households	8	48
Composed of seven households	5	35
3. Non-fraternal, non-filial households	12	12
Grand total	89	258

Chart 3.5
GENEALOGICAL CHART FOR TABLE 3.7

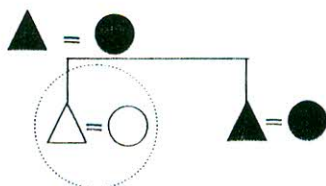
(1) Integrated fraternal family



(2) Dispersed fraternal family



(3) Non-fraternal, non-filial family



SYMBOLS

	Male alive	=	Related by marriage
	Male dead		Related by descent
	Female alive		
	Female dead		
	Household		

It can be clearly seen from the Table 3.7 that 89 families in Srirampur are fraternal families in nature. Of the total fraternal families, 28 are integrated fraternal families. It was also observed that of these integrated fraternal families, there are eleven families each of which is composed of two married brothers living jointly in a same household after their parents' death. And 17 other integrated fraternal families; each is composed of one married brother with his unmarried siblings. As an integrated fraternal family is characterized by co-residence and by joint property arrangements between the brothers, it is the responsibility of the married brother to look after the unmarried siblings(s) after

the death of parents. Table 3.7 also shows that there are 49 families in the study village which are dispersed fraternal families in nature and each of which is constituted of two or more married brothers living in separate households. When they start residing separately by establishing several separate households, the family relationship begins between the members of the divisive households and thus family bonds or kinship relations tie them together. Of the dispersed fraternal families in Srirampur, 5 families are each composed of two households, 8 are each composed of three households, 14 are each composed of four households, 9 are each composed of five households, 8 are each composed of six households and 5 are each composed of seven households. There are 12 families in Srirampur, which are non-filial and non-fraternal in nature. The families have been formed in the case of demographic circumstances. Of the 12 non-filial and non-fraternal families, each of which is a simple household of a married man whose both the parents are dead, he has no married son of his own and he has also no married or unmarried brother. This situation does not allow possibility of forming either filial or fraternal family, whether integrated or dispersed families in the village under study. In all these cases the owners of families are economically independent and no kin group usually exercises wide control over the behaviour of its members. However, in all these 12 cases a simple household is considered to be a family in the context of other families in the village and thus we find that the same unit being called a household as well as a family in nature in Srirampur.

3.2.2.2 Relationships in the *Parivar* (Family)

The family is the only institution so far devised by human society for the preservation its future generation and its culture. Each and every individual of the family is dependent on others in connection with the daily activities and other socio-economic and religious functions which constitute a network of relationship among them. About the existing relationship pattern in a Bangladeshi village, Sarker states, "The family is primarily responsible not only for the dependent young but also for the care of its aged members and for any

of its members suffering from illness, accident, or misfortune. It consists of the allocation of a pattern of rights and duties defining that area of life connected with marital, parental and domestic relationships" (1997:7). However, the *parivar* or family relationship in Srirampur exists between the parents and their married son(s), and is continued between brothers even after the death of the parents. After the brothers' death, their sons (i.e., patrilineal male cousins) do not constitute a *parivar* (family). They may reside in different households and the family relationship more or less ceases, and then they form a *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) relationship.

The types of family have been divided in the village under study into filial and fraternal families. It should be noted here that all these integrated families each of which is constituted of a single household. The intra-familial relationships in these families are, therefore, the same as those observed within the household. Thus, the members of the different types of family perform certain functions and fulfil obligations to each other, which interlock them into different network relationships as well. On the other hand, the intra-family relationships in the filial dispersed as well as fraternal dispersed families are in fact inter-household relationships.

Usually, the households forming a family of filial dispersed or fraternal dispersed are located in a *bari* (homesteads), but sometimes they may be dispersed in two or more *baris* (homesteads) or sometimes in two or more *paras* (wards) of the village due to a number of reasons, such as shifting of a household due to largeness of the *parivar* (family) and shortage of space in the *bari* (homestead) complex when a family expands. For example, Charu *Parmanik* of *Sarkerpara* who has four sons. Three sons of them have formed separate households in *Dhakinpara*. Three sons namely, Chandu *Parmanik*, Abed Ali *Parmanik* and Zahir Uddin *Parmanik* have shifted their households to a new *bari* (homestead) in *Dhakhinpara* (South ward) because they did not get enough space in the ancestral *bari* for building their houses. Similarly, the different households (i.e., a filial dispersed or fraternal dispersed family) may also be located in several villages. In most cases, however, the households of such a family are located in

the same *bari* (homestead) or at least in the same village. It was observed in the village that it is common for sons to separate from their parents due to a number of factors within a few years of their marriage. As a result of this separation they start as an elementary family (i.e., a filial dispersed or a fraternal dispersed family) and gradually it becomes larger as children are added to it. When sons of a parent grow up, get married and continue to live with their wives in the parental home with co-owned property the unit can once again be classed as an integrated filial family. The members of a *parivar* (both in the filial dispersed and the fraternal dispersed category) have a number of things in common. They use the same surname, if they have any, with their names. Usually, their *bari* (homestead) is known by a common name. Take for example, *Sarker bari*, *Mullah bari*, *Mondal bari* etc.

The family unit in Srirampur village as well as in Bangladesh is called a *ghar*, which literally means 'homes' and a senior male member heads the *ghar*. The head of each family is locally termed as *malik* (owner), *murubbi* (eldest living male), *pradhan* (main), and *karta* (head) interchangeably to refer to the head of the family. These are the terms of reference used by kin members and unrelated people for identification of the head of the *parivar* (family). The *malik* (literally, owner; in this context, head of the *parivar*) of the *parivar* exercises authority over the members as a guardian as well as social adviser, thus commanding the patriarchal authority in the *ghar*. He is, therefore, regarded as the principal manager of the family affairs and as such is the patron of all dependents of the household. It was also observed that the wife of the eldest male or the next male is given the second place. A respectful son very often describes his old widowed mother as the head of the family. The senior most woman of the *parivar* is called *grihini* and usually she performs functions as *grihini*, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, and fetching water, rearing the children or supervises such functions. It should be noted that as long as the eldest remains the real head of the family, the mother is given responsibility for domestic management. Sons of the parents are expected to obey her and the daughters-

in-law are expected to perform household duties according to her guidance. However, the parents dominate the scene in their youth and early middle age. With approaching old age when they become ineffective in the management of household economy, including property, they gradually retire from such activities. In such a situation, they remain the heads of the family nominally, but their sons have been delegated power authority to conduct the management of property as well as profession as they like. Sometimes, the people of dispersed family own certain things, such as land, *bari* (homestead), pond, parlour, country boat, path way within the *bari* compound and graveyard in common and manage them as joint property. This certain inherited paternal property is kept separate for common use with a view to acquire maximum benefit. At the time of familial occasions, the members of a *parivar* (family) take food cooked at a single *chula* (kitchen), such as *milad*, *akika*, *idul-feter*, *idul-Azha* etc. The eldest male in the *parivar* (family) may invite the people of other households of his *parivar* to join his household. Sometimes the households under a dispersed family exchange various items among themselves, such as cooked food, vegetables, fish, meat, grains etc. This exchange may be in the form of help from one household of the *parivar* to another or in the form of gifts. It has been observed that in a few cases the father resides in the household of one son and the mother resides in the household of another son. In such a case, if a special dish is prepared in the household where the mother stays, is sent to the household where the father stays, and vice versa. The households belonging to a dispersed family in Srirampur may receive some guests in common. Take for example, if a few brothers reside in different households they may receive their out married sisters, grand daughters and such other guests jointly, or the guests may stay in each of the households of the family by rotation.

A man of dispersed family from the village prefers to borrow things or money from the members of his own family. In some cases, certain cooperation is occasionally needed from the group of households to overcome the bottlenecks of agricultural operation in rural society of Bangladesh. The different households

of a *parivar*, sometimes depend upon one another for certain cooperation, such as loans of food grain, exchange of labour, sharing of agricultural implements and bullock, sharing of common courtyard for processing harvested agricultural products, sharing of utensils and so on. When the different households of a *parivar* face the above-mentioned situation, they expect that they will be helped and receive co-operation by the members of the family in due course. Usually, a man in rural society approaches someone outside the *parivar* (family) for the above-mentioned things only when he fails to get them from members within the different households of a *parivar*.

The members of the different households of a *parivar* in Srirampur may expect help as well as cooperation on their socio-culture, economic and other activities, such as selling or buying land or house, starting litigation, leaving the *bari* (homestead) permanently, arranging marriage, finalizing a guest list for a wedding or funeral feast etc. During these activities the members of a *parivar* prefer the prior consultation with the senior member of the *parivar*, which is also regarded obligatory and useful. The elders of the *parivar* always expect the smooth relationships among the members of the family. The elders, therefore, always admonish all family members not to involve in the habits, detrimental to individual as well as family prestige, such as gambling, addiction to narcotics or country-made liquor, stealing, and premarital or extramarital sexual relationships. Such admonition frequently creates a special distance between the younger and older generation. The senior members of the family may also take initiative to mitigate the misunderstanding between the couple. However, in all such cases, they will be within their customary realm of power if they intervene. The senior members of the *parivar* can demand that their advice be taken into account. Actually, the relationship of affection and respect among juniors and seniors specifies their roles and thus creating equilibrium as well as balance in the different households of a *parivar* in Srirampur.

All these, however, do not mean that all the members of the different households of a *parivar* (i.e., dispersed family) have harmonious relationship

with each other. Tension may arise among them. It may emerge between male and female members of the different households of a *parivar*. This tension may arise due to clash of economic interests, person's prejudices, rivalry, jealousy, children's quarrels, and distribution of business profit share in joint production, celebration of social and familial function, sour relationship and bad relation between members, dating back to the time when they were in the same household. These tense relations may develop into open quarrel or conflicts between the two households of a *parivar*. Sometimes, domestic quarrels as well as dissensions may develop among the members of the *parivar*. In some cases it may take place in the course of several years. The lack of cordial relationship among the different households of a *parivar* may exhibit itself in several ways. For example, the members of the dispersed family may stop speaking and visiting each other. The exchange of things between them may also be stopped. They may not invite each other on the occasion of familial festivals. Sometimes a quarrel may also arise, and in an extreme case, they may even fight with each other. In such a situation, the household of a dispersed family may get divided into several sub-groups. It is mentionable that when the alliance and re-alliance may arise among the members of the dispersed family of a *parivar*, all the members of the family may not be involved to solve the crisis. Usually, the male head of the *parivar* tries to solve such crisis within the *parivar*. In some cases, some other senior persons in the village may be involved to solve it.

Although sub-grouping, alliance and re-alliance, jealousy, rivalry, hostility etc. are observed in the different households of a *parivar*, its members have a sense of belonging to its collectively due to their common ancestor. The members of a *parivar* have a thought in common that their common ancestor is the protector of this collective consciousness. Therefore, they expect solidarity in the environment of heterogeneity and they act unitedly in case of matters demanding collective action. It is important to note that co-operation and conflict co-exist in the inter-household relations within a *parivar* in Srirampur as well as in other parts of Bangladesh (Bhuiyan 1978, Aziz 1979, Mashreque 1980,

Rahaman 1990). The location of the different households (i.e., a dispersed family) of a *parivar* is another factor, which influences the degree of interaction among them. If its constituent households are dispersed in different *paras* (wards) or villages, the degree of interaction between them decreases and co-activities are reduced and weekend. On the other hand, if the households are located in the same homestead, even in the same *para* (ward), the proximity and emotional closeness bind the members of a *parivar*

3.2.3 *Gushti* (Lineage) as a Basic Unit of Kinship Organization

The *gushti* is an important unit of kinship organization. This is a patrilineal kin group, which has social, political, economic and other activities among them. It is also a larger kinship group than other units of kinship organization (i.e., household and family). The term *gosthi* comes from Sanskrit, the etymological meaning of which is "meeting", i.e., people with common interests who meet together, that is to say "kindred" (Karim, 1990: 83). Regarding the lineage group Barman (1988) rightly states, "Lineage group refers to a group of persons tracing their descent from the same ancestor and plays the role of an important source of power. Though not rule, it is usually found that the lineage people try to maintain good relations among themselves. This good relationship brings not only the group solidarity but also attracts other lineage groups, particularly the smaller ones, to lend their support to them on account of numerical largeness of the lineage" (Barman, 1988:74). A *gushti* is, therefore, a group of cooperation as well as a larger group of kinship organization.

A *gushti* in Srirampur is a patrilineage, which designates a group of households, or families and they are agnatically related. Common descent provides a sense of belonging that binds together the members of a *gushti*. As a male ancestor is the common referent for the members of a *gushti*, they are descendents from a common male ancestor in the male line. Both male as well as female children of a common male ancestor are members of the *gushti*. A man's wife is not included in

his *gushti*, while even out married daughters are included in it. The wife of a *gushti* man is included in her father's *gushti*. Daughters belong to the *gushti* of their father, but are included in that of their husband upon marriage. Therefore, after marriage they are identified with another *gushti* but do not shun their fellowship in the *gushti* of their parental home (Mashreque, 1980:99). Usually, a daughter's husband as well as her children is not included in her *gushti*, but in some cases they may be included. In this regard Rahaman (1990) opined that in an exceptional circumstance (i.e., *ghar-jama*), when the husband of a *gushti* daughter takes up residence among his wife's *gushti*, he is considered as a member of his father-in-law's *gushti*. Sometimes, he may inherit the property, position, status and patronymics of his father-in-law. But this statement is not beyond criticism. People of Srirampur do not agree to this idea. The word *gushti* is, therefore, sometimes loosely used to include non-kin and even affines. For example, if a child of a daughter in the *gushti* is born in her natal home and continues to reside there, he/she is normally identified as a member of their mother's *gushti*. In this case, they are included in this *gushti* because they are born and brought up in the village of their mother's father. It should be noted that the female child will marry and join her husband in time but the male child of the daughter of a *gushti* may become the founder of a separate *gushti* in the next generation. However, a *gushti* is more inclusive group in one sense but in another sense it is less inclusive (i.e., exclusive). A *gushti* is inclusive when it includes non-patrilineal kin and sometimes even affines as its members. On the other hand, a *gushti* is exclusive if it excludes affines (wives) and non-patrilineal kin from being members (Rahaman, 1990: 171).

Usually, the members of a *gushti* share a common residence and reside close together in a cluster of *baris* (homesteads), but it is not unusual for a prosperous household of a *gushti* to settle down on a residential plot in different *paras* of the same village, and sometimes even in different villages, who can

identify as well as trace their common ancestry to the same *gushti* as well. In the village *bari* members are united by the bond of *gushti* relation thus indicating the concentration of the *gushti* people in a compound. *Gushti* sometimes may develop into a wider network of kinship relations transcending the *bari* boundary to include within its bounds those living elsewhere in other villages or towns. So the boundary of the *gushti* may stretch far to other villages and towns wherein live the fellows of the same (Mashreque, 1980: 98).

However, the *gushti* denotes the common identity as to birth of its members and belongs to a specific surname regarding religious tradition as well as the occupation of ancestors, political role or owing to their forefather's leadership positions in the society. There are 38 *gushtis* in Srirampur. Each *gushti* has a patronymic of its own, which is locally known as *padobi* (literally, a position; in this context, "surname"). The most visible criterion for identifying a *gushti* is the patronymic *padobi* (surname); although similarity in patronymic *padobis* does not necessarily mean that individuals belong to the same *gushti*. In the study village the following patrinyim surnames are in use: *parmanik*, *mondal*, *sarker*, *mulla*, *fakir*, *sardar*, *munshi*, *sikder*, *shah*, *shaikh*, *khandokar*, *khan*, *abbasi* and *karigor*. It is important to note that the same patronymic surname is used by more than one *gushti* in Srirampur as well as in other parts of Bangladesh (Bhuiyan 1978, Aziz 1979, Mashreque 1980, Rahaman 1990, Karim 1990), but this does not mean that they are descendants of a common ancestor. They can be separate *gushtis* descended from separate households also.

There are 38 *gushtis* in the study village, each of which is located together in a single cluster of *baris* (homesteads) in a *para* bearing its surname and not usually dispersed in several *paras* (wards). However, Table 3.8 shows the *gushtis* in Srirampur with their *padobis* (surnames) and location in *paras* (wards).

Table 3.8
Distribution of *Gushtis* in Srirampur with their *Padobis* (Surnames) and Location in *Paras* (Wards).

<i>Podabi</i> (Surname) of <i>gushti</i>	<i>Dakhinapara</i> (South ward)	<i>Sarkerpara</i>	<i>School- Para</i>	<i>Maddhapara</i> (Middle word)	<i>Natunpara</i> (New ward)	<i>Uttarpara</i> (North ward)	Total
<i>Parmanik</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
<i>Sarker</i>	1	1	1	-	1	1	5
<i>Mondal</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
<i>Mulla</i>	1	-	1	1	1	1	5
<i>Sardar</i>	-	-	-	1	1	1	3
<i>Fakir</i>	1	-	-	1	1	1	4
<i>Munshi</i>	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
<i>Abbasi</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Sikder</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Shah</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Shaikh</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Khandokar</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>Khan</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
<i>Karigor</i>	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total	8	4	6	5	8	7	38

Table 3.8 shows that of the total 38 *gushtis*, 6 *gushtis* bear the *padobi* (surname) *parmanik* (a leader of the *samaj* who enjoys leadership status), 5 *gushtis* bear *sarker* (literally, government or servant of the government; in this context, a *padobi* (surname), which was offered to those who were responsible for maintaining the land accounts on feudal estates during the British and pre-British period), 6 *gushtis* bear *mondal* (leaders of the village *samajs* who enjoy leadership status in the village *samajs*), 5 *gushtis* bear *mullah padobi* (religious congressional leader with religious education), 3 *gushtis* bear *sardar* (lineage of leaders), 4 *gushtis* bear *fakir padobi* (*fakirs* are those whose forefathers lived as mendicants), and 2 *gushtis* bear *munshi padobi* (lineage of the people of religious Clark). The remaining all other *gushtis* in Srirampur bear each a

separate *padobi* (surname): *Abbasi* (the members of this *gushti* could not provide any information as to why they hold this *padobi*), *sikder* (lineage of 'advocates'), *shah* (lineage of men whose forefathers were associated in oil business), *shaikh* (lineage of men from Arabia), *khandoker* (lineage of Mohammedans saint), *khan* (lineage of men from Pakistan), *karigor* (lineage of men who are related with handicraft). Table 3.8 also reveals that some of the *padobis* (i.e., *parmanik*, *sarker*, *mondal*, *mullah*, *sarder*, *fakir* and *munshi*) are similar in all *paras* of the study village. However, it is mentionable here that the identification of all *gushtis* in Srirampur as well as in other villages of Bangladesh are complicated for both researchers and villagers because many of them do not keep genealogical records. I was, therefore, careful to identify the *gushti* through checking and crosschecking the interview data. I also came to know through interview and observation that there is no rigid rule in using the patronymic *padobis*, but it is true that a patronymic *padobi* is the apparent identification of a *gushti* although real membership depends on tracing descent from an acknowledged ancestor.

The size of the *gushti* in Srirampur is indicated by the level of upward generation. If a *gushti's* members trace their relationship to an ancestor, one or two generations earlier, it is a small one in size. On the other hand, when the members of a *gushti* reside in the village for a long time and they trace their relationship more than two generations earlier, then it is a large one. The number of households and the number of its population also influences the size of the *gushti*. Table 3.9 shows the size of *gushtis* in Srirampur according to the number of its households and population. The size of *gushtis* in Srirampur also varies from 1 (one) household to 15+ households (see Table 3.9). It should be noted that the village *gushtis* have been classified into three categories according to the number of households, such as (i) small (i.e., one to five households each), (ii) medium (i.e., seven to twelve households each), and (iii) large (i.e., thirteen to fifteen plus households each).

Table 3.9
Distribution of the Size of the *Gushtis* in Srirampur by the Number of
Households and Population

Categorization of <i>Gushti</i>	<i>Gushti</i> Households	Number of <i>Gushtis</i>	Total Households	Population
Small	1	1	1	6
	2	3	6	27
	3	3	9	43
	4	1	4	23
	5	3	15	68
Small sub-total (1 – 5)		11	35	167 (5.50%)
Medium	7	3	21	96
	9	1	9	42
	12	1	12	54
Medium sub-total (7 to 12)		5	42	192 (6.33%)
Large	13	2	26	117
	14	2	28	135
	15	1	15	67
	15+	17	578	2357
Large sub-total (13 to 15)		22	647	2676 (88.17%)
Grand total		38	724	3035

Table 3.9 shows that of the 38 *gushtis* in Srirampur, 11 *gushtis* are small in size, which have 35 households and 167 (5.50%) persons, 42 households belong to 5 medium *gushtis* and their total population is 192 (6.33%). The majority of the total households, 647 households belong to 22 large *gushtis* and the total number of population in these *gushtis* is 2676 (88.17%) and also the maximum number of households as well as the number of persons belongs to these *gushtis* in the village. It is mentionable that *abbasi gushti* of *Sarkerpara*, *sikder* and *shah* of *Dhakhinpara*, *shaikh* and *khandoker* of *Natunpara*, *khan* of *Uttarpara* and *karigor* of *Schoolpara* belong to small *gushti*. On the other hand, *sardar* of *Maddhapara*, *sarder* of *Natunpara*, *sardar* of *Uttarpara*, *fakir* of *Dhakhinpara*, *fakir* of *Uttarpara* and *munshi* of *Dhakhinpara*, *munshi* of *Schoolpara* belong to medium *gushti*, while *parmanik*, *sarker*, *mondal* and *mullah gushtis* of different *paras* in Srirampur are large *gushtis* in size. These four *gushtis* are the dominant *gushtis* in the village; *sarker gushti* is the most dominant and the members of this *gushti* who by dint of their linkages with the

government and with high officials have long dominated the informal political structure of the village. However, there are several reasons for the different sizes of the *gushtis* in Srirampur. Firstly, the large four *gushtis* (i.e., *parmanik*, *sarker*, *mondal* and *mullah*) are formed of the descendents of the earliest settlers in the village, while most of the small *gushtis* (i.e., *abbasi*, *sikder*, *shah*, *shaikh*, *khandoker*, *khan* and *karigor*) are formed of the descendants of later settlers. Secondly, most of the members of the large four *gushtis* reside in Srirampur itself, while many members of some of the small *gushtis* reside in other villages or towns due to the spread of education, modernization, increase of civic facilities, migration and so on. Thirdly, the population of some of the small *gushtis* in the researched village did not grow much due to demographic accidents (i.e., death of male members and birth of only female children), although they are residing in the village for a long time. Thus, the demographic reasons act as a bar in the increase of the size of a *gushti*.

3.2.3.1 Power Distribution among *Gushti* Members

The *gushti* members in Srirampur do not enjoy equal status as well as power in the village *samaj*. Therefore, the *gushtis* in Srirampur vary from one another in their power. Based on observation and informants' opinions some various important factors are identified, which determine the power of a village *gushti*. Of these, five are identified as major factors. These are: (a) membership strength of a *gushti*; (b) good and solid economic foundation of a *gushti* people; (c) having educated and professional persons in the *gushtis*; (d) affinal relations with bigger *gushtis* and (e) to establish good connection with the people involved in administration and government organization. It seems that a small *gushti* generally wants to ally themselves with the bigger *gushtis* in their respective *para* to receive patronage and support of the latter, which obviously increase the strength of the former in the village. It was observed that *gushti sikder* with *parmanik* and *gushti mondal* with *mullah* are allied. *Gushti abbasi* and *mondal* of *Sarkerpara* are allied with *sarker gushti* in that *para*, *mullah* with *mondal*, and *sarker* with *parmanik* in *Schoolpara*; *fakir* and *sarder* with

parmanik, *mondal* with *mullah* in *Madhapara* are allied in that *para*; *shaikh* and *khandoker* with *parmanik*, *fakir* with *mondal* in *Natunpara*; *khan* with *parmanik*, *mullah* and *sarker* with *mondal* and *fakir* in *Uttarpara* are allied to increase the strength of the small *gushtis* in the village. It has also been observed in Srirampur that according to the dictates of the bigger *gushtis*, small *gushtis* participate in the activities of these bigger *gushtis* with which they are allied. Sometimes small *gushtis* in the study village participate in the activities of large *gushtis* located even outside of the *para*. This situation usually depends on two certain factors, such as (i) when any of the smaller *gushti* gets financial, political and other help and cooperation from large *gushtis*, and (ii) any of the smaller *gushtis* has kinship or affinal relations with *gushtis* outside of the *para*.

3.2.3.2 Marriage Practices among *Gushti* (Lineage) People

Kinship ties in Srirampur as well as in other villages of Bangladesh are extended through affinal connections. But to be prestigious and politically powerful in the village; a man often marries into a family or into a *gushti* with status equal to or greater than his own family's or *gushti*'s. Thus a number of marriage ties in Srirampur are established between the members of different *gushtis* over the years. It should be noted that though there is a tendency to seek marital alliance outside the circle of kin and this fact is supported by data (see Table 4.4). Nevertheless there are a number of cases of inter and intra *gushti* marriages in the study village. However, there is no principle of village endogamy or exogamy. The *gushti* in Srirampur is, in fact, neither an endogamous nor an exogamous group. As a *gushti* is not an isolated group, its members are interrelated with one another in a number of ways. Therefore, marriage may be practised within the *gushti* or outside it. I collected data on 550 marriages in Srirampur. Of these marriages 74 marriage ties are established within the village (see Table 4.4) It seems that these 74 marriages are arranged within the villages bearing in mind economic considerations as well as geographical proximity and the importance of strengthening the family's or *gushti*'s socio-political base within the village. In 21 of the 74 cases, the man has married his

father's brother's daughter (see Table 4.5). That is to say, these 21 marriages are intra-*gushti* marriages, and obviously they enhance the unity of the *gushti*. Of the 74 intra-village marriages, 53 marriages are inter-*gushti* marriages, which shows the inter-relations between the different *gushtis* in Srirampur. This figure also shows that inter-village marriages are much more common than intra-village marriages. These inter-village marriages often serve an informal political function, as a person is now able to extend his socio-political field by establishing friendly contacts over a wide area. These extended kinship ties often strengthen a family's political power at the supra-village institutional and organizational level. On the other hand, the intra-*gushti* marriages are much less in proportion. Only a few *gushtis* out of 38 *gushtis* in Srirampur have opted for intra-*gushti* marriage. It has been observed in the village that except a few *gushtis*, such as *munshi*, *abbasi*, *sikder*, *shah* and *shaikh* all other *gushtis* have been involved in inter-*gushti* marriages. These five *gushtis* are small in size and most of these small *gushtis* have not been staying in the village for very long. The majority of the small *gushtis* are each interrelated with other *gushtis* by one inter-*gushti* marriage, while the large *gushtis* are each interrelated with other *gushtis* by several inter-*gushti* marriages. It is also significant that much more men of the large *gushtis* have married to men of other *gushtis*. This exhibits the superiority of the large *gushtis* in the village. On the other hand, a few number of men of small *gushtis* have married women of other *gushtis*, while much more of their women are married to men of other *gushtis*. This indicates that it is easier for a man of a large *gushti* to marry a woman from a small *gushti*. On the other hand, a small *gushti* may succeed in establishing marital relationship with a large *gushti* by giving its woman in marriage to a man of the large *gushtis*, but it may not find it easy to get a woman for marriage from the large *gushtis*. Another important characteristic of the inter-*gushti* marriage is that a *gushti* with long standing in the village wants to establish marital relationship with similar *gushtis*. For example, *gushti parmanik* has marital relationship with *gushtis* of *sarker*, *fakir*, *mondal* and *mullah*. *Gushti parmanik* is the largest *gushti* in the village in respect of population and it has long ancestry in Srirampur.

Inter-*gushti* marriages in Srirampur have a bearing on the economic, political, religious, socio-cultural and other spheres. As the *gushtis* are interrelated with one another in a number of ways, the inter-*gushti* marriages are important for both large and small *gushtis*. It seems that a small *gushti* wants to establish marital relationship with other *gushtis*, with the bigger ones in particular to attain power, economic assistance, proper guidance etc. This indicates to receive patronage and support of the latter, which obviously increase the strength of the former in the village. Similarly, a large *gushti* desires to establish marital relationship with other small *gushtis* in the village to extend its power and influence in the village activities. Thus, the inter-*gushti* marriage ties has political significance in the village.

3.2.3.3 Role and Functions of *Gushti* (Lineage) People

A *gushti* is not an isolated group. In fact, it is a group of cooperation, which has social, economic, political and other activities among the *gushti* members. Therefore, the *gushtis* in Srirampur are interrelated with one another. As mentioned earlier, the members of a *gushti* usually reside close to each other in a cluster of *baris* or in different *paras* or at least in the same village. They have constant face-to-face interaction, which increases the possibility of cooperation as well as conflict between them. However, a *gushti* has a number of co-activities among its members. Firstly, take economic activities of the *gushti* members. A villager who is a farmer needs agricultural tools, i.e., cow, plough, ladder labourers etc. If he cannot afford all these things himself, the members of his own *gushti* having these instruments help him. Similarly, a villager engaged in boat plying during rainy season to carry goods and passenger or in any other economic activities, requires some minimum number of necessary instruments to keep going. When he himself is unable to arrange for such things, his *gushti* people help him by lending their own tools or sometimes in cash. It should be noted that the *gushti* people who are involved in such situation do not usually expect any interest from their *gushti* members. However, the economic activities of male as well as female members do not reveal the same. For example, the

joint economic activities are not conducted merely among the male members of the *gushti* in Srirampur village, but the female members of the *gushti* represent the same trend. Of the many household chores in which *gushti* housewives are engaged, i.e., paddy husking, sewing, animal feeding, making of fishing gears, washing cloths, making seasonal *phitha* (cake) and so on. In all these activities the female members of the *gushti* take help and cooperate one another as well. Secondly, *gushti* members in Srirampur as well as in other parts of Bangladesh get united in political activities as a feeling of integrity based on kinship. When a person from the *gushti* in the study village competes for an election in a Union Parishad or in any other sectors (i.e., *gram sarker*, *masjid* committee, school committee, club committee etc.), it is usual for him to hope that the members of his own *gushti* will support him for the same. It is almost obligatory on the part of the members of his own *gushti* to support him. It is interesting to note that some members of his *gushti* may support other candidates due to affinal relation, economic consideration, and political commitment and so like, they may do so, but they cannot usually dare do it directly and openly, because in that case they will face criticism from the majority of the *gushti* members. If some members of his *gushti* do not want to support him, pressure could be brought on them to support the *gushti* member. Thirdly, when contingency arises in or outside the village, one's *gushti* members come forward with help. When a person dies in the village, his death is a loss not only to the deceased's household and *parivar* (family), but also to his/her whole *gushti*. The members of a *gushti* are required to be present at the burial of its dead member and also during the ceremony held after the death of a *gushti* member. All the funeral activities, i.e., the *khatam* (prayer for the dead), feast etc. are thus jointly held by the members of a *gushti*. Fourthly, when disputes and quarrels with others are arised, one can expect to get the support from his *gushti* happens to be in trouble or quarrel with the members(s) of some other *gushtis* in or outside the village, almost all members of a *gushti* directly take part in favour of their *gushti* man in such matters. Fifthly, when any person from a *gushti* comes across any

problem regarding familial, social, economic or other affairs, he goes to some elderly wise man of the *gushti* to seek their advice for resolving his problem.

However, it is not that the inter-household relationship within a *gushti* always goes on smoothly. It has been observed that the inter-household relationship within a *gushti* is marked with tension, rivalry, conflict, jealousy, dispute, etc. These events may also arise because of several issues, i.e., property, political difference, legal battle and so like. Nevertheless, there is alliance and re-alliance between some households of a *gushti* against some other households of it and thus conflict and cooperation co-exist in a *gushti*.

3.3 Residential Groups

Kinship systems are universal which is also the only one aspect of social structure in all-human societies. The basic social structure and values of rural Bangladeshi societies are anchored in a system of kinship relations (Aziz, 1979:29). But some scholars have paid their attention to study *khana*, *parivar*, *gushti*, *bari*, and *para* but they have not focussed much on kinship groups as well as its units.

Kinship implies blood-related persons who have their own identity and interaction among them (Rahaman, 1990:169). But in the rural society of Bangladesh the pure kinship groups are rare. There are some mixed village groups, such as household, *bari* (homestead), *parivar* (family), *gushti* (patrilineage), and *para* (ward), which do not fulfil the requirements of the kinship completely. However, there are certain groups in the village where kinship is the guiding principle of their formation, i.e., where the father-son, brother-brother, and such other relationships are the basic relationships (*ibid*: 170).

In Bangladesh society kinship relations have also the local, residential as well as territorial settings. On the other hand, it is always necessary to identify the relations between kinship and residential groups. So, an attempt has been made to differentiate these two groups, such as kinship groups and residential groups.

In Srirampur, the kinship groups include household, family and *gushti* (patrilineal lineage), while the residential groups include *malot* (persons living in nearby households), *bari* (homestead), and *para* (ward). In Srirampur, kinship based on blood or affinity is the guiding principle of the groups of the household, family and the *gushti*, while in the case of residential groups blood or affinal relations may be present but are not crucial. Of the kinship group I have discussed the household, family and *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) as the basic units of kinship in earlier where it has been observed that this group is based mainly on blood relationship. On the other hand, it is also affected by relationships of marriage or affinity. However, an attempt has been made to elaborate the relation between kinship and the residential groups, i.e., *malot* (persons living in nearby households), *bari* (homestead), and *para* (ward).

3.3.1 *Bari*

In Srirampur, a *bari* is the residential locus of a group of people and the geographical proximity between a number of housing complexes on the one hand and clear cut demarcation from other are important for forming a *bari*. It is found in the village that the separation of one *bari* from another is clearly marked out the distance is not fixed from one *bari* to another one. On the contrary, it varies depending upon the geographical setting of the village of Bangladesh. A *bari* is generally located on a mound, a few feet higher than the surrounding cultivable land and ditches and it is expected that the patrilineal kin men live in the housing complexes of a *bari*. But it is not that only the patrilineal kin necessarily live in a single *bari*. Even non-*gushti* men as well as non-affines may reside in a *bari* purchasing by other's land.

In Srirampur, the members of a *bari* have their own group feeling and many of their social interaction is collective. In this way, the internal solidarity of the *bari* is maintained by the head whose authority as well as leadership capacity rest on recognition and acceptance of the members. On the other hand, bad internal relation of a *bari* reduces its importance and status. However, in any social or

familial affair, *bari* members are informed and they are generally cooperative with one another. There are some quarrels, conflicts and disputes among the *bari* members. But head of the *bari* members strongly plays leadership to keep up the image as well as power to mitigate disputes and handle the internal affairs effectively.

3.3.2 *Malot*

While household, *parivar* (family) and *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) are kinship units of village social organization, the *malot* (sub-*sama*) is a geographical concept prevalent in Bangladeshi villages. The *malot* is a group of dwellings where two or more households live together. There is no fixed geographical boundary to form a *malot*. It is likely that members of a *malot* group include one or more *baris* comprising of several simple or complex households. It is, however, expected that the households of patrilineal kinsmen live near each other and form a *malot*. But sometimes, the households other than those of patrilineal kinsmen may reside near each other and form a *malot* group. Therefore, the *malot* is a residential group in Srirampur by nature. Basically, the *para*, a residential group is divided into several sections and each of which is called a *malot*. In Srirampur, the *malot* group has the following characteristics: (i) there is no separate boundary to form the *malot*; (ii) generally, it is expected that the patrilineal kinsmen (i.e., father, son, grandson, brother) and affines form the core, and the other are marginal, peripheral, or secondary members of it; (iii) the *malot* is a larger unit than that of *bari*; (iv) two or more *malot* constitute a *para*; (v) the relationship among the *malot* members is close and direct; (vi) the non-blood kin and non-affines (i.e., neighbours, fellow villagers, outsiders) may also become part of *malot* by purchasing a portion of the land of a *malot*, and then building houses on it; (vii) the norms and values are strictly maintained by the members of the *malot*; (viii) the heads of every *malot* are very powerful in the village. There are 37 *malots* in Srirampur. The following Table shows *para* wise *malot* numbers, households and population residing in the village.

Table 3.10
Distribution of *Para Wise Malots*, Households and Population in Srirampur

Name of <i>Para</i>	Number of <i>Malot</i>	Number of Households	Population
<i>Dakhinpara</i>	4	69	306
<i>Sarkerpara</i>	3	39	156
<i>Schoolpara</i>	5	78	303
<i>Madhapara</i>	6	93	422
<i>Notunpara</i>	8	218	896
<i>Uttarpara</i>	11	227	955
Total	37	724	3035

Table 3.10 shows that there are 37 *malots* in Srirampur, which cover 724 households and 3035 population. Of the total *malots*, there are 4 *malots* in *Dakhinpara*, which cover a total of 69 households and 306 population. *Sarkerpara* belongs to only three *malots* and the total number of households belonging to them is 39, and their population is 156. In 5 *malots* of *Schoolpara* belong to 78 households with a population of 303. There are 6 *malots* in *Madhapra*. The total number of households belonging to them is 93 and the population is 422. *Natunpara* belongs to 8 *malots* with a population of 896 residing in 218 households. In *Uttarpara*, there are 11 *malots* and the largest number of households (227) is located in them, and their total population is also the largest.

However, the relationship among *malot* members in Srirampur and in rural Bangladesh is direct and close because of the proximity of their households. It was observed in Srirampur village that the *malot* members generally keep themselves informed about most of the socio-familial affairs of one another. It can be, however, differences in inter-household relationship according to the kinship composition of the *malot* group. As mentioned earlier, two or more households together constitute a *malot*, they sometimes may also form a small dispersed *parivar* (family). In such a situation, the relationship is the same as in a small-dispersed *parivar*. If the households belong to different *parivars*, the

relationship would be different. During this time, the head of the households form a variety of fictive relationships addressing one another by fictive terms, such as *bhai* (brother), *chacha/kaka* (father's brother), *mama* (mother's brother), *chachi* (father's brother's wife), *bu, apa, bon* (sister) etc.

As it has been seen that the relationship among the members of the *malot* is direct and close, they are usually treated at par with kinsmen and affines in most of the familial or social occasions (i.e., wedding, feast, *milad, musalmani* etc.). In some cases, the members of a *malot* may, however, seem to be closer than one's own blood relatives and affines. For example, in case of any accident or such other emergency cases, i.e., fire, injury, disease, death etc. one's blood relatives or affines may not get the information and consequently they may not be able to extend their helping hands as fast as the *malot* members can, because the former may be living at distant places.

All these, however, should not be taken to mean that the relationship within a *malot* always goes on smoothly. Tension, rivalry, quarrel, disputes too are common among *malot* members in Srirampur village. These events may arise because of several issues, such as children's quarrel, legal battle, damage to crops by the domestic animals, political differences, someone's criticism by another etc.

3.3.3 *Para*

Para is another unit of residential group in Srirampur and it is larger than the *bari* and *malot*. Although there is no clear geographical boundary or specific borderline for a *para*, it is formed usually on an area of mound land where the villagers settle to live. This settlement is usually surrounded by scattered agricultural land. Next to it, another *para* may start. During the settlement in a particular neighbourhood, the members of the same *gusthi* or religious group may prefer to settle close to each other. After the settlement, the *gusthis* and *parivars* in a *para* may form a *samaj*. As the *para* dwellers live close to each other, the formation of a *samaj* comes with the people living in the same *para*.

However, a few *baris* and one or two *malots* compose a *para*. Generally, a *para* consists of the mixed kinsmen, affines as well as non-relatives but the social relations of filiations, alliance and residence are structured in a *para*. Actually, it is a system, which serves as the relation of production and in this system, ideological non-exclusive ownership of resources is communal but material ownership of resources is individual. In Srirampur, kinsmen, affines and non-relatives compose the *samaj*. So, we have observed both kinship relations as well as production relation's function in a *para* of Srirampur village. Moreover, it binds the *para* members with a feeling of unity on some occasions- *para* people to cooperate as well as participate like their own kinsmen and affines. In this way, there is a good solidarity among the *para* people of Srirampur village.

3.4 Components of Kinship Relationships

The components of kinship relationships in Srirampur comprise of different lines of relationships. These are: patrilineal, matrilineal, affinal and fictive relationships. These lines of relationships and the inter personal relationship among the members of them are discussed below:

3.4.1 Patrilateral Relationships

A person's patrilateral relatives are the persons who resides his/her father's household, family or lineage. In broader sense, it includes people who live in the whole environment of father's side (Rahaman, 1994:101). It has been observed in Srirampur that patrilateral relatives have many duties to each other and it actually begins right at the time of his/her birth. When the child is born, the rituals associated with birth, i.e., *akika* (Islamic naming ceremony of the newborn baby), *milad* (gathering for hailing the prophet (sm.) of Islam) etc. are performed by the patrilateral relatives. They provide the child according to their socio-economic status, all basic necessities, such as food, clothing, medical treatment etc. Besides, the patrilateral relatives start working about the child's schooling. On the other hand, they help a person in building up the behavioural pattern in the village society. In this way, the children are taught and supposed

to follow a particular code of conduct and discipline and adhere to the customs as well as culture prevalent in the society around. It has also been observed in Srirampur that a son and a daughter learn their necessary learning from the patrilineal relatives. However, it is important to note here that tension, discord, conflict and dispute are also very common among them. These may accentuate because of host of reasons. Of them, property distributions, damage to crops caused by domestic animals, distribution of agricultural produce, socio-cultural ceremonies, lending money, local politics, and legal battle are important.

3.4.2 Matrilateral Relationships

Merilateral relation is a person's connection with his/her mother's natal side and it is subjected to change in course of time. In Srirampur, there are several terms, which are used to indicate one's mother's natal home, such as *nanar bari* (mother's father's *bari*), *mamar bari* (mother's brother's homestead). Out of these terms, *mamar bari* is the most popular and it is very favourite place. However, the ward *mamar bari* is used in two senses: wider and narrower. The wider sense denotes the mother's natal home, family, *gushti* and even total social environ. In the narrower sense it indicates only the household and family of mother's father and brothers (Rahaman, 1990:245). As *mamar bari* (mother's natal home) is a place of enjoy for the children, they always very eager to visit their matrilateral relatives. *Mamar bari* (mother's brother's home) is place of enjoyment for the children. In the rural society the village people say, the mother's natal home is the second home for children' (Rahaman, 1994:102). So, it is found that the children have affectionate as well as loving relationships with *mama* and *mami*. A child's relationship with *nana-nani* is a close relationship and he gets affection and importance from them. *Nani* (mother's mother) is especially indulgent to her *natis* and *natnis* (the children of her daughters). On the other hand, the relationship with maternal grandparents is qualitatively different from that with *dada-dadi* (parental grandparents). Sometimes the parental grandparents may admonish the grandchildren, because they live in the same home and the grandparents may feel that they should discipline the

children of the home. But the case is different with the maternal grandparents. The daughter's children are guests in their home. They have come to their *mamar bari* (mother's brother's homestead) or *nanar bari* (mother's father's homestead) and will leave this place soon. They are very happy in their *mamar bari* and get affection from everybody. There is nobody to discipline them like that of the parental home. It is a place of recreation and enjoyment for them. In Srirampur, it is found that on familial rituals, ceremonies and festivals and in cases of emergency, a woman visits her natal home to be with her natal home's members. The children have close ties with their *nanar/mamar bari* and they get gifts from *mamar bari* on several occasions, such as *akika*, *musalmani*, *Eid*, wedding, etc. However, the children get affection as well as loving and hearty treatments from all persons on mother's natal home.

Sometimes, the *nanar/mamar bari* may become a place of shelter for the children and it happens if their mother is divorced or widowed and reverts back to her natal home along with her children. Although, the children have affectionate and loving relationships with the maternal relatives, there may be situations in which the children do not receive expected affection from mother's natal home-particularly from *mami* (mother's brother's wife). However, the children's ties with their matrilineal relatives do not always continue to be the same and one can always count on help and support from one's matrilineal relatives in times of need and crisis. If one's *mamar bari* is comparatively richer than the father's natal household, it is expected that the *mama* (mother's brother) will help the children of his sister's. He may give them clothes on occasions, such as on the occasions of *musalmani* (circumcision of boys), *Eid* and wedding. Besides, they get gifts, such as clothes from their *mamar bari* at least once a year. He may even bear a portion of the expenses of their education. The relationship of the children with their matrilineal kinsmen thus becomes very important.

However, the relationship with the *nanar bari/mamar bari* gradually become loose when the children grow up. After marriage the girls join their husbands'

household and do not find much time to visit their *mamar bari*. The boys also get involved in their domestic life after their marriage and the number of their visits to the *mamar bari* becomes less.

3.4.3 Affinal Relationships

Affinal relationships are formed through marriage. One's wife's/ husband's natal home is called by several terms, i.e., *shasur bari*, (one's wife's husband's father's home), *svamir bap-mar bari* (one's wife's husband's parental home). Of these terms *shasur bari* is the most commonly used. Affinal relatives are also identified in two senses. In the narrow sense, the affinal relatives are persons who live in whose parental household, family or lineage. And in the wider sense, affinal relatives are those persons who live in the whole environ of the wife's father's (Rahaman, 1994:103).

In a man's *shasur bari*, he gets importance, comfort and hearty hospitality. This is a place of enjoyment for a man. On every important occasion, i.e., marriage, *Eid* etc. the son-in-law is invited by the *shasur bari*, and his cooperation as well as participation are expected. He is usually the most prominent participant to those functions. It should be noted here that not only the household but also the *gushti*, and even the village people expect that the son-in-law should be present on every ceremonial occasion in the household (Rahaman, 1990:249). On the other hand, a woman's affinal relative's place is not like of a man. No woman's *shasur bari* is a place of recreation for her. She is the permanent member of her *shasur bari* and also this is her own home. There are different patterns of relationship with the members of one's *shasur bari*. In the case of a man his relation is one of respect from his *shasur-shasuri* (parents-in-law), *shumundi* (wife's elder brother), *apa* (wife's elder sister) and the like. In turn the man is affectionate towards them. His relationship with other members of *shasur bari*, i.e., *shala-shali* (wife's younger siblings), *shala bau* (wife's younger brother's wife) and the like, is a joking relationship. In the case of woman also she has different patterns of relationship with the affinal relatives are not always smooth.

There are a numbers of factors, which result in tension, quarrel and even dispute between them. Similarly, in case of a woman, her inefficiency in household chores, lack of ability to adjust, bad moral character, high expectation from husband's are the factors. However, a person's relationship with affinal relatives does not remain in tension through out the life. In the case of woman, her relation with the affinal relatives changes according to the situation.

3.4.4 Fictive Kinship Relationships

Fictive kinship relationships are very important and it plays a significant role in the kinship organization. It has been observed in Srirampur that there are forms of ritual and ceremonial kinship, which just the same way as blood and marriage connected people as fictive brother, sister, mother and such other relatives. Vatuk (1972:168) also observed this fictive kinship between the people neo-locally resident in the neighbourhood in the city of Meerut. This kin type is limited to such basic relations as *baba* (father), *ma* (mother), *bhai* (brother), *bon* (sister), and *bondhu* (friend). On the other hand, membership of the neighbourhood is known as *padshi*, membership of the *samaj* is known a *samaji* and membership of the same village is known as *deshi* (Aziz, 1979:77). In this context, Karim also states, 'Fictive kinship ties are usually an asymmetrical relation between a powerful person and a less powerful person by which he gains/sustains prestige and political status in the village' (1990:81). In Srirampur, a number of villagers establish fictive kinship relationship and they call it as *dharma-atmiya* or *dharma-kutumbu*. *Dharma* means religion and the use of this term, acquired from Sanskrit, signals a relationship between two otherwise unrelated persons (Bandyapadhya 1966, Koss 1958). The word *dharma* owes its origin from the Sanskrit *dhr*, which means, "to sustain" (Inden, 1976:19). It also denotes obedience to caste rules. "*Dharma* does orient towards what is expected in the specific contexts of a variety of hierarchical relationships" (Roland, 1988:125). In some respects *dharma* plays a major role, rather than Islamic ideology, in constructing Bangladeshi Muslim culture. The rural people usually say, "it is human *dharma*" (Kotalova 1993, Blanchet 1984,

Maloney *et. al*, 1981). However, the fictive kinship relationships form on the basis of religion and the other, without it. In this context, Sarker states, "there is a convention to established fictive kin relationship irrespectively of religion, caste, sect and sub-sect through a ceremony and is called ceremonial or ritual fictive kinship" (1986:189). When a person establishes fictive kinship relationships with another person, they decide to use certain kin terms to address each other and the quality of relations depends upon this term of address. For example, if the term of address is *mama* (mother's brother) or *kaka/chacha* (father's brother), or *abba* (father) or *ma* (mother), the quality of relation is one of respect. On the other hand, if the term of address is *dosto/bandu* (friend), the quality of relation is of joking. However, the fictive kinship relation can be established between two men, between men and women, and between two women. It was observed in Srirampur that the fictive kinship relation is established between two persons for some causes, such as economic help, for social adjustment, making friendship, for same personal name/physical appearance, help in hard non-economic situation and so on. The villagers establish these relationships after the purpose or interest is over. This relationship endures as long as both parties continue to claim it, whether mutual reciprocity continues or not. However, fictive kinship ties in Srirampur require certain rituals and are formalized with an exchange of gifts. The gifts usually include fruits, vegetables, a special food prepared on certain occasion, and also a *saree* or a *lungi*, etc. But it should be noted that fictive kinship ties are swiftly declining due to economic and social changes in the rural society of Bangladesh, which have accelerated economic mobility and so partly undermined the traditional principles of kinship.

3.5 Some Concepts of Kinship in Srirampur

In Srirampur village, I found some popular concepts involving the kinship relationship. They are *atmiya*, *svajan*, *gyati* and *kutumbu*. The villagers regard all of them as *nijerlok* (own people).

3.5.1 *Atmiya*

The term *atmiya* is pervasive in our country and as such, inclusive, referring to consanguinal and affinal relatives. As per villager's ideas, the *atmiya* are those persons: who are related by blood or marriage: who are close to soul, or close proximity of mind: who are giving a supportive hand in problems and need. According to Inden and Nicholas (1977) a person is called *atmiya* when he/she is closed to one's *atma* (soul). The villagers classify *atmiya* into two categories: ordinary *atmiya* and real *atmiya*. The ordinary *atmiya* includes persons related by blood or marriage relations but do not care to maintain close links and constant interaction, i.e., not visiting one another's home or being anxious about one another's well-being while the real *atmiya* includes those persons who always maintain close link and interaction with one another. It should be noted that while all relatives are *atmiya*, all of them are not real *atmiya*. However, the *atmiya* is basically a moral or ethnical category and applied in the field of kinship in the society.

3.5.2 *Svajan*

The concept *svajan* is a particular category of people who are closest among the *atmiya*. People who are consanguineally related are considered as *svajan*. On the other hand, the word *svajan* means *nijerlok* (own people). *Svajans* are always eager to keep themselves abreast with the latest news about each other: They are called for advice, suggestion while taking decision on his/her important social or familial affairs. It is found in Srirampur that the *svajans* take pain for each other and they are anxious to solve problems and also sufferings of each other. Sometimes, the villagers take pain for the welfare of each other.

3.5.3 *Kutumbu*

The term *kutumbu* has a special meaning, which is used by the villagers to indicate only the affinal kinsmen. It is a category of people related by affinity or marriage. In this context, Khanum states, "... *kutumbo* implies marital relationships" (2000:199). This word is used into two senses: one, narrower, and

the other, wider. In the case of former, this includes people who live in the lineage of the wife's natal side. And, in the case of latter, it extended to the persons who reside in the whole environ of the side of wife's father's. However, this relationship is reciprocal and it has most honourable status in our society. The villagers in Srirampur receive cordial welcome when they visit each other's residence and all the family members become busy in honouring them. The villagers frequently meet the *kutumbu* to inquire about their well-being and conveniences. However, the *kutumbu* are the *atmiya* of the respective villagers and they are special category among the *atimya*, deserving honour as well as hospitality.

3.5.4 Gyati

The term *gyati* is used to include all the members' patrilineal related sharing the property of their ancestors. It should be noted that direct blood relationship is the main criterion of identity among the members of the same *gyati*. *Gyati* indicates a member of the same lineage (Inden and Nicholas 1977, Aziz 1979, Mashreque 1980, Rahaman 1990, Khanum 2000). Sometimes, the term *gyati* is replaced by other alternative terms, such as *gushtirlok* (persons of same lineage) and *aki-rokterlok* (persons of same blood) etc. Thus, *gyati* is a restricted category of people. However, the kinsmen that are referred to as *gyati* fall within the bonds of *gushti*. All the villagers in Srirampur usually use the term *gyati* on three occasions: i.e., (i) when some outsiders ask him about of his lineage, (ii) when a villager introduces his lineage member, and (iii) when any member of his *gushti* (lineage) becomes an issue of discussion owing to his /her significant achievement or failure or bad luck. It is, however, observed in Srirampur that some simple families comprising husband, wife and children have developed into wider families that include within their bounds all the relatives vertically and horizontally related, such as parents, children, grandparents and grandchildren and siblings of the spouses.

The on going study is mainly dealing with kinship organization from socio-economic point of view. In order to that I have tried to consolidate the ideas

about the nature of kinship organization in this Chapter. However, in search of identifying a uniform pattern I have sought to study the kinship system of Srirampur, a Muslim dominated village, as it presents a structure of relationships that may exist in other Muslim villages of Bangladesh, especially in northwest Bengal. In this Chapter, I have discussed the interrelations of household, family and *gushti* (lineage) as the basic units of kinship organization. It is also apparent from on going discussion that the development of household, family and *gushti* (lineage) may be towards progression or regression. The development or lack of development of these basic units depends on several factors, and their developmental process is not a mechanical one. They do not have a single course of development, but a number of courses. Moreover, an attempt has also been made to distinguish between kinship and residential groups. Other inevitable aspects of kinship organization, i.e., components of kinship relations and some important concepts of kinship have also been discussed in this Chapter. We have also seen that the Bengali kinship universe comprises both primary and secondary relatives. So, their kinship universe reflects the relationships of both simple and complex families. It may be mentioned that the simple family includes the parents and their unmarried children who are united through the ties of primary kinship and the complex family includes both the primary as well as secondary kin. But in the rural society of Bangladesh, the *atmiya* or the kin groups embody the widest circle of people including all relatives-such as primary, secondary, consanguinal and affinal.

Chapter 4

Marriage Practices : Role and Activities of Kin Network

4.1 Importance of Marriage

Marriage is an important social institution in every society, which plays a significant role in many spheres of social life, such as in formation of household or family, procreation and legalisation of children, socialization, performing socio-cultural activities and so on. In fact, as an important social institution its object is procreation of children and the continuation of family. However, as a social institution it is developed from the beginning of an organised social life. The desire of enjoyment as well as the procreative urge of two individuals of opposite sex makes them a union in a socially recognised manner through the performance of a definite rite for the maintenance of a socio-religious life. Here I agree with E. Kathleen Gough when he states, "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized legitimate offspring of both parents' (Gough, 1968: 49). Regarding Muslim marriage Badaruddin states, " Marriage is a social institution developed from the begging of an organised life in the society. The desire of enjoyment and the procreative urge of two individuals of opposite sex make them form a union in a socially recognised manner. This union is marriage" (1986:65). On the other hand, regarding the views of marriage in Islam Ahmed comments, " Marriage is an important social institution of human life. It is a union between a man and a woman sanctioned by the society through the performance of a definite rite for the maintenance of a socio-religious life (1993:166). Thus, marriage establishes relationship between the spouses themselves; between the social groups from which the spouses come; and between these people and the children born of marriage" (Mitchell, 1963:29).

Generally, in Islamic provisions marriage is defined to be a contract, in reality the terms of contract have been formalized as well as deprived of much of their

effect, which has for its object; i.e. the procreation and the legalizing of children. Actually, it is a social bond between an eligible man and an eligible woman, concluded in the presence of witnesses, whereby they are acknowledged as husband and wife for performing new social roles, including that of producing children (Rahaman, 1990: 193). On the other hand, I also agree with Sarker when he states, "It is regulated for maintenance of legal sexual relationship and production for legitimate children" (1997:18). However, it is clear from the above discussion and definitions of marriage that the emphasis is laid on either its legal or its biological aspects. It should be mentioned that marriage not only brings two individuals of opposite sex together but also their respective families, groups as well as Kindred's. That is why, in some cases friendship between groups is reinforced through this universal social institution and by encouraging about it between groups, cases, races, classes, religious, linguistic and other communities, it is possible to minimise the social distance between groups and strengthen their solidarity. In this connection, Fortes says, "Marriage is the bridge between the kinship side and the affinal side of the dichotomy that is of necessarily built into the total genealogically defined domain of social relations which we find in every social system" (Fortes, 1972: 2). Thus, by establishing affinal relationships among the people of both sides, marriage apportions status to them and is patterned through the type of society and regulated by culturally defined sets of rules as well as customs. Further, marriage is not merely a bond; it is something wider and deeper, involving socio-cultural consequences (Rahaman, 1990: 193). It appears from the above discussion that marriage has important social as well as cultural aspects in which a large number of man and women get involved in the marriage process. Thus, 'by a marriage certain existing relationships, particularly, in most societies, those of the bride to her family, are changed. New social relations are created, not only between the husband and the wife, and between the husband and the wife's relatives on the one side and between the wife and the husband's relatives on the other, but also, in a great many societies, between the relatives of the husband and those of the wife, who, on the two sides, are interested in the marriage and in the

children that are expected to result from it' (Radcliffe- Brown, 1950:43). Thus marriage serves to establish a significant relationship between people of different groups, but as far as possible of equal economic status and pedigree (Khanum, 2000: 212). Ideally it aims not only at the individual's biological, emotional, social, and spiritual fulfilment and development through union with a person of the opposite sex, but also at the development, fulfilment, and welfare of the family, and through it of the society and mankind (Kapur, 1973:6).

In the study village, the word for marriage is *bea* (*sanskrit-vivaha*) and it is arranged at the presence of a large number of kinsmen, affines, and other persons. Here marriage is associated with the passing out of brides from their natal home. As the village is patriarchal society, there it is patrilocal the shift of residence and locality is usually undertaken by the bride and she is identified as a member with the *gushti* of her husband. It is mentionable here that no pre-marital relationship and love marriage of the western type are socially permitted in Srirampur village. However, in some cases, if any pre-marital relationship occurs between the man and women, either they will avoid pursuing the relationship further, or the concerned guardians of both sides will be informed and marriage between them will take place with their consent. Thus it brings the newly married females into the sphere of activities of effective marriage.

All these aspects of marriage in Srirampur reveal that it is not considered as a contract only between a boy and a girl. They are not entered into voluntarily and they normally continue throughout life. It is true that a marital relationship is entered into, but it is not a contractual relationship between husband and wife; it is best described as a union' (Radcliffe-Brown, 1950:12). As marriage brings life-partners together and helps them to develop intense love as well as affection towards each other, the villagers consider it as their duty to arrange marriages of their children once they come of age. Generally, parents and other members of the family of study village take the initiative in looking proper match for eligible sons or daughters. If a daughter's family wishes to arrange a marriage with a wealthier and a suitable male partner for the daughter, that is not an

easy task. Friends and relatives are also often consulted in matchmaking. At this context, Rahaman rightly says, 'The responsibility of marrying one's sons and daughters is considered to be a serious matter and once this responsibility is fulfilled, one feels quite relaxed and happy and considers it to be a great load unburdened' (1990: 194).

It is obvious from the above discussion that the marriage is based on mutual respect where the husband fulfils his role of providing services and protecting rights of his family, whereas the wife fulfils her role in honouring him by meeting his needs and being a good mother to her children. However, marriage as an institution of the society can have very different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, culture to culture and also within the same culture, but it is present everywhere as an institution.

4.2 Rules Regulating the Marriage

According to religious provisions to marry is almost a religious duty for every adult Muslim. As mentioned earlier that all the people in the study village are Muslims, hence I would like to discuss the marriage rules following the Islamic rules and customs. In the Muslim society, marriage is based on contract and solemnized according to the law of *shariah*. Thus, I would like to confine myself only to those social and religious aspects of Islamic marriage, which have relevance for the study village as well as for other parts of the country as well. However, the rules of marriage are related with kinship relation between the bridegroom and the bride. It is also different in connect with the religiosity or the religious affiliation of the individual. It is observed in Srirampur village that the villagers practice the hyper gamy and hypo gamy system of marriage in connection with the occupation, social status as well as lineage. The Muslim villagers have few rules restricting marriage beyond the family. Thus, Srirampur village, Muslims abide by the rules prescribed by Islam when looking for a suitable match. The rules regulating selection of mates apply to both kinsmen as

well as affines. According to the Islamic rule, the relatives whom a man is forbidden to marry include certain woman in the direct line of descent. Besides, a Muslim man is prohibited from marrying his milk mother (foster mother), milk sister (foster sister). On the other hand, a Muslim man should not have, at the same time, two wives who are related to each other by consanguinity (i.e., two sisters, aunt and niece). However, one can marry one's wife's sister only after the death of the wife or only after giving divorce to the wife. Regarding this matter Renben Levy rightly says, " a man cannot marry two sisters at the same time, or a foster mother who has suckled, him, or others nursed by the women, who nursed him" (1957:104). Thus, marriage between full siblings as well as intergenerational marriage is prohibited in Islam. A Muslim male cannot marry a woman who is currently married to another man. However, a Muslim male is prohibited to marry the following fourteen persons:

- i) One's own mother and stepmother;
- ii) One's own daughter and daughter's daughter;
- iii) One's own sister, stepsister and the daughter of stepfather (i.e., other than stepsister).
- iv) One's own *phuphu* (father's sister) and the daughters of his father's stepmother and stepfather.
- v) One's own *khala* (mother's sister) and the daughters of his mother's stepmother and stepfather.
- vi) The daughters of one's own brothers and at the same time, the daughters of stepbrothers;
- vii) One's own sister's daughters and at the same time, the daughters of one's stepsisters;
- viii) Milk mother (milk mother is a woman who gives suck other than her own child within two years and half of a month from the birth period).
- ix) One's own *dadi*/grandmothers of father's side (father's mother).
- x) *Nani*/grandmother of mother's side (mother's mother).
- xi) The daughters of his wife's x-husband;
- xii) The wife of one's own son;
- xiii) Two sisters who are related to each other by consanguinity;
- xiv) A man cannot marry a woman who is already lawful married to and in the possession of another man.

If a man marries a woman violating the above-mentioned prohibitions, his marriage is irregular. At this situation, they would be ex-communicated, as it is treated as incest. However, any Muslim male, whatever may be his status, can marry any female except from among the prohibited categories of women that already I have mentioned. Likewise, according to Islamic rule, a Muslim girl may not marry her *bhai* (brother), *chacha/kaka* (father's brother), *mama* (mother's brother), *nana* (mother's father), *dada* (father's father), *bhaste* (brother's son), or *bhagne* (sister's son). On the other hand, "...a Muslim can marry outside the religious group but he or she must be converted into Islam before marriage" (Sarker, 1997:23).

A Muslim man can marry a Christian woman without converting her into Islam while a Muslim woman cannot do so. In this context, Kapadia rightly comments, "A Muslim male can marry a non-believer, but a Muslim female cannot marry a non-Muslim" (1966:176). According to social custom, in some of the Islamic countries, marriage between parallel cousins (brothers' sons and daughters) is preferred (Ellickson 1972). Since Bangladesh is an Islamic country, an individual is allowed to marry a parallel cousin or cross cousin under the Muslim marriage rules. The cohesion of both families is reinforced by the practice of cousin marriages among all Muslims in the country and so one would expect such a preference to prevail here. Moreover, the Islamic laws of inheritance in Bangladesh would also appear to encourage parallel as well as cross-cousin marriages. According to these laws a daughter (married or unmarried) is entitled to get half a share of the amount a son gets in her father's property. So, the prevailing thought is that if a daughter is married outside, she may take her share of the property to her conjugal family. But if she is married with her father's brother's son it can check the outflow of property. So, in general, it is often thought, rather rationalised that the Muslims would prefer marriage with father's brother's daughter. In the study village, a few marriages are arranged between boys and their father's brother's daughters and some marriages of boys

with other relatives are also found, such as, their mother's brother's daughters and father's sister's daughters. However, most of marriage ties in Srirampur village are established between families who were not related to each other before marriage.

4.3 Sample of Marriages of the Study Village

I have collected information on 702 marriages of 550 villagers in Srirampur as a sample of all marriages. Because this data concerns mainly those factors, which play significant role in the selection of village brides as well as grooms. It is mentionable that there are about 900 married men in the study village. So, the selected sample of married men in Srirampur almost covers two-third of them. These married men were selected because they were prepared to provide me reliable and accurate data about their several aspects of marriages. On the other hand, all the married men of the village were not prepared for this purpose as they usually do not wish to talk to an outsider about several aspects of marriage relations, i.e., *mohar*, divorce, separation, pre-marital relationship etc. The villagers think that all these aspects are their personal affairs. That is why; a pragmatic technique has been taken in selecting the sample. It should be noted that I could not collect the information on marriages of those daughters who had married outside the study village for several reasons, such as, (i) the man who had arranged his daughters' marriages and could give me information about daughters' marriages was either dead or not available in the village during the fieldwork. In the absence of those men whom I got, i.e., younger brothers of the daughters or any junior members of the household could not tell me about the age at marriage of their elder sisters, the marriage transaction, the amount of *mohar* fixed at their marriage, main factors of divorce, separation etc. (ii) It was not possible for me to collect information from the out married daughters' husbands' households because in most cases they lived in other villages. I have, therefore, limited myself to the analysis of the data on the marriages of married

men in Srirampur village. Generally, the village marriage in Srirampur is monogamous in nature but in many cases polygyny is also practised by the villagers of Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh (Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990, Sarker 1997). Polygyny was introduced since the time of Prophet to protect the female infanticide and chastity of women by reorienting the Arab law of marriage and divorce in favour of women (Kapadia, 1966:187). 'Polygyny is a system of marriage which takes place between one man and two or more women. In this system of marriage a Muslim can marry up to four wives at a time according to Sunna' (Sarker, 1997:29). Beech *et al* observe that polygyny, though permitted, is relatively infrequent (1966:7). The people in Srirampur less respect the polygynous men and their families. Sometimes, such men are looked upon as men of 'bad character'. A polygynous man is hardly a man of good repute. The people of Srirampur think that polygyny increases quarrels in the family and ultimately brings sorrow and misery to it. However, polygyny system of marriage is performed by the Muslims due to certain reasons first, if the first wife is barren; second, a wealthy Muslim takes two or more wives for prestige and position in the society; third, sometimes a Muslim may marry his brother's widow as his second or third wife if she is considered advantages for the family (Aggarwal, 1976:275). Besides, polygyny may take place for the interest of dowry and love affair and finally, if the first wife is invalid to lead a normal married life. According to the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961-' Polygyny is restricted to the extent that no man can contract another marriage during the subsistence of an existing marriage without the permission of Arbitration Council. The Arbitration Council consists of a representative of husband and a nominee of wife, and the Chairman of the Union Council is the ex-officio Chairman of the Arbitration Council. However, there are a few men in Srirampur who have married several times but at present they are staying with only one wife. The following Table shows the frequency of marriages as well as the number of wives of 550 men in the study village.

Table 4.1
Distribution of the Frequency of Marriages of 550 Men and the Number of
their Wives at Present

Frequency of Marriages	Number of Men	Number of Marriages	Number of Wives at Present
1	437	437	437
2	85	170	92
3	17	51	17
4	11	44	11
Total	550	702	557

The above Table shows that out of 550 married men, 437 men have married only once and have one wife each; 85 men have married twice but at present only 7 of them have two wives each; while the remaining 78 men have one wife each; 17 men have married thrice, but each of them is at present staying with one wife; 11 men have married four times but have at present one wife each. So, the total number of marriages of 550 men is 702 and they have at present 557 wives.

4.4 The Age at Marriage

Age at marriage is actually one of the important factors in demography but it differs from family to family depending on some material as well as no-material aspects, i.e., wealth, status and cultural background. However, it has an important effect on marriageable boys and girls in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh, especially in a society where there is strong social pressure on marriage at the pubertal age of girls who have little control over the decision on marriage (Jahan, 1975: 18-19). It has been observed during the fieldwork that the minimum age for marriage depends upon the guardians' wish regarding the time when they want to get their sons or daughters married. Bhuiyan also observes, "families known for their religiosity prefer marriage at an early age while those families some of whose members have acquired higher (i.e., secular) education, tend to marry their children relatively at a later age" (1978:240). In

this context, Afsaruddin states, " In rural Bangladesh when the daughter attains puberty and the son comes of age, the parents try to get a suitable match for them. Friends and relatives are often consulted in matchmaking"(1990:82).

According to the marriage laws in Bangladesh, the age of marriage is fixed 21 years for males and 18 years for females. But it is not always followed in Srirampur as well as in other parts of the country (Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990, Aziz 1979, Sarker 1997). Here I agree with Sarker when he states, "as there is no' national system of vital events registration, and those who perform marriages cannot check the ages as stated by the guardians, this law in itself has little effect" (1997:34). It has been observed that being fixed the minimum legal age of marriage in Bangladesh, it is affected by demographic and other factors, which play an important role on marriageable age. A man having only one son or only one daughter cherishes to see his *bauma* (son's wife) or *jamai* (daughter's husband) and thus, he may like to get him or her married as soon as possible. Similarly, a male or female, whether because of illness or old age may like to see their son or daughter married quite early lest he or she should pass away. Moreover, the aged parents try to arrange marriage for their daughters at early age because in case of their death they do not like to create burden for their sons and others of the family, on whom the daughters have to depend after their death. On the other hand, in the case of families having a more religious bent, children (both boys and girls) are generally married when they become adult. The children who are seeking higher secular education (attending school or college), may not be considered to give marriage until they complete their education and at this situation the guardians of adult children also delay their marriage so that their education may not be hampered by their getting married. In families where a man required some time to improve his financial position in order to get married, he has to wait at this situation. Sometimes, the moral obligations of male persons may affect the age at marriage. For example, if a father having a marriageable daughter as well as a son in his family, the unmarried son has to wait up to his sister's marriage and until the completion of

marriage of marriageable female persons in the family the marriageable son usually does not get married. However, in almost every marriage the groom is older than the bride. In this context Sarker rightly observes, " . . . the older husbands feel proud to have younger wives. They think that younger wives can be active and a good conjugal partner for a long time and will have the potentiality to bear as many children as they desire to have" (1997:34). The difference of age at marriage between the husbands and the wives is shown in the following Table.

Table 4.2
Distribution of Age at Marriage of Husbands and Wives of Srirampur.

Age at Marriage	Husband	Percentage	Wife	Percentage	Total	Percentage
11-15	-	-	203	36.91	203	18.45
16-20	102	18.54	285	51.82	387	35.18
21-25	351	63.82	51	9.27	402	36.55
26+	97	17.64	11	2.00	108	9.82
Total	550	100.00	550	100.00	1100	100.00

The above Table shows the age groups of 550 men in the sample at the time of their first marriage and also the age groups of their wives. Of the 550 married men, 102 (18.54%) were in the age group 16-20 years at the time of their first marriage, 351 (63.82%) in the age group 21-25 years, and 97(17.64%) were more than 25 years. Among their wives 203 (36.91%) were in the age group 11-15 Years, 285 (51.82%) belonged to the age group 16-20 years, 51 (9.27%) wives got married in 21-25 years, and only 11 (2%) wives got married after attaining the age of 26 years. It is shown in the Table that majority of the men got married at the age of 21-25 years and majority of the women did so at the age of 16-20 years. Thus, the mean age at marriage is 22.95 for male and for female is 16.82 years. The difference of age at marriage between husbands and wives is about 7 years. It should be mentionable that the mean age of female marriage in the village under study is significantly lower in comparison with the legal minimum age of marriage of Bangladesh, while the average age of male marriage is comparatively higher with the minimum legal age at marriage.

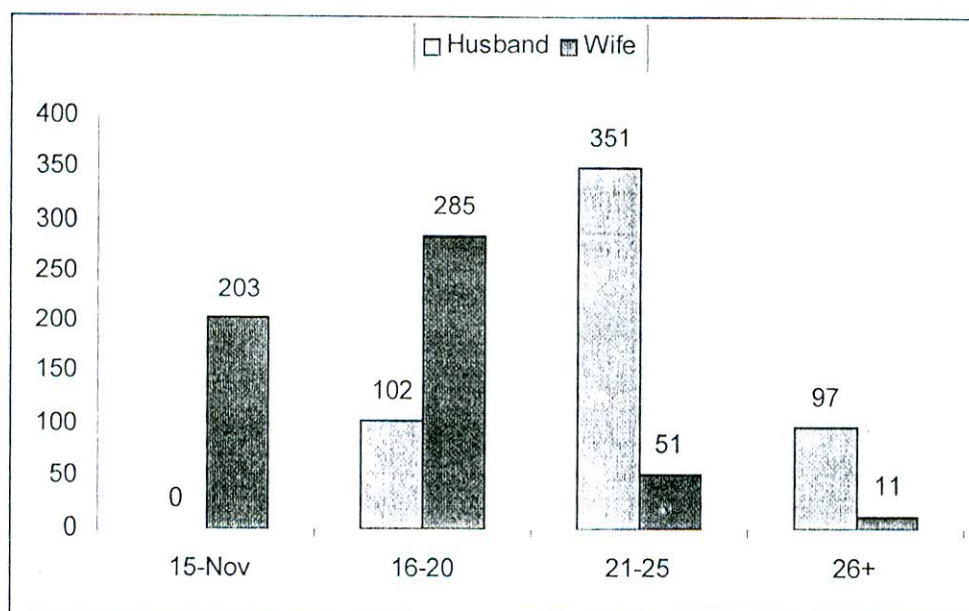


Figure 4-1 : Bar diagram for Table 4.2.

4.5 The Role of Kin in Spouse Selection

The people of Srirampur consider that it is their bounden duty to arrange the marriage of their adult as well as nubile daughters and after the completion of the marriage of all of them; they feel they have completed their duties towards their children. In fact, parents of eligible boys and girls are much more concerned about the marriage of their children than the children themselves. If the parents do not arrange the marriage of their eligible sons and daughters in 'due time', they may be reminded of their duties towards their children by the *atmiya-svajans* and the fellow villagers (Bhuiyan, 1978: 232). In Srirampur like other parts of the country, there is some kind of spouse selection procedure which functions to sorts' males and females as marriage partners (Rahaman 1990, Sarker 1997, Afsaruddin 1990). However, the general practice in Srirampur is that the bridegroom's party initiates the proposal of marriage and they directly propose to the bride's side. In this context, I agree with Afsaruddin when he states, " The proposal of marriage is discussed by relatives, friends and admirers of the bridegroom with reference to the status of the bride's kin relationship, power and pride of the kiths and kin of either side" (1990: 108-109). There is an all round feeling among the villagers that it is difficult to find

suitable match for their daughters. Regarding the mate selection in the rural society of Bangladesh the statement of Afsaruddin is relevant as he states, " It is easier to find a bride for the son than a husband for the daughter" (*ibid*: 82). They try to arrange the marriage with a suitable bridegroom but the proposal of marriage from the bride's side is not as direct as the one from the groom's side. It is mentionable here that the bride's side would never do it in a direct as well as overt way, the implicit reason being that if the proposal is rejected by the groom's side it will damage the reputation of the bride. If the bride's side wishes to send a proposal, they would send it in an indirect and covert manner to the groom's side. During this time some relatives, such as, elder brother's wife, elder sister's husband, grand fathers or grandmothers, and such others play a significant role in spouse selection among all villagers of Srirampur, as a matter of fact in the whole of Bangladesh.

Normally, both the concerned parties finalize the proposal of marriage and they take help of a third person who is called a *ghatok* (mediator). Sometimes, the terms and conditions of marriage are thoroughly discussed in the presence of *ghatok* (mediator) by the concerned parties in their respective homes. Generally, the *ghatok* is a known person to the local area. He is requested to go ahead for the completion of marriage. The *ghatok* (mediator) takes the case in hand and tries his best to make the affinal relationships between the concerned parties. It is mentionable here that two types of *ghatok* are found in village society, i.e., professional and non-professional (Rahaman 1990, Naher 1985). But in the study village no professional *ghatoks* (mediators) are found. Only the non-professional *ghatoks* (which generally include kinsmen, affines, friends etc.) among the relatives' networks play a vital role in match making. The professional *ghatoks* take remuneration for their efforts. The non-professional *ghatoks* are generally kinsmen, affines, friends, well-wishers of the concerned parties (i.e., groom's side and bride's side) who seek their help. These *ghatoks* do not work for a financial consideration. However, some of the non-professional *ghatoks* do receive gifts in cash or kind from their respective parties. Some of

them take-up this role because of their conviction is that it will be virtuous for them from the religious point of view. Whatever the case may be, it is found in the rural society of Bangladesh that the *ghatok* (mediator) has to play an important role in the settlement of marriage terms.

4.6 Some Important Factors in Spouse Selection

Now a day, the selection of a spouse is influenced by various factors. But it should be taken into consideration that with the growing rate of literacy as well as the improvement in communication systems, the pattern of spouse selection has considerably changed. However, at the time of spouse selection generally, the reputation of the bride's and the groom's *gushti*, family, their age, education, religion, cultural background, socio-economic status, personal skill, wealth and status of the family are considered important. Besides, the bride's fair body complexion, education, a good moral character, family background, financial background of parents, health, age, her being good and amiable nature, her skill at cooking and management of domestic affairs are also considered. Regarding the selection of the bride and the bridegroom Afsaruddin says, " Arranged marriage or marriage by negotiation between guardians of both the bride and the bridegroom is a common practice found in the village. Many factors are considered while arranging a marriage. Some of the important variable factors are religion, status and standard of living (higher status the better), family background, education, age (husband should be three to five years older than his wife) and physical appearance of the girl" (1990:82). As stated earlier, the village is completely a Muslim inhabited village; the bride should know reading the *Quran* (the holy book of Islam) and also should be regular in her prayers as well as fasting. Sometimes, handsome gifts from the bride's side to the groom's side are also taken as a favourable factor, which succeeds in swaying the balance in its favour. It should be noted here that the bride's father is sometimes compelled to make a heavy payment in order to get a suitable groom for his daughter and in a few cases; a list of demands is presented to the bride's father from the groom's side for fulfilment.

Similarly, the selection of a groom mainly includes occupational position, level of education, family background, health, age, and having a good moral character. However, at the concerned social contexts I agree with Bhuiyan when he states, " . . . a man who can provide his wife with *bhat* (literally, boiled rice; in this context, food), and *kapar* (cloth) is a worthy husband. The basic considerations in the selection of a husband are his family background and his ability to earn" (1978:233-34).

In Srirampur, there is a preferential bias in selecting a spouse for the children. Generally, the guardians prefer to establish the marriage relationship with families of equal social status. As stated earlier, the people of Srirampur fall in four status categories i.e., *Barolrok*, *Bhadrolk*, *Grihesto*, and *Gariblok* (see Chapter 1). It may be mentioned here that the categorisation of villagers on the basis of their income, landholding, life style, social values, good moral character, a socially conscientious outlook etc., is not a peculiarity of this village. In other villages of Bangladesh also the people are ranked similarly (Bertocci 1972, Bhuiyan 1978, Van Sehendel 1981, Hartmann and Boyce 1983, Chakrabarty 1985, Rahaman 1990, Kotalova 1993). So informal endogamous marriages are found among these four status categories. For example, when the *Baroloks* of Srirampur select a spouse from within the village or *gushti* in the village, they usually try to get a spouse from a family of equal social status. Similarly, the guardians in each of the rest categories select spouses for their children within their respective category. But there are deviations in the exceptional cases when a son or daughter has any special achievement for a certain quality, such as beauty, higher education, skill, good moral character, a job in a government office, goodwill of family as well as *gushti*. About the establishment of marriage ties in Bangladesh, Bhuiyan further states, "Normally, marriage tie is established between two families of the same status category. Only in an exceptional case a man may get a bride for his son from a family with more wealth and higher status. For example, if he has any special achievement, such as higher education or a job in a government office, he may succeed in getting a

bride for him from a family of higher status. Similarly, in a rare case, a man may get for his daughter a groom from a family of higher status," (1978:237).

Table 4.3
Distribution of Marriages on the Basis of Influencing Factors during the Selection of Brides from Inside and Outside the Village

Main Factors	Number of Marriages	Percentage
<i>Gushti's</i> (lineage) Reputation	197	28.06
Economic Assistance	158	22.51
Bride's Beauty	107	15.24
Existing kinship and Affined Relations	117	16.67
Friendship with Bride's Family members	48	6.84
Family's Education	41	5.84
Others	34	4.84
Total	702	100.00

The data on the main factors behind the preference of getting brides is presented in Table 4.3. We can get a concrete idea of some aspects about the influencing factors in arranging marriages in Sriampur from this Table. The Table shows that of the 702 brides, 197 (28.06%) have been selected mainly because of the high reputation of their respective *gushtis*. 158 (22.51 %) brides have been chosen mainly because of the economic cooperation as well as assistance between the two families, 107 (15.24 %) brides have been selected mainly owing to their beautiful looks or fair body complexion. 117 (16.67%) matches have been arranged mainly on the basis of the groom's already existing relationship with the bride's side. 48 (6.84 %) brides have been selected mainly because of the friendship of the groom's side and the bride's side. 41 (5.84%) brides have been chosen mainly on the basis of the educational qualifications of their family members, and in 34 (4.84%) marriages the respondents could not specify any particular factor which influenced their selection of brides. So, it is clear from the Table that almost all of the marriages of the people of Sriampur are arranged by the above-mentioned influential factors and the highest influential factor is *gustiti's* reputation (28.06%).

4.7 Geographical Distribution of Affines

There is no principle relating to village endogamy or exogamy in the study village. Data presented in Table 4.4 shows the distance of original homes of spouses from Sripampur. Some of the marriage ties are established within the village and some outside. The Table shows that the number of marriages outside the villages is markedly more than that within the village.

Table 4.4
Location of Marital Ties among the Villages

Geographical Distance of Marriages (in Kilometres)	Number of Marriages	Percentage
Within the same village	74	10.54
Adjacent villages (within five kilometres from Srirampur)	367	52.28
Within ten kilometres (in and outside the union)	142	20.23
More than ten kilometres from Srirampur (including town area)	119	16.95
Total	550	100.00

The above Table presents the data on area wise selection of brides for village sons. A considerable number of marriages (10.54%) are arranged among the villagers itself. The percentage of marriages within the adjacent villages, in which the study village is not included, is significantly high (52.28%). And the percentage of marriages links within ten kilometres is 20.23%. A small percentage of marriage ties are also established at a distance of more than ten Kilometres including town area. It is clear from the above Table that almost all of the marriage ties of the people of Srirampur are established within a radius of ten Kilometres. The majority people of Srirampur prefer to establish affinal relationship within a radius of ten kilometres, because in most cases it is possible for them that the families arranging a marriage tie would know each other before the establishment of the tie. The concentration of marriages within the local

region is a result of consideration of social relationships, which has led to a situation where a large number of the people from nearby villages are having affinal relations with the people of Srirampur. Thus, these villages along with Srirampur seem to have formed a local society comprising of *atmiya*, *savajan* and *kutumbu* people (for explanation of these categories, see Chapter 3).

However, the geographical distance is a physical phenomenon but there are social as well as cultural factors behind the selection of a spouse within a short distance. The villagers prefer to arrange the marriages within nearby places and from known families for several reasons, such as: (i) the people living within a close geographical range may be known to each other earlier, (ii) as they reside within a close geographical range, they have certain things in common, such as mode of cooking food, speech, dress, habits etc. (iii) being a short distance between the families all of them usually may get regular information about each other's well-being, (iv) generally, the members of both families may get social, political and other support in times of need, (v) similarities of social as well as cultural background of the spouses help them in establishing the marriage tie, (vi) due to the short distance both the parties may have easy opportunity to communicate as well as to visit each other.

The above discussion reveals that though there is neither an exogamous nor an endogamous area for the village people, there is a preferential bias to select brides for the sons from a close geographical area. The villagers sometimes prefer to get spouse from a distant village or from a town when they consider it to be exceptionally good and in that cases the marriage bond may be established with a family from distant places. A village son may marry a bride from a distant place if he has any connection with some people of that place. A man who is well known in the locality for his notoriety may find it difficult to get a wife from the same village and its neighbourhood and in that case; he may have to bring a wife from a distant place. On the other hand, in case of secondary marriages people may go to a distant place for a spouse selection.

4.8 Marriage within the Kin Circle

Under the Muslim marriage rules, an eligible man is allowed to marry a parallel cousin or cross cousin and it is practised among the Muslims in Bangladesh. As mentioned earlier that the cohesion of the family is reinforced by the practised of cousin marriages among all Muslims. Sarker (1997) reported that when a man starts looking for a partner for him, his first choice might be among his father's brother's daughters or father's sister's daughters. If he does not find an eligible partner within this circle of cousins, his next choice is to extend to his second cousins or outside the kin circle. But it has been observed in Srirampur village that there is a tendency to seek marital alliance outside the kin circle and this fact is also supported by data (see Table 4.5) though a considerable number of marital alliances have been arranged among kin circle.

There are some cases of intra *gushti* marriage in Srimampur and among cross as well as parallel cousin marriages. Parallel-cousin marriage is preferred among the villagers of Srirampur, as a matter of fact, in the whole of Bangladesh. It should be noted that marriage is possible within the same *guhsti* but one is strictly prohibited to marry any member of his or her conjugal natal household. There may be two kinds of parallel-cousin marriages, i.e., patrilineal parallel-cousin marriage and matrilineal parallel-cousin marriage. Similarly, cross-cousin marriage is also classified into two categories, i.e., matrilineal parallel-cousin marriage and matrilineal cross-cousin marriage.

These four types of marriage between first cousins, which are distinguished by the sex of the siblings whom the cousins are related, as shown in the following genealogical chart.

preferential in some special circumstances. However, the main reasons for considering such marriage are: first, the family wealth will remain within close kinsmen by marrying within the *gushti* and thus, it serves to strengthen the cohesion as well as solidarity of the agnatic kin by keeping the property within the *gushti*; second, such a marriage among the circle of kinsmen contributes largely to reinforce the existing relationships; third; cousin marriage is also felt to be desirable because households linked through kinship relations are of similar standing in respect of social as well as cultural background; fourth, marriage is preferential among them because there might be less probability of divorce; fifth, there is possibility of less dowry also; sixth, the couple might be able to adjust easily because they know each other about their sentiment as well as pre marital background, i.e., chastity which is highly valued in our society; and finally, girls marrying within the kin circle who might seek greater unity and consolidate the interests of the individual households as well.

Table 4.5 shows the high frequency of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage (17.95%) (i.e., father's brother's daughter), while cross-cousin marriage (father's sister's daughter) constitutes 17.09%. However, all these marriages within the collaterals and affines involved the village with in and outside villages respectively for the paternal homes of the wives. As stated earlier, the existing kinship and affinal relations are an important factor of influencing the village people in choosing spouses for their children. A considerable number of matches (16.67%) (see Table 4.3) have been arranged on this basis. Out of 117 marriages arranged among kin as well as other affines, 21 (17.95%) marriages within the same *gushti*, i.e., the boy has married his father's brother's daughter. The following Table also shows the nature of relationship between village husbands and their wives before their marriage including cross-cousin and parallel-cousin marriages.

Table 4.5
Distribution of Kinship and Affinal Relationship Between Husbands and Wives
before their Marriages.

Relation before Marriage	Number of Marriage	Percentage
Wife was husband's father's brother's daughter (patrilateral parallel-cousin)	21	17.95
Wife was husband's father's sister's daughter (matrilateral parallel-cousin)	20	17.09
Wife was husband's mother's brother's daughter (matriaerall cross-Cousin)	17	14.53
Wife was husband's mother's sisters' daughters (matriaerall cross-cousin)	16	13.68
Wife was husband's father's fathers' brother's son's daughter	4	3.42
Wife was husband's mother's father's brother's son's daughter	5	4.27
Wife was husband's brother's wife's sister	9	7.69
Wife was husband's sister's husband's sister	10	8.55
Wife was husband's brother's wife's father's brother's daughter	6	5.13
Wife was husband's brother's wife's mother's sister's daughter	4	3.42
Wife was husband's sister's husband's father's brother's daughter	3	2.56
Wife was husband's sister's husband's father's sister's daughter	2	1.71
Total	117	100.00

Table 4.5 shows that out of 117 marriages arranged among kin and affinal relations, 74 (63.25%) marriages arranged between cousins of the parallel-cousin and cross-cousin marriages, in 21 (17.95%) cases the village husband has married his father's brother's daughter, in twenty (17.09%) cases his father's sister's daughter, in seventeen (14.53%) cases his mother's brother's daughter, and in sixteen (13.68%) cases his mother's sister's daughter. And remaining 43

(36.75%) marriages have been arranged among other affinal relatives, i.e., 4 (3.42%) marriages have been arranged with the bride's father's brother's son's daughter; 5 (4.27%) cases with his mother's father's brother's son's daughter; in 9 (7.69%) marriages wife was his brother's wife's sister; 10 (8.55%) with groom's sister's husband's sister; 6 (5.13%) with his brother's daughters; 4 (3.42%) with brother's wife's mother's sister's daughter; 3 (2.56%) cases with groom's sister's husband's father's brother's daughter; and 2 (1.71%) with his sister's husband's father's sister's daughter. It is clear from the analysis of 117 marriages in Srirampur that marriages between a village groom and his different kinds of cousins patrilateral and matrilineal, parallel as well as cross-have taken a considerable place among themselves and its ratio is almost equal and therefore it brings equal importance in the study village like other parts of the country (Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990, Aziz 1979). Table 4.5 also shows that the marriage preferences in rural society, as a whole of Bangladesh, between relatives are not emphasised in favour of any particular kind of cousin (see Table 4.5).

4.9 Rituals and Ceremonies of Marriage Observed in the Village

Marriage in Srirampur is a social and economic contract, which is ritualised by a socio-religious ceremony. Through the ceremony the marriage is recognized by the community. A number of certain rituals and ceremonies have been associated with the institution of marriage but they differ from place to place and even society-to-society in different times. However, the marital rituals and ceremonies which are specially related with the bridegroom and the bride are celebrated at the houses of the concerned parties while others which are applicable for both are jointly practised at their father's residences by turns. Of the several rituals and ceremonies in a Muslim marriage in Srirampur have been discussed systematically under the following phrases.

Kinsmen, affinies and allied persons initiate the marriage process in our rural society. The *wali* (lawful guardian; but socially, a group of man consisting of guardians and important relatives and allied persons of bride and bridegroom)

requests the friends and *atmiya-svajans* to look for a spouse for the boy or girl in his family when he thinks that his children have become eligible for marriage. Sometimes, some of his relatives or friends may bring proposals for his son or daughter. Whatever the case may be, usually, the proposal is sent through third persons who are known to both the families. It should be noted here that even in the case of marriage between two relatives in the rural society the concerned parties to marriage generally do not initiate the proceedings of marriage directly. A common friend or relative of the concerned families takes the initiative of the marriage. It was observed in Srirampur, as a matter of fact; in the whole of Bangladesh that the groom's side usually send the proposal. If the bride's family accepts the proposal of marriage for consideration, the negotiation begins regarding the match making. Thus, when the both concerned families are agreed to give their words in marriage, they mutually take the initiative to see their prospective daughter-in-law as well as son-in-law by turns. Relatives from both sides visit each others place to make discrete enquires regarding the socio economic status of the concerned families as well as the character and qualities of the prospective bride and bridegroom. In Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh this ceremony is called *cheley-dekha*, *meye dekha* (seeing the groom and the bride). It is completed in two phases, one, informal and the other, formal. In the informal phase, enquiries are made discretely, i.e., without informing the party. The bridegroom is generally chosen first at village *hat* (market) or in a public place in the rural society. Sometime he is asked some questions relating to religion, family backgrounds, education, and occupations as well as social status. Similarly, as a part of informal phase of seeing the bride, a reliable amity (relative) may be asked to visit the bride's home and to see her secretly. Informally he visits the bride's home on some pretexts but he himself and the bride's family know that he has come to see her as a primary selection. During this time she is asked to come before him in connection with some work, such as to serve him food. If the groom's family is satisfied with the report of the person sent to see the bride, a day is fixed in consultation with the bride's family to see her formally; i.e. open or public negotiation begins. Sometimes, the

bridegroom or any other members of the groom's family confidentially go to see would be future spouse in the sly. Thus after the primary selection of the groom as well as the bride, both the concerned parties have made up their mind of the mutual seeing of their homesteads, the guardians of the wedding parties give the formal consent to the wedding and the formal phases gets going. However, when the negotiation for a marriage begins, both the two sides try to gather as much information as possible about each other. In particular, the groom's family tries to know in detail about the bride's beauty, behaviour, temperament, character etc.

The *wali* from the wedding parties visited each other's residence on a fixed date. Usually, it is the groom's *wali* who first visit to see the bride in her natal home with prior notice. The bridegroom's *wali* generally accompanied by a few relatives, i.e., groom's father, father's brothers, father's sister's husband, sister's husbands, mother's brothers, brothers' wives, brothers and sisters, sister's father-in-law, sister's husband's brothers, friends and well-wishers. All these relatives together go to see the bride in her natal home on a fixed date. Generally, the groom does not join this party, but a few children; such as the groom's younger brother, nephews and nieces may join it. At the time of visiting the prospecting bride's place, they carry some gifts, usefully a *saree* or a ring for the bride and some sweets with them. It should be noted here that sometimes they may not take any gift in kind, but a cash amount is given to the bride. When the party reach at the bride's residence, bride's guardian and relatives receive them cordially. They are then served food specially prepared for them. After taking meals some important persons on behalf of the party, express their desire that they would like to see the bride and the bride's side is already prepared for such request. She is beautifully dressed for the occasion and comes before the *wali* members with *paan-supari* (betel leaf and betel nut). It is customary to offer these things to guests in the study area as well as in Bangladesh. One or two young unmarried girls who are usually her cousins or friends escort her. It is mentionable here that no elderly women accompany her

because they observe *purdah* but all the time they watch the whole scene from behind the curtain. Sometimes, those elderly women would instruct her even from behind the curtain to behave properly before the party. A few of her close relatives, such as, her *nana* (mother's father), *mama* (mother's brother), *chacha* (father's brother), *phupa* (father's sister's husband), *khalu* (mother's sister's husband) and so on may remain with the *wali* members; If she has a *dula-bhai* (elder sister's husband), he will invariably be present on this occasion.

However, the bride is asked to sit and is asked a few questions by the members of that party. Persons from the groom's *wali*, may ask her a few questions. As the bride's face is covered with *ghumta* (a portion of *saree* covering the face), she is expected to open it and answer the questions. Some general questions regarding her name, educations, skill at cooking, sewing, ability to read the holy *Quran*, regularity about offering prayers, compulsory fasting etc. are asked. She may also be asked to recite a *sura* (verse) from the *Quran*. However, she is expected to answer the questions in a low voice, as a mark of her modesty. Her relatives present on the occasion sometimes may help her in giving accurate answers and if she gives wrong answers, they even correct the same. The relatives present on the occasion sometimes would inform the party about her various virtues as well as qualities not known to the *wali* members. Generally she stays before the party for about half an hour and after receiving the gifts she goes inside the house. This is called *meye-dekha* (seeing the bride). It should be noted here that in the selection of a bride in our rural society emphasis is always given on some special aspects, such as social status and economic background of her natal family, her training in the household affairs and lastly, her religious and ordinary Bengali reading and writing knowledge. Having observed all these things if the members of the groom's *wali* feel satisfied, they invite her relatives to visit their residence to see the groom.

Subsequently, a party led by the bride's *wali* goes to the groom's residence on a fixed date to see the condition of his father's house as well as the surrounding environment. They are also cordially received by his guardian and relatives and

served food specially prepared for them. After finishing their food, the groom formally comes before the *wali* members and gives *salam* (salutation) to them. They request him to take a seat. The groom usually wears a new dress or clean dress for this occasion. They (bride's *wali*) may ask the groom a few questions regarding his education, occupation, religious affairs, family background and social status. He takes leave after replying the asked questions. The villagers in Srirampur say that seeing the groom (if he is not from a far off place) is mostly a formality only, because he can be seen outside the home very easily, as he, unlike the bride, usually works outside the home. Generally the bride's *wali* do not bring any gifts for the groom but carry some sweets with them. However, this is called the ceremony of *cheley-dekha* (seeing the groom). If the bride's *wali* were satisfied after seeing the groom and his family, the date for wedding as well as other details would be finalised by the two families. People in Srirampur say that seeing the groom is a formality only, because he can be seen outside his room also. However, on the day of *cheley-dekha* (*cheley* is son/boy, and *dekha* is see, in this context, seeing the groom) the date for wedding and other details are finalised. The most common things discussed by the two concerned families are the amount of *mohar*, the exchange of gifts in marriage, and the number of guests in the groom's party on the wedding day. Marriage proposals and *mohar* discussions normally go together. The bride's relative called *wali* plays an important role in the discussion. It should be made clear that *mohar* is an important aspect in a Muslim marriage. The word *mohar*, as it is also pronounced as *mehr*, *mohar* or *meriah* come from Hebrew word *mohar* and Syrian word *mahra*, which refers to the bridal gift (Arefeen 1983). As prescribed by the Islamic law, *mohar* is to be paid or pledged by the groom to the bride when the social and religious arrangements for the wedding are settled and both the parties sign the *kabinnama* or written contract. The economic contract in a Muslim marriage is the payment of *mohar*, which provides some economic security for the woman. However, the date for the next ceremony, namely, *pan-chini* (literally, *pan* is betel and *chini* is sugar, but in the context of marriage, *pan-chini* is betrothal) is also fixed in this meeting. On the day of *pan-*

chini, the groom's *wali* goes to the bride's home to bless her. On this occasion, the *wali* should take a *saree* and a piece of gold ornament for the bride i.e., a *nath* (a nose ring), *aungti* (a ring). Some toilet articles, such as hair oil and soaps are also given to the bride. She comes before the *wali* who blesses her and present her the gifts. If the details of wedding are not finalised on the day of *cheley-dekha*, they are finalised on the day of *pan-chiri*. Now-a-days, however, the bride and the groom are seen as well as interviewed by relatives of both the two sides and in some cases-especially in the marriages of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* category families, it is a normal practice for each of the couple to see and approve a photo of the other prior to the marriage.

Once *cheley-dekha* and *meye-dekha* ceremonies are over, the next ceremony is engagement. Locally, this ceremony is called *nirakkhan* (engagement). Actually, it is a ceremony for fixing up the proposal of marriage that both the concerned families have already decided to accept after the primary talk about the wedding. In Srirampur, this is called the ceremony of '*bea-thik-thak*' (literally, marriage is fixed). On the day of *bea-thik-thak*, the groom's *wali* accompanied by one or two senior men, but usually this group is smaller than the party of *meye-dekha* (seeing the bride) as well as close relatives of bride's side get together at a place, usually the bride's natal residence. Thus, the engagement ceremony occurs in the residence of the bride when the party of kinsmen of the groom usually comprising close agnates as well as other relatives, go there bearing gifts, sweets, fruits etc. with the prior notice. Actually, the close as well as respected relatives who participate on this occasion are mostly groom's father, mother's brother, elder sister's husband, father's brother and a few others. On this occasion the bridegroom's *wali* usually takes a *saree* and a piece of gold ornament for the bride. On this special occasion the bride is brought before the *wali* members and the gifts which have been brought are then customarily presented to the would be daughter-in-law by her future father-in-law or by the senior one of the *wali* on behalf of the groom's father as a token of certainty of marriage and blesses her. Some toilet items, such as hair oil, soaps

and so on are also given. It should be noted here that these things have a symbolic value, i.e., she is no longer a member of her natal family and already she has become a member of her husband's family. She will physically join this family within a short time. So, it is befitting that the bride should begin to use these things given from her husband's family. On the occasion of betrothal or engagement the bride's side also gives at least a ring (usually of gold) or wristwatch to the groom as a mark of engagement. It should be noted here that those who belong to *Grihesto* and *Gariblok* categories do not usually give such gift to the groom on this occasion but in the case of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* categories of the study village such gift is given to the groom.

The two concerned families of the marriage also arrange the '*gaye halud*' (turmeric ceremony) in their respective residences at the night before the wedding day. It is a very popular ceremony at every marriage in both rural and urban areas in Bangladesh. It was observed in Srirampur that the smearing with *mehndi* (henna) is conventional but plucking of its leaves is quite ceremonial. It is mentionable here that there are also a few differences between rural and urban areas as regards the mode of performing this popular ceremony. However, the day before the wedding in the countryside particularly in Srirampur *mehndi* (henna) leaves is ceremonially plucked in both the residences of the bride as well as the groom. The unmarried girls go to pluck the leaves with a painted *kula* (winnowing fan) in their hands. At the time of plucking the *mehndi* (henna) leaves others also rejoice in singing the *hanola* (womanly songs) as a customs. The groom's side usually celebrates it first and the bride's side also follows them. The *mehndi* function is usually observed at groom and bride's natal home with their own people who have "joking relationship" with them. At this function their (groom and bride) hands are dyed with *mehndi* (henna). Some gifts are sent from groom's side for bride (i.e., with red-bordered yellow and water discharging *saree*, a blouse, a petticoat and a pair of red *sandals*) to be used before and after the bridal bath. Similarly, the bride's side sends some gifts to the groom such as a *pajama*, a *lungi*, a *genji*, a *panjabi*, a

shirt, a cap, a pair of shoes, *sandals* etc. Moreover, both sides reciprocate each other some common bridal things needed for the *mehndi* (henna) ceremony, i.e., *halud* (turmeric), *mehendi* (henna), cosmetics, a clay dish with mustard oil and a wick, a pair of winnowing trays, betel leaf, betel nut, sweets, fish and *pitha* etc. which are usually brought at the time of *painama*. However, in the rural areas usually the relatives and non-relatives of one's own place participate at this occasion. Each side at other's places separately delivers the materials used in this ceremony and it involves reciprocal visits of both sides. Through a series of reciprocal deeds and exchangers this ceremony consolidates the bond of relationship between the two concerned families. At the morning on the wedding day a barber is called to the groom's home to cut his hair and to shave him. Sometimes, the groom gets his hair cut a day before. According to marriage custom the groom sits on a small stool and the women who have joking relationship with him hold a *saree* over his head as a kind of canopy and start singing some wedding songs in a gay mood. The barber receives a handsome remuneration for his service.

After the barber has finished his work, the groom is carried to a place for his special bath for the wedding. Usually, he is carried there by a male relative (elder sister's husband gets preference). While bathing, he sits on a small and low stool and his mother holds her *anchal* (the end part of the *saree*) over his head as a canopy. Some women present there hold the *sil* (stone used for grinding spices) vertically over this cloth in which contain vases of mango leaves, paddy, betel leaf, betel nut, turmeric, flower petals, *durba* grass etc. Mustard oil is poured over the *sil* and on the *anchal*. All these things are brought three times before the groom. The body of the groom is also rubbed with turmeric as well as mustard oil and then the women together (including his mother) pour water over his body. As soon as water is poured over him, all the women present there splash it around at one another and at by standees. A mock fight with mud as well as colour throwing takes place among the persons present there. The groom's brother, his *bhabis* (brothers' wives), sisters, *dhula-bhai* (sisters'

husband) and others may also join at these fights to enjoy. The assembled women may sing some wedding songs during this period. Through their songs they tell the groom that he is now going out of their authority and may now forget them as he is going to have his "*nijer manus*" (own woman). However, both the bride and the groom are separately bathed at their respective houses by their close relatives.

After bridal bath, the groom is carried to the house by a male relative (usually, his elder sister's husband). Then he takes his meal along with other. Generally, his close relatives, such as his younger brothers and sisters, his sisters' husbands, his *bhabis* (brothers' wives), cousins and friends also eat with him. His *dada-nana* (father's father and mother's father) may also join him at the meal. The invited guests who have already reached home are also served some light food. When the meal is finished, the groom is dressed in his new bridal dress. Generally, on the wedding day, the groom wears *payjama* (lower garment), *panjabi* (upper garment), a *pagri* (turban) on his head and a garland around his neck. Sometimes, *sherwani* (a long, men's overcoat) is also worn by the grooms belonging to *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* categories. It should be noted that people of all the status categories in the study village do not process the above-mentioned items of dress as their wedding dresses. *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* have them while the *Grihestos* and *Gariblok* do not. Thus, one can guess the groom's social status from the wedding dress. The grooms belonging to different social status wear different types of wedding dress on the wedding day but the *pagri* (turban) is invariable as a bridal dress. The groom's *pagri* (turban) is more ornamental as well as colourful than the usual one. However, all these wedding dress except *sherwani* are brought from the shops in Baraigram, Chaskhoir or Natore town market. But in most cases, the villagers get the *sherwani* (a long over coat) on hire from shops in Natore town.

With his wedding dress on, the bridegroom sits on a *pati* (mat), which is kept on the yard. His sisters' husbands also participate with him and other invited people gather round him. The groom should show respect all the participants by

standing. He also gives the invited people his *salam* (salutation) especially to his parents and other elders of his household, family, *gushti* as well as other residential groups in the village, and touches their feet, in return for which they should give him *salami* in cash or other things (usually, the gift of salutation) and bless him for a better conjugal life. Before departure the groom's mother takes him in her arms and offers him a glass of milk as a symbol of her love and blessings and then she bids him giving a kiss on his forehead. When all expected relatives and others have reached, the wedding party start their journey towards the bride's residence. Regarding the journey of groom's party towards the bride's residence, a number of transports may be used, such as van-rickshaws, boat, bus, microbus, car, bullock-cart, and buffalo-cart. But the selection of the mode of transport depends partly upon the place where and when the wedding party is going. During the monsoon the party may go by boat while during the dry season by the above mentioned means of transports or even on foot. It should be noted here that a few decades ago it was customary for the groom to go to the bride's natal home on a *palki* (palanquin) and other members of the wedding party followed him walking. Even now a few marriage parties use the *palki* but now a days, it is not easily available. Whatever the transports may be, the wedding party is to pass usually through a number of villages before reaching the bride's village. Many villagers come out to see the marriage party. If the bride's natal residence happens to be very far, the groom's party may stop at some places on the way. Sometimes, the young boys of the villages through which the party passes towards the bride's residence may stop the marriage party at several places. The young boys who generally stop the wedding party may request the groom to take sweet or *sharbat* (sweet cold drink), in return for which the groom should give them some money as gift. Under no circumstances should a wedding party be stopped in the groom's own village when they start.

On their arrival at the bride's natal home, the groom's party would find a gate beautifully decorated with coloured papers and leaves in front of that home. The gate is built to welcome the groom and his party but it is blocked by some young

children, i.e., bride's younger brothers, sisters, cousins and friends of the bride. Blocking the gate, however, they would say that they would not allow the groom to cross this gate unless he pays them some money as gift. As it is a custom for the groom that he should give an amount for crossing the gate. The young children who block the gate may demand a large amount while the groom's side wishes to pay least. But under no circumstances would the groom be allowed to go in before the gate money is paid demanded from him. In the meanwhile, the other persons of the wedding party may be allowed to enter the home. The negotiations between the two concerned parties continue for a long time, sometimes even quarrelsome, bargain is made. The two sides are unable to resolve the issue, the elders from both the sides come forward and ultimately an agreement is reached. After that the groom and his party are allowed to cross the gate. Flower petals are thrown on him as he gets out of his vehicle.

On the other hand, preparations go on simultaneously in the bride's natal home for the wedding. On this very occasion the *atmiya-svajons*, friends, neighbours, and well wishers are invited cordially. Most of them come to the bride's residence before the arrival of the groom's party. The men of bride's side are found to be busy with several activities, such as in making decorations, the sitting arrangement for the groom's party, gossiping etc. Some are also busy in cooking various items of food. However, as soon as the cooking and other preparations are over, the bride is dressed in the wedding dress and ornaments brought by the groom's family. During this period, usually, she remains seated in a room in the inner part of the home, covering her face with the end part of the *saree*.

After entering through this special gate, the groom and his party are seated in a room, which is generally in the outer part of the bride's natal home. This room and the seat of the groom is specially decorated with flowers made of coloured papers. The bride's place is softer and more comfortable. If there is no suitable room in the outer part of the bride's family, arrangement may be made in the courtyard of the family's housing complex for sitting wedding party members. When the groom is seated on the special seat made for him, he is fed a glass of *sarbet* (sweet drink)

or milk to drink half of it and the other half is sent for the bride. Other members of the groom's party are served *sarbat* and light food, such as biscuit, *chanachure*, cake, *luchi*, *semai* and sweets with tea. The groom, however, looks down most of the period covering his mouth with a handkerchief out of shame as well as respect for the elder people and other gathering present there.

The groom's party then request the relatives of the bride to receive the necessary items they have brought for the bride. Generally, the male relatives of the bride's side receive those items from the groom's side. Some kinsmen, affines and other persons present there, both male and female scrutinize those gifts. Among the bride relatives some females in particular are very curious in this matter. After scrutinizing thoroughly they criticise and comment on these gifts. In this context, Bhuiyan rightly observes, "...the bride's relatives would never be satisfied- -or at least show satisfaction--with the gifts brought by groom's party. They would invariably find that some of the items from the agreed list are missing or that the things brought are not of desired quality" (1978:284). Thus, it is a common phenomenon to find the bride's kinsmen, affines and friends criticising the groom's relatives as well as about the gifts they have brought for the bride. However, after the acceptance of the gifts by bride's relatives, the *imam* (leader of the prayer) proceeds for solemnisation of marriage according to Islamic rules. One man, generally from the groom's side is requested to be the *ukil* (proposer of marriage). After taking the permission from the guardians of the concerned parties, the *ukil* accompanied by two male witnesses (one from the groom's side and the other from the bride's side) goes inside the residence where the bride is seated. He raises the marriage proposal to the bride and seeks her consent at the presence of the two witnesses. The bride says, *bismillah* (in the name of God) and *kabul* (consent) three times before them in a feeble voice. This is the expression of her consent (*kabul*) for the marriage. It is mentionable here that sometimes; the bride may also be late in expressing her opinion for the marriage, as she is usually instructed beforehand by some of her female relatives not to give her consent quickly.

However, after getting her consent the *ukil* and the two witnesses come back to the place where the groom's party and other male guests are waiting for them. Next, they approach to the groom in the same way and the same *ukil* raises the marriage proposal before the groom. He also informs him of the bride's opinion for the marriage and seeks his consent (*kabul*) for it. The groom also expresses his consent by saying *bismillah* and *kabul* three times before the gatherings. Thereafter the Imam asks the *ukil* and the two witnesses, whether both the bride and the groom are agreed to the marriage alliance, and whether the *mohar* has been paid. When they reply in the affirmative, the Imam starts reciting *fateha* (first verse from the *Quran*) and *khutba* and then he prays to God a long and happy life for the newly married couple. Others present on the occasion follow the *Imam* and the women inside the residence also pray for them with the *Imam*. Thus, a respectable male designated as *ukil* with two male witnesses performs Islamic marriage.

Under the Muslim marriage rules, every marriage is required to be registered with the *Nikah* Registrar (Marriage Registrar). In the case of a registered marriage in Srirampur village as well as other parts of the country a clerk appointed by the government in the Local Marriage Registrar's Office is informed to come before the verse recitation. He comes to the wedding venue and gets fees at the rate fixed by the government for his work. Sometimes, the same man acts as the *Imam* as well as the Marriage Registrar. However, he fills up four copies of registries forms as documentary proof of the marriage as Aziz states, "among Muslims marriage is a contract and usually the terms of the contract are formally documented" (1979:57). He then gets them signed by five persons namely, the bride, the groom, the *ukil*, and the two witnesses. The illiterate persons can also put their left hand thumb impression instead of signing on these registration forms. Each copy of this form is called *kabin-nama* (marriage deed). Both the groom and the bride get one copy each of the *kabin-nama*, one copy of it remains with the Marriage Registrar and of the remaining one copy is submitted to the office of the Union Parishad.

The wedding guests from both the sides are then entertained at a feast. When the feast is over, the groom is taken inside the home where the bride is seated surrounding by her women relatives, such as her younger sisters, brothers' wives and friends. The groom is seated close to her. A mirror is placed in front of the newly married couple to observe a customary function in such a way that both of them can easily see each other's face in it. After seeing their face at the mirror, a plate of sweets is brought in front of them and he is requested to feed his wife. Similarly, the bride is also asked to feed sweets to her husband but she feels very shy in feeding her husband on this occasion. Sometimes, one of her unmarried woman relatives may also help her in feeding sweets to the groom and then they are asked to exchange garlands and rings between them. Meanwhile, the newly married couple are made of fun by the women present there by asking questions. Thus, it is also a time for both joy and fun.

After the completion of various wedding ceremonies at the bride's natal home, the groom and his party return home on the same day with *natinbau* (new wife) where the newly married couple are received by the groom's relatives through the social customs. It is mentionable that at the time of taking the bride at her new residence, one or two children, usually her younger sisters, brothers or cousins accompany her. Sometimes, the aged females who have 'joking relationship' with her (i.e., bride's *dadi*, *nani*, *bhabhi*) may also be accompanied her. These close guests would stay at the groom's home till the bride returns her parents' residence for the first time after her marriage. But the farewell ceremony would create a commotion among the bride's nearest relatives. Actually, this is a heart touching scene. Most of the people present there have their eyes wet with tears during this time. Some also cry loudly. Her parents, brothers and sisters feel the loss much more. Now she is heading alone for an unknown place and a new environment for the rest of her life.

On their arrival at groom's home the groom's family receives the bride and the groom. They are asked to stand on a fine *patti* (mat) kept in the courtyard. The bride and the groom are surrounded by the gatherings. Both of them are given

sarbat (sweet drink). Meanwhile, the women relatives who have 'joking relationship' with this newly married couple tie the bride's *anchal* (end part of the *saree*) with the end of groom's *panjabi*. In return, the groom should give them some gifts in money. This ceremony is called "*anchal Bhadhar*" (Socially, to tie the end of the dresses of the couple together). The groom is then asked to lift her inside the room where the other senior members of the groom's family and close relatives assemble to see and admire the *natunbau* (new wife). The groom and the bride are then left in a secluded room known as *Basar ghar* (bride-chamber) which is already decorated with sweet smelt as well as beautiful flowers by the younger brothers, sisters, cousins etc. The groom should also pay some money as gift. However, the wedding bed for the newly married couple is specially arranged and they are to pass their first bridal night there.

The next day of the wedding the groom's father gives a feast for his newly married daughter-in-law in which the relatives, friends, neighbours and fellow villagers of the groom are invited. The feast is called *bau-bhat* (literally, *bau* is wife and *bhat* is cooked rice; in this context, feast for daughter-in-law). Some persons consisting of important relatives and allied persons of the bride's natal family come to join at the feast and to bring the couple back to her father's house. The groom's family at this feast deliciously feeds all the guests of both sides. It should be noted that it is a long-standing practice between the *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* categories in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh, while the *Grihestos*, and particularly the *Garibloks* cannot afford it due to their economic crisis. After the feast, the bride is introduced with the relatives and allied persons of the groom's side. The *natumbau* (bride) sits in a special room wearing her wedding dress. The guests bring some gifts for her. The elders bless the bride after seeing her. A young male from the groom's side usually keeps an account of all the gifts and also the persons giving gifts in a *farda* (list). There is a social impact of keeping the names of the provider as document of the invitees in a *farda*. Because the women have a surprising capacity to remember the gifts and the persons who made it but men hardly can remember

it. It is interesting to note that in most cases, excepting significant occasions, (like, relatives' wedding) woman decide nature of the gift and males pay little attention to assess the suitability of the gift yet in case of an unsuitable gift, the males are to be blamed. From this point of view Webner (1988) has rightly pointed out, 'a man's status remains crucially anchored in this inter-domestic realm, in large measure controlled by his wife' (Webner, 1988:183).

Since it is *Udla Bodla*, similar to *Vartan Bhanji* the return gifts must exceed the value, which her family received earlier (Eglar 1960, Werbner 1988). Basically the prestige of the provider's family largely depends on the value and nature of the gifts, since,

The number and quality of the gifts given and received are indicators of the family's knowledge and ability in dealing with people and provide an index of its status, influence and power and of the breadth of its social circle- all of which mean *Izzat* (Eglar, 1960:111).

It should be mentioned that the gifts should not always be as valuable as that was received earlier. During my fieldwork, I have been invited to different ceremonies and had an opportunity to evaluate the trend of gift exchanges. I have observed that gifts are usually of equivalent when both the receiver and the provider belong to the same status. When the receiver belongs to high status group (either economically or a member of professional group) the gift is more expensive than that of the provider. It is usually small when the receiver belongs to a low status group. This trend is common between friends and distant relatives. In case of close relatives, it is just the opposite, especially at the time of wedding, circumcision etc. However, during the couple's first visit at the bride's father's natal residence a special feast is organized by the bride's father in honour of the groom's first visit to his affinal place after the wedding. This is called *phirani* (return journey). The *natur bau* with the groom, however, stays at her natal place for a few days. After all these ceremonies and functions are over, she becomes a guest to her natal residence. On her return to her husband's house, the bride is gradually asked to cook, serve food and other similar chores of the groom's family. Bhuiyan's observation on a village in

Comilla district is similar in this connection, "After this cooking of rice, she becomes a *bou* (wife). She is no longer a *koney* (bride). From now on, she does the usual household chores" (1978:290).

From now she customarily moves to live with her husband at her natal home. After marriage, the girl gets merged with her husband's family. Occasionally, she visits her parents, but feels that her place now is her husband's home (Afsaruddin, 1990:83). The men from her natal home also occasionally visit the bride. The bride usually visit her natal home once or twice a year: once in winter just after the annual paddy harvest when they have less work and then in summer, when mangoes, jack-fruits and other fruits ripen. Her husband may or may not accompany her in her subsequent visits to her natal home. In the initial days after marriage the *natur bau* may go to her natal place whenever she likes. But later, when she enters into obligations and responsibilities in her conjugal household and family, she cannot afford to go to her natal residence easily.

4.10 Transactions at the Village Marriage

The amount of *mohar* and the exchange of gifts are very important aspects of marriage alliance in the village. That is why; before the date of wedding in the study village as well as in Bangladesh, some important aspects of marriage, i.e., the amount of *mohar* and gifts exchanges are settled in detail by the respective *atmiya-svajans* of the bride and the groom. But all these things depend largely upon the mutual agreement between the concerned families. However, during the negotiations in marriage *mohar* may be of any amount and may be either in kind or sometimes in cash or both are given to the bride by the groom's side. *Mohar* denotes the amount or other assets the wife is entitled to get from her husband. It is in no case to be paid to the father, like bride price or bride wealth, because it is the entitlement of the wife alone from her husband. The husband attains his sexual right over the wife by the promise of *mohar*. The wife may deny herself to her husband until the *mohar* is paid (Ellickson 1972, Carrol 1979, Rahman 1986, Levy 1957). Speculates that historically the acquisition of a wife

might will have evolved from bride capture to bride price to marriage by contract in contemporary Muslim society. Depending on this evidence, Korson (1967:53) observed that the current practice of *mohar* 'grew out of a system bride price.' Therefore, it demonstrates strongly that the practice of *mohar* grew out of a system of bride price, but with the growing concern for the economic welfare of the bride (see for more detail, Levy 1957, Encyclopaedia of Islam 1955, Korson 1967, Arefeen 1983, Karim 1990). Aziz also states, "Among Muslims *mahr* or a certain amount of payment under specific conditions is to be made by the bridegroom or his family to the bride in every case of marriage. Such an agreement for payment is given to the bride symbolizing her worth as a person to the bridegroom (1979:57). Before the date of wedding the amount of *mohar* is settled by the respective *atmiya-savajans* of the bride and the groom. It depends largely on the status and economic position of the concerned families. Sometimes, this thing may also be settled at the date of wedding. However, *mohar* fixed during the negotiation is not paid in full at the time of consummation of marriage. The ornaments and clothes bought by the groom's guardians for the bride on the wedding day are usually considered as a part of the *mohar*. It is recorded in the *nikahnama* (marriage document) that a portion of the *mohar* (mentioning the approximate cost of those ornaments and clothes) is paid in kind and the rest will be paid later. Both the concerned families agree to defer the payment of the balance of *mohar*. It is mentionable that in most cases the balance of *mohar* is not paid later on. Even then the *mohar* is fixed, because it is a symbol of status. The general norm in the rural society of Bangladesh is that a higher amount of *mohar* is considered to be a sign of higher status.

The Muslim Family Laws prescribe the marriage should be registered with the *Nikah* Registrar (Marriage Registrar) and at the same time, the amount of *mohar* should be recorded in the *nikahanama*, which is to be signed by the bride and the groom and the two witnesses at marriage. The illiterate persons can put

their left hand thumb impression instead of signing it. In this context, Karim rightly comments, ' As prescribed by the Islamic law, *mohar* is to be paid or pledged by the groom to the bride when the social and religious arrangements for the wedding are settle and the *kabinnama* or written contract is signed by both the parties' (1990:79). It may be mentioned that even in marriages, which are not registrared, the *mohar* has to be fixed. The amount of *mohar* tends to vary with the economic position of the bride's family. However, in the marriage between two families of equal status, *mohar* is fixed on the basis of their wealth and status, which has to be agreed upon by both the families. According to Islamic prescription, the groom must make prompt payment of a portion of the *mohar* which is decided and agreed to by both the concerned parties, and with the remaining part of the *mohar* becomes a matter of record unless there is a divorce, separation, or marriage failure. But customary law does not prescribe it as an obligatory payment; although when the marriage is formally recorded with the *ukil/kazi* (the registrar of Muslim marriages), the amount of *mohar* becomes a matter of record. It should be noted that there is no maximum limit for *mohar*, but as per the Muslim law, it is an obligation imposed upon a husband as a mark of respect for wife. In fact, the Muslim law does not fix the amount of *mohar* but the husband is obliged to pay some amount as *mohar*. Sometime a marriageable male may agree to give a piece of land to his wife as *mohar* but usually in most cases *mohar* has to be fixed in terms of money. It was observed in Srirampur village that in the marriage between the concerned families of equal status, it is settled on the basis of their status as well as their economic position, which has to be agreed upon by the two sides. However, among the villagers the amount of *mohar* fixed at marriages varied widely according to the socio-economic status of the families concerned. *Mohar* in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh provides some economic security for the woman. In fact, the economic contract is the payment of *mohar*. According to Islamic law, if he marriage fails or a separation or divorce occurs, the *mohar* is to be paid to the wife. Thus, the *mohar* acts to restrain a man from divorcing his wife.

For the sake of convenience I have calculated the amount of *mohar* in terms money of those marriages. The following Table shows the amount of *mohar* at the marriages of 550 men.

Table 4.6
Distribution of 550 Marriages in Srirampur on the Basis on Amount of *Mohar* (in Taka).

Amount of <i>Mohar</i> (in Tk.)	Number of Marriages	Percentage
Below 10,000	115	20.91
10,001-20,000	142	25.82
20,001-30,000	180	32.73
30,001-40,000	75	13.64
40,001-50,000	30	5.45
50,001+	8	1.45
Total	550	100.00

Table 4.6 shows that of the 550 marriages, in 115 (20.19%) marriages the amount of *mohar* was below 10,000 taka, where as in 145 (25.82%) cases the amount of *mohar* was between 10,000 to 20,000 taka, in 180 (32.73%) marriages the amount was, 20,001 and 30,000 taka. The number of 75 marriages where the amount of *mohar* was between 30,001-40,000 taka, in 30 (5.45%) marriages the amount of *mohar* was between 40,001-50000 taka and only in 8 (1.45%) marriages it exceeded 50,000 taka. It should be noted that when an amount of *mohar* is fixed at marriage through negotiation, the previous *mohar* amounts for the girls of the same family are cited in fixing the new *mohar*.

Table 4.6 shows the amount of *mohar* fixed at marriages in terns of money but generally they need not pay it. According to villagers' view the high amount of *mohar* fixed at marriage has a symbolic value only. As regards the *mohar* fixed at marriages, Bhuiyan observes, "... it is a symbol of status. A higher amount of *mahar* is considered to be a sign of higher status" (1978:243). It was observed among the villagers that the marriages with the amount of high *mohar* are

usually of *Baroloks* and *Bhadroloks* while the marriages with low amount of *mohar* are among the *Grihestos* and *Garibloks*. In the case of a woman marrying for the second time (i.e., for a divorced or widowed woman) her family may have to be satisfied with a lower amount of *mohar*. On the other hand, in the case of second marriage of a male he may have to agree to a quite high amount of *mohar* and it may be fixed of a sum of money or other property, which the wife is entitled to receive from the husband in consideration of the marriage. Similarly, if a man wants to marry a woman of higher status category, a high amount of *mohar* may be demanded from him at the marriage.

Although the amount of *mohar* at marriage may be fixed by the mutual consent of both the groom's and the bride's party, a spouse's personal qualities and skills constitute another factor with a bearing on the amount of the *mohar* fixed at marriage. If the bride happens to be a fair complexion, having academic background etc., the groom's side do not protest the demand for a high amount of *mohar*. Similarly, when the groom may be highly qualified, the bride's side consider with a low amount of *mohar* at the marriage.

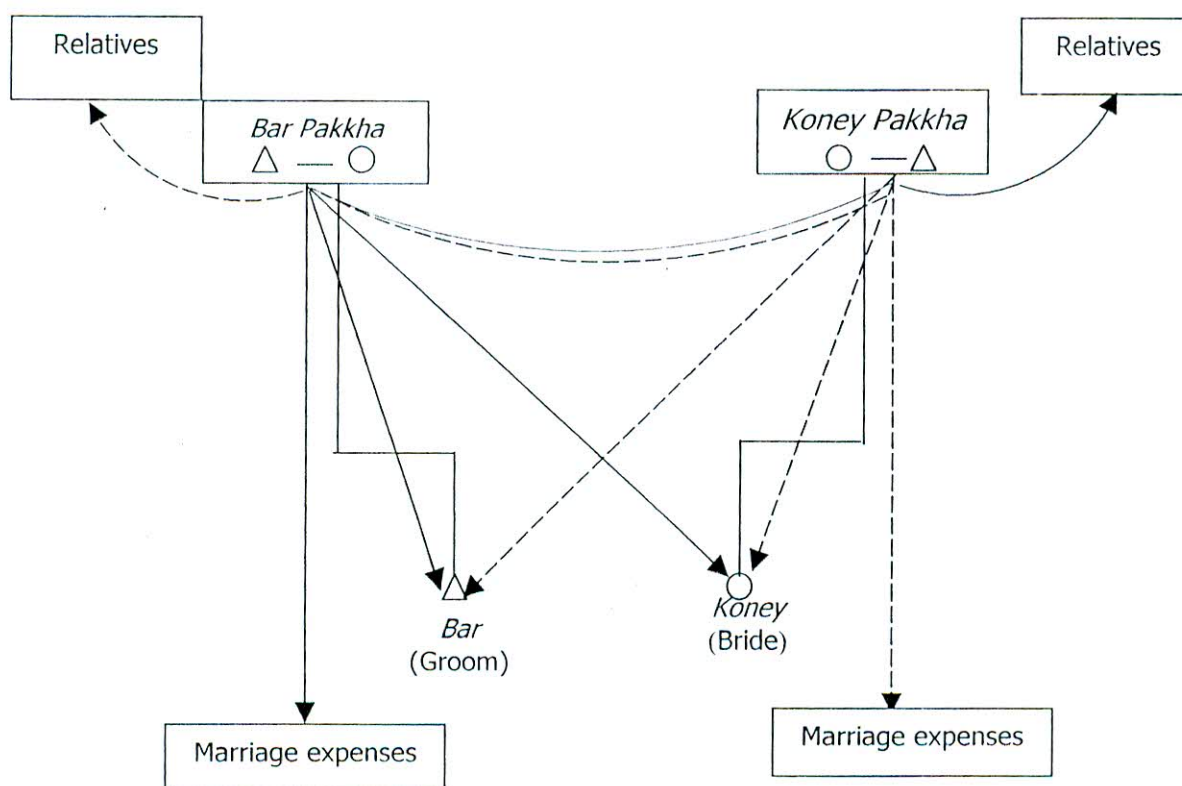
Apart from *mohar*, there are other transactions during the wedding in the study village. These transactions may be classified into two types; one, transactions for the bride, which are given by the groom's side and other is transactions for groom, which are given from the bride's side respectively. However, at the time of marriage ceremony the groom's party brings different types of ornaments as well as clothing as the marriage transaction. Some time these may be considered as the part of the *mohar* amount. At the time of marriage both the concerned parties involved may make gifts of money, ornaments, clothing, household items and other things. Most of the gifts almost invariably come from the purse of the father of the female partner. The most popular gifts for male partners include the transistor radio and wristwatch (Aziz, 1979:68). It should be

taken into consideration that dowry is forbidden in Islam but the social practice forces the bride's father to give his son-in-law some gifts, like- watch, a bicycle, motor cycle, radio, television, ring, chain and so on. Sometimes, he has to give a good amount of cash for the bridegroom and some gold ornaments for the bride. As a matter of which a poor villager often finds it impossible to give his daughter in marriage owing to prevalence of the disguised dowry system in the rural society of Bangladesh. A large number of parents in Srirampur village are always worried about the marriage expenses of their daughters. In some cases they have to sell their landed property, even homestead and other valuables for arranging such gifts. Sometimes, parents have to take loan from the bank, NGO or from village *mohajans* in high interest rates. In fact, it poses a serious problem for the institution of marriage. The following Table shows the main items of the two types.

Table 4.7
Categorization of Transactions at Village Marriage.

Transactions for the Bride	Transactions for the Bridegroom
a) Gold, silver and imitation jewellery (such as: bangles, armlet, chain, necklace, earring, nose pin, <i>tikli</i> , and foot ring).	b) Gold, silver and imitation jewellery (such as: ring, chain, shirt buttons)
c) Clothing (such as: <i>saree</i> , blouse, petticoat, bra, scarf, <i>burqha</i> , towel, handkerchief) and umbrella, shoes etc.	d) Clothing (such as: <i>lungi</i> , <i>ganji</i> , shirt, pant, <i>pajama</i> , <i>punjabi</i> , towel, short pant, handkerchief, cap) and shoes.
e) <i>Mohar</i>	f) Domestic items (such as: bedding, pillow, pillow-case, bed sheet, <i>khatha</i> , <i>shital pati</i> (mat), <i>kalshi</i> (jar), glass set, <i>thalabati</i> and other utensils).
g) Land, cash or both (in very few cases).	h) Items of personal use (such as: motor cycle, bicycle, clock, wristwatch, pen, umbrella, television, radio).
i) Items of cosmetics (such as: snow, powder, soap, coconut oil, cream, leaf liner, lipstick, eye-brow, clips, brand, make-up box, loc-dye, ribbon etc.)	j) Means of livelihood (such as: cash, land (in very few cases), van-rickshaw, otto-rickshaw, animals etc.)

Chart 4.2
MARRIAGE PRESTATION CHART FOR TABLE 4.7



SYMBOLS

- △ — ○ *Bar Pakkha* (Groom's side)
- — △ *Koney Pakkha* (Bride's side)
- △ *Bar* (Groom)
- *Koney* (Bride)

- ▶ Transactions from groom's side to bride's side
- - - - -▶ Transactions from bride's side to groom's side

According to custom, the relatives (*atmiya-svajans*), friends and other invited persons have to bring presentations for the bride or groom during the wedding ceremony. However, there are some customs and norms, which govern the giving of gifts in a wedding in the village. Those who participate in the wedding ceremony are divided into two categories on the basis of their relationship with the two principal participants, such as the bride and the groom. Guests from bride's side are known as *koney-pakkha* (bride's side) and that of groom's as *bar-*

pakkha (groom's side). It is necessary to note that the village custom suggests that the persons of *bar-pakkha* should bring the gifts for the bride. Similarly, the persons of bride's side should bring gifts for the groom. But the quality of presentations varies according to the closeness of the persons. The relatives of one's first ascending generation (i.e., father's brothers, father's married sisters and their husbands, mother's brothers, mother's married sisters and their husbands etc.) are expected to bring good presentations in one's marriage. Other relatives who bring presentations are brothers, sisters, father's brother's sons and daughters, father's sister's sons and daughters and first generation cousins on the mother's side but expectation is not so high in their cases. However, the friends, neighbours and fellow villagers may also bring presentations.

4.11 Factors behind Divorce and Separation

Divorces and separation are very important aspects in marital dissolution in Bangladesh but the practice and values of these two phenomena are different from one society to another or even in the different segments of the same society. However, both divorce and separation bring marital instability in our society. Though divorce is not encouraged by the society, it occurs mainly due to adultery, infertility or incompatibility of husband and wife, wife's bad character, practice of polygyny, non-payment of dowry and so on.

As stated earlier, I have collected information 550 men and their 702 marriages of Srirampur village under the present study. It shows that a considerable number of men have divorced their wives for the above mentioned causes. It should be mentionable here that 113 men married more than once. Of these 113 men, 85 married twice, 17 married thrice, and 11 married four times. Thus, the number of marriages for these men is 265 and the number of second marriage is 152 (see Table 4.1).

A man can divorce his wife as divorce is permitted in Islam. Thus a husband may invariably seek some fault, real or fictitious, on the part of his wife or her natal family for divorcing her. But it should be taken into consideration that it is

a hateful act in the society. Therefore, relatives of husband and wife try to prevent it by bringing reconciliation between them. However, three kinds of divorce (*talaq*) are approved in Islam, i.e., *talaq-i- ahsan*, *talaq-i-hasan*, and *talaq-i-bidaat*. In Srirampur, divorce is also obtained in these three ways. It is necessary to note that the first two modes of *talaq* are approved in Islam, and the third one though legally valid, is considered sinful. The *talaq-i-ahsan* means the pronouncement of one single *talaq* while the wife is in her state of chastity, the husband has been abstaining from sexual intercourse with her, and this abstention has endured at the time of whole *iddat*, which according to *Sunni* Law, covers three manustrial periods so that on the expiration of this period the marriage between husband and wife stands dissolved. The *talaq-i-hasan* consists of three successive pronouncements of '*talaq*', which is made during three consecutive *tuhars* (states of purity on the part of wife) during which there should be no sexual intercourse. And last, the *talaq-i-biddat* constitutes the pronouncement of three '*talaqs*' in one sitting which immediately thereafter severs the marriage bond and the divorce becomes *talaq-i-bain* (irrevocable). At the time of suspended divorce (as to be found in the first two modes of divorce), a woman continues her husband's wife. During this period, the husband is legally permitted to take back his provisionally divorced wife, and for this no ritual as well as ceremony is required to be arranged. But after *talaq-i-bain* (irrevocable divorce) as husband can not take back until she is legally married to, has cohabited with, and is divorced by another man which is known as *Hillah*. According to religious provisions as well as in Islamic law, a divorce woman can remarry but she should wait for three manustrial cycles before remarriage (Kapadia 1966, Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990). As stated earlier, three kinds of divorces are approved in Islam. It was, however, modified by the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961. This ordinance enacted during Pakistan period is still in force in Bangladesh, and is therefore relevant for the understanding of marriage in the village. According to this ordinance a husband must give notice to the Chairman of the Union Parishad (the lowest unit of local self government). The Chairman tries for reconciliation within three months of the notice. If the

reconciliation is failed between the concerned parties, the divorce will be effective after this certain period. On the other hand, Islam does allow the woman the right to divorce her husband easily. A woman is given the right to seek dissuasion of marriage on some specific grounds. In this regard, Sarker rightly comments, "she can secure a divorce only if she can persuade her husband to agree to a divorce on certain circumstances like impotency of her husband, or he could not afford her for abnormal mental condition of the husband, etc." (1997:42).

Among the three kinds of Islamic divorces, *talaq-i-bain* (irrevocable), the third one prevails in Srirampur village. Its procedure is simple and through this procedure a man having taken a decision to divorce his wife, whatever be the cause, by simply pronouncing the word "*talaq*" (I divorce you) three times anywhere and anytime. It is necessary to note that as soon as the phrases "I divorce you" or the word '*talaq*' is repeated for the third time, the wife no longer belongs to the husband. After the pronouncement of three '*talaqs*' the divorced wife can not stay in her husband's house even for a single day and then the divorced wife usually goes back to her natal residence and is accepted there with a sad heart.

Table 4.8
Modes of Termination of Marriages in Srirampur and Its Frequencies

Modes	Number of Marriages	Percentage
Divorce	96	13.68
Separation	05	0.71
Death of wife	44	6.27
Number of terminated marriages	145	20.66
Number of existing marriages	557	79.34
Total	702	100.00

Table 4.8 shows the modes of termination of marriages and their frequencies. The total number of terminated marriages in Srirampur is 145 (20.66%) of 550 men and the number of their existing marriages is 557 (79.34%), 96 (13.68%) of the 145 (20.66%) terminated marriages have been terminated by divorce, 5 (0.71%) by separation and 44 (6.27%) marriages ending by wife's death.

There may be, however, many causes for divorce in Srirampur village, as well as in Bangladesh. In general, the divorce in most cases was initiated and brought about by husband. The present study reveals that in most cases, divorce is given by the husbands who are illiterate, belonging to families without any patronymic or *khetab* (title) and while the wife is still young as well as childless. In Srirampur, the women are divorced on a several number of grounds. However, the following Table presents the data on the major factors leading to divorce in the village.

Table 4.9
Distribution of Major Factors Leading to Divorce and Their Frequencies in Srirampur.

Factors of Divorce	Number of Divorces	Percentage
Practice of polygyny by husband	17	17.71
Wife's bad character	14	14.58
Non-payment of promised gifts	11	11.46
Neglecting of wife's maintenance by husband	24	25.00
Neglecting of husband by wife	8	8.33
Wife's infertility	6	6.25
Wife's sickness	5	5.21
Wife was quarrelsome by nature	7	7.29
Long age gap between couples	4	4.17
Total	96	100.00

Table 4.9 shows that out of 96 divorce cases, 17 (17.71%) marriages were ended due to husband's practice of polygyny, 14 (14.58%) divorces have taken place because of wife's bad character, 11 (11.46%) were fallout of non-payment of promised gifts from wife's natal family, 24 (25%) marriages did not survive because of the negligence of wife's maintenance by husband. Similarly, in 8 (8.33%) divorces the negligence was from the wife's side, 6 (6.28%) marriages ended into divorce due to the wife's infertility. In 5 (5.21%) cases the wife was alleged to have all time sickness, 7 (7.29%) alliances did not survive because of the wife's quarrelsome nature and 4 (4.17%) divorces have taken place because of the long age gap between husband and wife.

The Table 4.9 also shows that in all cases of divorce, it was initiated as well as brought about by the husband. But the causes, which are given for divorce, may be real or vague and fictitious. However, in addition to interviews of 550 married men, I made case studies of seven divorces to make the point clear.

Divorce Case 1 :

Nashir Uddin *Mondal* is a poor farmer of *Schoolpara*. He is now 40 years old. He had a habit of practicing polygyny and married five times. Now he is living with his third wife whose name is *Zobaidha Khatun*. Halima, his second wife died and the rest of the wives had been divorced for his falsification activities.

Divorce Case 2 :

Shagor Ali, 35 years old, is a butcher. He lives in *Uttarpara* and got married to *Shabiya Khatun* of *Dharikushi* village, under the same upazila. Most of the time Shagor Ali stays at his Slaughterhouse and comes home at night. *Shabiya Khatun*, established an extra marital relationship with a neighbour named *Iddris Ali*. At first, one of his kin relatives informed him about this incident. Shagor Ali suspected her of having sexual union with *Iddris Ali* and his enquiries proved to be true. He became very angry and divorced his wife because of her alleged sexual relationship with *Iddris Ali*.

Divorce Case 3 :

Shokur Ali is a helper of mason. He is now 29 years old. He married a woman named *Rahima Khatun* of *Garmati* village under *Baraigram* upazila. At the time of his wedding, the wife's natal side assured him that he would be paid 30,000 taka. Shokur Ali expected that the assured amount of money would be paid to him after the consummation of marriage. Though his wife's natal family informed him several times that they would pay the promised money soon but they failed to do so. In the meanwhile, he was blessed with a son and a daughter. But after five years he divorced his wife, as his wife's natal family did not keep their

word. Then he married another woman and she is living with him. His children also live with the second wife.

Divorce Case 4 :

Tazu Mia of *Natunpara*, is an agricultural labourer. He is 36 years old and married twice. His first wife committed suicide as he tortured her mentally as well as physically. He then got married the daughter of Keftha *Fakir* of *Uttarpara*. He did not have any means of livelihood when he married for the second time. Before, he got a few landed property inherited from his father, but he sold all of it to other persons. As a result, he had no way to maintain his household. He used to misbehave with his second wife. Consequently, she went to her natal family. At last, Tazu Mia divorced her on the ground that he was quite unable to maintain livelihood of his wife.

Divorce Case 5 :

Mr. Aminul Islam *Sarker* is a schoolteacher. He is now 40 years old. His first marriage was arranged with Shifaly *Khatun* of Protabpur village. She lived with him for three years but she alleged that he is not able to satisfy her sexually. For sexual maladjustment he had not control over her and she used to move freely wherever she liked. Thus, she began to maltreat Aminul Islam. Gradually he found a change in her attitudes and she was not cooperating with the household work properly. Several times he and his family members tried to control her but she did not care to pay any head to their words. Therefore, Aminul Islam *Sarker* divorced her and married again to a woman, Nagira Begum of Baro Pingal village, Baraigram upazila. He was blessed with two daughters from his second wife and living with them.

Divorce Case 6 :

Khalilur Rahman is a farmer. He got married to Rokeya *Khatun* within the same village. Even after 9 years of married life he did not have any child. When he consulted a physician, he came to know that his wife was barren.

He was very anxious about his future generation and wanted to marry again. There were frequent clashes between them on this issue. At last, he divorced his wife for her alleged failure to bear children. Khalilur Rahman married again and is living with his second wife and with her children.

Divorce Case 7 :

Zakir Hossain, 32 years old, is a peon of a college. He got married to Ranu Bibi of Endrapara village. She lived for 4 years with him but he had no control over her at all. As she was an ill-behaved woman, she did not care about other members of the family. All her activities and attitudes always revealed that she was quarrelsome by nature. She dominated even in household affairs. Zakir Hossain also tried to warn her of the consequences several times but failed. Consequently, he divorced her saying she was "quarrelsome" by nature.

The above case studies show that practice of polygyny by husband, wife's bad character, non-payment of promised gifts, neglecting of wife's maintenance by husband and the same by wife, wife's infertility and wife's quarrelsome nature are the main causative factors behind divorce. They also support the data shown in Table 4.9.

Separation is also an important aspect in marital dissolution in Srirampur village like other parts of the country (Bhuiyan 1978, Rahaman 1990, Sarker 1997). It has been observed that separation of wife is a common phenomenon in relation to dissolution of marriage among the villagers but it is difficult to say what proportion of them actually may lead to permanent dissolution in our society. However, two types of separation are observed in Srirampur, one is physical separation and another is mental separation. It should be noted here that in physical separation, husband and wife live separately in the separate places. At this situation, the wife usually leaves for her natal residence. Sometimes, she may also live in other than her natal residence. On the other hand, in mental separation both the husband and the wife live together in the same residence

and perform their daily activities. Here it is interesting to note that during this period, they do not have any sexual relationship between them. It is usually found among the educated couples where the physical relation hampers their prestige and position in the society.

As mentioned earlier, there are five cases of separation (both physical and mental) in Srirampur (see Table 4.8). It can also be mentioned that the rural people are very much sensitive to their personal affairs. So, it is very difficult to collect information on this sensitive issue from the villagers.

Separation Case 1 :

Md. Md. Zainal Abedin is an officer of Non-government Organization (NGO). He is now 38 years old. He got married to Rani, the daughter of Abdul Zabber of Dhighalkandi village, which is an adjacent village. Once they read in Srirampur High School and developed love affair with one another. Zainal got married to Rani after several years. He was blessed with a son. After the consummation of marriage they lived a happy conjugal life for several years. Rani was elected the member of Union Parishad from the Reserved Seat' for the women in December 1997. She used to go to the Union Parishad Office regularly to perform her duty. But a love affair had been developed with the UP Chairman whose name was Abu Ishahaque. Gradually, this relation had turned into sexual relation and continued for long. Rani was requested by Zainal to resign from the U.P. membership and would live as a housewife. But she did not agree. Rani bought a portion of land and built a brick-built house near the Union Parishad Office where Ishahaque, the then Chairman visited frequently. Such incident had turned Zainal a drug-addict man. Zainal did not divorce his wife but has been living separately from her.

Separation Case 2 :

Noor Mohammad Member is a farmer and belongs to *Grihesto* category. He is 55 years old. He married three times and during the fieldwork two

wives had been living at their natal residences. Noor Mohammad did not divorce his third wife, but the two are living separately.

Separation Case 3 :

Alauddin, 40 years old, is a government service holder. He got married to Shahanara Khatun of Bonpara village, Baraigram upazila. His wife was also a graduate and a schoolteacher. Shahanara Khatun earlier had a love affair and sexual relationship with one of his classmates whose home was near her father's house. It is continued even after the consummation of marriage. For this reason, she tried to visit her father's home whenever she got an opportunity. This gave rise suspicion on the part of this frequent visit to her natal residence and he decided to go for silent investigation. Some persons from his wife's natal village informed him about the previous relationship. The guardians of Shahanara Khatun arranged her marriage against her will to Allauddin. Several times Alauddin tried to warn his wife not to continue the previous relation but no change had been noticed. Since then they had been living in the same residence and perform their daily functioning but they do not have any sexual relationship. Allauddin did not divorce his wife for the fear of hampering their prestige and position in the society.

Marriage is a socially sanctioned union for man and woman in the relationship of husband and wife. One can have legally and socially recognized children through the institution of marriage. Thus, marriage is a legal arrangement for Muslims, although it is imbued with religious overtones (Jacobson, 1976:182). Marriage is also looked upon as a *Sunna* (practices and precept of the prophet) and therefore, it is regulated as an obligation, which must be fulfilled. Marriage, as an important institution not only brings two households (i.e., of husband and wife) together, but it has also important structural consequences for both the households. If one establishes marriage tie outside one's existing *atmiya-savajans* (relatives), one can have new *atmiya-savajans* through marriage who

may be a source of help and support in times of need and crisis. In fact, marriage alliance creates new groups of relatives and regulates recruitment in factions and as such affects the power structure in rural Bangladesh. Moreover, the extension of kinship through marriage in rural Bangladesh can influence a significant portion of the rural electorate. If one arranges a marriage among his *atmiya-savajans*, his ties with them is renewed and intensified. While in marriages outside the relatives, extension of ties may be a motive; in marriages between the relatives 'intensification' of existing ties may be a motive. In Srirampur, negotiation marriages are common and like any other social action in the village, it requires social approval. Both the concerned parties in a marriage try to get the approval of their respective *samaj* (society), though in an informal way. The *atmiya-savajans* have a greater say, and play a vital role in a marriage. Marriage in Srirampur is thus solemnized with the consent of two concerned households, in consultation with their respective *atmiya-savajans*, and with the informal approval of the respective *samaj*. Thus, kinship relation takes place among the people of Srirampur and sometimes outside the village through the institution of marriage.

Chapter 5

The Pattern of Kinship Terminologies in Rural Bangladesh

5.1 Significance of Kinship Terminology

Each human society has a system of kinship terms, which identify the statuses and roles composing the kinship system, and helps define and regulate relations among kin folk (Murdock, 1949). In fact, kinship is one of the universals in human society and its terminologies give us valuable clues to the understanding of human relationships as well as the ways of linguistic and cultural differentiation in a given society. In this context, Mashreque rightly states, "... kinship terms are useful for understanding the web of social relations the ascription of status and roles to the individuals and the pattern of behaviour" (1980:69). Therefore, a systematic knowledge of kinship and its terminology is essential towards understanding the persistence of certain kin types and terminologies. A large number of anthropologists and sociologists have paid their attention in the organization of kinship relations and kinship terminologies in many societies all over the world. Kinship relations are a set of interacting roles that are customarily ascribed to various statuses of kinsmen. Members of every culture use a set of words that symbolize each its kinship statuses. The words used by speakers born in a certain area to designate kinsmen are called kin terms, and the whole is called the system of kin terminology (Aziz, 1979:1). In fact, a society's kinship system is reflected in its kinship vocabulary, and this is why anthropologists tend to be interested in this particular aspect of language.

The study of kinship has directed much attention to the terms, people use to classify and identify their relatives. Kin are everywhere categorized into distinct groups with specific roles and behaviour. As the term "kinship" refers to the system of human relationships derived from marriage and descent, it belongs in the domain of anthropology, which is the science of the beginning, development, customs and beliefs of mankind. Anthropology of kinship also seeks to describe

systematically such aspects of human organization and behaviour as family structure, sexual activity, marriage, descent, succession as well as inheritance. However, a good deal of anthropological literature on kinship has been largely concerned with the terms various systems employ in addressing and referring to kinfolk and affines. In some societies, kin terms may also indicate how the family is split over the inheritance of goods and property.

In the original context of anthropological literature on kinship that a kinship terminology is the complex of items that describe social relationships created through descent and marriage as well as those relationships established by analogy of familial ones. The kinship terminology is, therefore, an actual social behaviour of human beings speaking a particular language in a given society. In this respect Rahman noted the importance of Bengali kinship term.

The kinship universe as reflected in the use of Bengali kin terminology-address forms as well as forms of reference-is a complex and fascinating system of links and levels, of tradition and taboo and of connections by blood and marriage. There are linguistic devices to preserve the separate identity for all member of the kin group; everyone has some importance and distinction; everyone has a definite role and place in the system and no two relationships are merged or submersed into one. In short, Bengali kin terminology correlates with the underlying values and attitudes of the traditional family (1983: 77).

It is necessary to point out that each individual has primary relatives to whom he belongs, and outside these, he can have many types of secondary relatives as well as tertiary relatives. Primary relatives include an individual's father, mother, son, daughter, brother and sister. Of the secondary relatives the following have been included: grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, aunt, uncle and cousin. However, the basic kinship terms refer to the primary kin of both the husband and wife of the conjugal family and grow out of marriage and parenthood. These terms may be extended outward in a lineage or they may designate secondary affinal relatives (i.e., relatives through marriage). The Bengali kin terminology reflects in the family structure and kinship system in Bengali society. Therefore, the relatives on the father's side as well as those on the mother's side are clearly distinguished in the use of kin terms and one has no difficulty in tracing the line of kinship. For example, father, mother, brother, son,

daughter, paternal uncle, maternal uncle, paternal aunt, maternal aunt, son's son or daughter—all these kinships are differentiated in Bengali kin terminology. Kin address forms as well as kin reference forms for the paternal line of relatives constitute one set of special vocabulary. On the other hand, kin address forms and kin reference forms for the maternal line constitute another set of special vocabulary. Each of the two groups consists of sub-groups of kinship words. In this context, Fortes (1962) rightly states, "a kinship terminology (which includes affinal and derived terms) is a special vocabulary complex. The native speaker of a language can recognize easily a word belonging to this vocabulary." The kinship terms that are inherent in Bengali culture give out a clear distinction between two sets of relatives, i.e., paternal and maternal or relatives belonging to the patrilineage or *gushti* or those belonging to the matrilineage.

It is a special characteristic of kinship terminologies that those in a given society sharing a common linguistic code constitute a kind of "restricted code" which can be used meaningfully only by persons belonging to the kinship universe. However, in the daily routine of life in many societies relationship terms are important not only as indicating the status of person addressed or mentioned with reference to the speaker but also because often there is no other mode of address. This related to the widespread prejudice in many societies against the vocative use of personal names, for which kinship appellation may be substituted even to the extent of assuming relationships.

5.2 Terminological Aspects of Kinship Relationship

The concepts involving kinship in Srirampur, are *atmiya*, *kutumbu*, and *sarik* (see for more detail, in Chapter 3). The villagers' categories two types of *atmiya*, such as: *nikatatmiya* and *dursamparker atmiya*. The former includes all the kinsmen closely related through father's and mother's lines (i.e., the relatives of paternal and maternal or relatives belonging to the patrilineage or *gushti* or those belonging to the matrilineage) and the latter includes all the kinsmen distantly related, may be detached relatives of mother's line and the collaterals having

marital ties. These two types of relatives have also been focused in the context of other villages of Bangladesh (Ellickson 1972, Aziz 1979, Mashrerque 1980).

In Srirampur, the *atmiya* or the kin groups embody the widest circle of people including all relatives, (i.e., primary, secondary, consanguinal and affinal) and this relationship is expressed in referential as well as addressing terms. However, an attempt has been made to describe the kin terminologies prevalent among the villagers in the study village located in rural Bangladesh. This attempt was also limited to the various kinship terminologies used by the people belonging to the selected village under study.

The kin terms used by the villagers under this study includes nearly all the relationships considered important in Srirampur as well as in rural Bangladesh today. Thus, the description of kin terms covers primary and secondary relationships as well as consanguinal and affinal relationships. It should be noted that this study also includes the kin terms in accordance with accepted practices. Though there are some deviations from the accepted practices, they are embedded in the local usages and customs as well as correspond much to the kinship system itself. Here the explanation of various kinship terms used in the study village are very useful towards understanding the web of social relations, the aspiration of status and roles to the individuals and the pattern of behaviour as well. The following kinship terminologies, which were obtained through conversation with the people residing in Srirampur cover the kinship universe (i.e., primary and secondary relationships as well as consanguinal and affinal relationships). In this study the kinship terms have been explained with the use of male 'ego' ('ego' refers to the persons from whom the relationship is traced).

In Srirampur, the terms for father include *baba*, *pita*, *abba*, *bap*, *bajan*. The children in the study village address and refer to their father *abba*, *abbu* or *abbi*. The term for father also varies in different parts of Bangladesh (Shahidullah 1964, Aziz 1979, Mashreque 1980, Rahman 1983). However, most of the

villagers in the study village use the Urdu term *abba* for address instead of using the above mentioned kinship terms to denote their fathers. In the village under study all the villagers use the term *pita* for father in writing only. The father is the procreator and protector as well as the legal guardian of the children. He is, therefore, the most important person to the ego, who abides by his instructions and gets to learn the values of kinship universe. The father is always respected by his children and the character of the former is reflected on his children who get to learn the way of behaving towards their kinship network. Thus, the resultant behaviour of the children is reflected in the manner which they address and refer the superior of their own *gushti* as well as of the other families.

The term for father's father is *dada*, *dado* and *dada bhai*. Most of the villagers in Srirampur, however, address and refer to their father's father as *dada*. On the other hand, the commonly used terms for father's grandfather are *baro bap* and *baro abba*. The same terms are also used for mother's grandfather as well.

Father's elder brother in the study village is *jetha*, *baro chacha*, *baro bap*. While addressing father's elder brother a villager frequently use the term '*baro bap*' in addressing the father's elder brother. But usually the members of high status as well as educated families would like to use the term *baro chacha* in addressing the father's elder brother. However, the addressing form of father's elder brother (i.e., *jetha*, *baro chacha* and *baro bap*) stands as the respected terms in the kinship universe. For addressing the father's younger brother the term *chacha*, *kaka*, *chachajan*, *chachu*. Exclusively the boys and girls use the term *chachu*. It may be mentioned here that for addressing father's brothers in Srirampur, some variations have been marked indicating fully the social and economic positions of these relatives. For example, if ego's father's brother is not economically solvent but socially inferior, he addresses him (father's brother) as the term *kaka* and in many cases adds this term (i.e., *kaka*) of address to his nickname (i.e., nickname+*kaka*). This term of address may appear between ego and his father's brother in the case of special relationships, which indicates extreme familiarity.

In srirampur, the people address the father's elder brother's wife as *jethi*, *baroma*, and for addressing the father's younger brother's wife they use the term *chachi*, *kaki*, *chachima*, *kakima*. These words are the feminine forms of the words used for the wives of the ego's father's younger brothers.

The terms for mother include *ma*, *amma*, *ammu*. The majority of the villagers of the study village use the term *ma*, but less frequently they use the term *amma/ammu* to denote their mothers. Sometimes, the babies also use the term *ammu* in addressing the mother. It should be mentioned here that in Srirampur, all the villagers use the term *mata* for mother in writing only.

Terms for father's mother are *dadi*, *dadima* under consideration in addressing form. But the villagers for father's mother frequently use the term *dadi*, whereas they use the term *nani* for mother's mother in addressing form. The terms for father's grandmother are *baroma*, *baro amma*. The same terms are also used in Srirampur for addressing the mother's grandmother. However, the kin term *baroma* is commonly used for father and mother's grandmother. It should be noted here that the kin position, which has the word *baro* as prefix in the term of address is accorded a very special respect *baro abba/bap*, and *baroma/amma* mean "respectable father" and 'respectable mother' in kinship universe.

Father's sister is addressed as *phuphu*, *phuphuji*, *phuphu amma*, *phuphi*. Some villagers also use the local kin term *beti* for addressing the father's sister. However, the kin term *phuphu* is frequently used in addressing form for father's sister. Among the villagers in Srirampur, the father's sister's husband is addressed as *phupha* or *phuphaji*; some villagers also address him as *jamai* (literally, husband; in this context, husband of *phuphu*). However, most of the villagers use the term *phupha* for addressing the father's sister's husband.

The mother's brother is addressed as *mama*, *mamu*. In some cases, he is addressed as *mamujan*, which is an Urdu term. The kin term *mama* is, however, frequently used in addressing form. It is mentionable here that mother's brother

(i.e., maternal uncle) is differentiated from father's brother (i.e., paternal uncle). Ego's relationship with his maternal uncle is more intimate than that with his paternal uncle. In Bengali kinship universe *mama* (maternal uncle) is a sweet word, full of love and affection to 'ego'. A sense of deep attachment to *mama* sweetens ego's relationship with him as it is based on love and affection. The *mama's* wife is addressed as *mami*, *mamani*. With the addressing form of *mama's* wife the term *mami*, *mamani* for them appear to be almost universal among all members in Srirampur under consideration.

For mother's sister the villagers in Srirampur, use the terms *khala*, *khalaamma*. The kin term *khala* is the Urdu and Hindi term and *khalaamma* is the Urdu term but they are synonyms with the Muslim terms in Srirampur. A few villagers also use the term *khalaaji* for mother's sister. Mother's sister's husband is termed as *khalu*, *khaluji*, *jamai*. However, the villagers frequently use the term *khalu* to denote the mother's sister's husband.

In ego's own generation in Srirampur, ego addresses his elder brother by using the kin terms *baro bhai*, *bhai*, *dada*. Some also use the kin term *miya bhai* to address their elder brother. However, regardless of age all brothers in ego's natal family are referred to as *bhai*. The elder brothers are also addressed as *dada* and *miya bhai*. The kin term *dada* is considered to be Hindu term but it is used for senior brothers among many Muslim families. On the other hand, the prefix *miya* is used to emphasize the authority of the elder brother, which he is likely to hold over his younger brothers after the death of the father. However, the ego addresses his elder brothers using the terms, such as *barobhai*, *mejabhai*, *sejabhai* and *noabhai* according to seniority. The younger siblings, thus, systematically apply kinship terms to their elder ones depending on their age, status, and role in the household.

In ego's own generation, ego uses the kin terms *bu*, *bubu*, *apa*, *bon* while addressing the elder sisters. The younger sister is frequently addressed by her name. The villagers in Srirampur, refer to brother and sister as *bhrata* and *bhagni*

in written form only. In many cases ego addresses his elder sister as *bu* by adding to her nickname (nickname+bu). The elder sisters are addressed as *barobu/apa*, *mejabu/apa*, *sejabu/apa* and *chotobu/apa* according to seniority. Ego sometimes uses the kin term *tui* while talking with his elder sisters. But the relationship between an elder sister and the ego is one of love and affection. The elder sisters sometimes play the same role towards their younger siblings as do their mother.

The terms for brother's son and daughter are *vaste/bhatija*, *bhair beta*, *bhai put*; and *vasti*, *bhatiji*, *bhair beti*, *bhaijhi*, respectively. Similarly, the terms *vagne/bhagina*, *bonput*; and *vagni*, *bonjhi* are used for sister's son and daughter respectively. The use of term mentioned above is determined according to the sex of the speaker among them. For example, when a man is speaking, his sister's daughter would be referred to as *vagni*. When a woman is speaking, she would be referred to as *bonjhi*. However, ego may use their nicknames for addressing his downward generation. In most cases ego addresses them as *abba*, *baba*, *beta* or *abbu* and *amma*, *ammu*, *ma* or *beti*, respectively, as if they are his father and mother. Such kin terms are symbolic of love and affection between 'ego' and downward generation.

The elder male children of uncles and aunts are addressed as *miya bhai*, *bhai*, and such elder female children are addressed as *apa*, *bon*, *bu*. The younger cousins are frequently addressed by name. For reference purpose, appropriate prefixes are used to *bhai* or *bon* to show the exact relationship with the speaker. For example, *jethato bhai*, *chachato bhai* or *bon* means brother or sister who is the child of father's elder or younger brother. The prefix *phuphato* is used to refer to the child of father's sister. Similarly, *khalato* is used to refer to the child of mother's sister, and *mamato* is used to refer to the child of mother's brother.

Among the villagers in Srirampur, the words for referring to a son are *chele*, *beta* and *putra* while the terms of reference for a daughter are *meye*, *beti* and *jhi*. They also address for the immature boy or girl as *khoka* or *khuki* respectively.

For son's son and daughter the villagers use the terms *nati* and *natni*, respectively. There is a joking relationship between *nati/natni* and grandfather/grandmother. In Srirampur village, the grandfather sometimes makes fun with granddaughter by calling her as his second wife. Similarly, a grandmother may make fun with her grandson by calling him as her second husband. This joking relationship is mutually accepted among them. Separate terms are used to indicate the affines in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh. A man establishes relation with a host of men after marriage with whom he was not previously acquainted. Thus, marriage generates a set of affinal kinsmen and also new sets of various kin terms.

In Srirampur, all women commonly use the word *svami* as a term of reference for husband. Wives as terms of reference also use the terms *tini*, *uni* and *ini* for husband. The literal meaning of this term is 'he'. On the other hand, the terms of reference for wife are *bau*, *istri*, *ginni/grhini* and *parivar*. Though the term *parivar* literally means family, it is widely and easily understood as a term of reference for wife in Srirampur. It was observed that when a husband badly needed the presence of his wife under certain permissible circumstances he might utter the expression '*ai sunchha naki*' which means 'Hello! are you hearing?'. The wife does the same for her husband by saying '*sunchhan naki*' which means 'are you hearing?' However, the husband generally addresses his wife in an affectionate and loving manner by saying *tui* or *tumi* ('you'). The wife addresses her husband in a respectable manner by saying *apni* or *tumi*, which means 'you'. Generally, the wife cannot address her husband by his first name or nickname. When a wife has to refer to the name of her husband, she has to take recourse to circumlocutions which sometimes rather amusing. Of course, the tendency to address or refer to one's husband by his name or nickname is noticed among young and educated people, but addressing one's husband by name has not yet been established in other sections of people in Srirampur. After the birth of a child, both the husband and wife change the terms of address. He addresses her by saying child's *ma* (child's mother). Likewise, the wife addresses him as child's *abba* (child's father).

The term of reference for husband's elder brother is *bhasur* who is respected like an elder brother by the younger brother's wife. The husband's elder brother's wife is addressed as *bhabhi*, *jha*. The terms of reference for husband's younger brother is *deor/devar*. A *deor/devar* is many times useful in getting things done favourable to the elder brother's wife. The husband's younger brother is an affectionate individual and a joking relationship is maintained with him. This relationship is, however, one of respect. The latter happens when the *devor* is minor and has lost his parents, especially the mother. In fact, he is very close to the elder brother's wife. He is the only male in the family to whom she speaks directly after her marriage and gradually both are free to talk to each other. The husband's younger brother's wife is addressed as *bhabhi* or *jha*. The kin term *jha* is frequently used for addressing the husband's younger brother's wife.

In the Srirampur, the terms of reference for husband's father and wife's father is *shasur/shasur miya* who is also frequently addressed as *abba*. Likewise, the terms of address for husband's mother and wife's mother are *shauri* or *shasuri*. She is also frequently used as *amma* or *ma*. A *bau* generally tries to remain in close contact with her *shasuri* during daily household chores. Because the *shasuri* plays a vital role in providing required guidance as well as instruction to her *bauma* (son's wife) with regard to household work. The relationship between *shasuri* and *bau* is the most important of all in-law relationships in the patrilocal families. The newly married woman (i.e., *bau*) frequently comes as an unknown individual to reside permanently in her husband's house. A friendly relationship between them is, however, possible if the *bauma* abides by the commands of her *shasuri* and has become accustomed to the attitude, behaviour and nature of the *shasuri*. A tense relationship between them may also be raised during daily household activities. If the tension continues for long and reaches at a high situation the *shasuri* may say things like: (i) "I will throw you out from the house"; (ii) "I will get my son married again"; (iii) "your father promised so may items to give to my son but those promises are now totally forgotten"; (iv) "you have captured my son and in fact, you have damaged the head of my son who was very simple by nature"; and so on.

The terms for husband's sister and her husband are *nanad* and *nandai*. Sometimes, a joking relationship between the *nandai* and the wife's brothers' wives (i.e., wives of *svamandi* and *sala*) is maintained. The elder sister's husband is addressed as *dula bhai*. In some cases, he is also addressed as *miya bhai*. However, *dula bhai* is frequently used for elder sister's husband in addressing form. The younger sister's husband is referred to as *chota bon jamai*. In most cases, he is addressed by her name.

The term of reference for wife's elder brother is *svamandi*. As ego is *svamandi* to his younger sister's husband, he is addressed as *bhai*. The term of address for *svamandi* in Srirampur is *baro bhai* (for eldest), *mejo bhai* (for second elder), and *sejo bhai* (for third elder). In referring to the wife's younger brother the villagers use the term *sala*. On the other hand, the wife's elder sister is *jethas*. She is also addressed as *apa*. In referring the wife's younger sister the villagers commonly use the term *sali*.

The daughter's husband is commonly addressed as *jamai*. The common term for son's wife is *bau*. Persons of ascending generation also frequently address her as *bauma* (daughter-in-law). The son of the husband's elder brother is termed as *bhasur put* and his daughter is termed as *bhasur koney*. Likewise, the husband's younger brother's son is referred to as *deor put* and daughter as *deorjhi*.

In referring to the spouse's brothers (both elder and younger brothers) as well as the sisters (both elder and younger sisters) the villagers commonly use the kinship terms *biai* and *bian*, respectively. In some cases, the senior brothers and sisters of the spouse's are addressed as *barobhai* and *baroapa* as they are the persons of respect, while the younger brothers and sisters of the spouse are addressed by their name as they are the persons of affection to the addresser.

The above description of the terminological aspects of kinship relations in Srirampur as well as in northern regions of Bangladesh leads to certain clear concepts about the usage of kin terms. It also reveals that many kin terms used to address and to refer to the relatives from the father's side and those from the mother's side are similar or identical, but in some cases a clear distinction is made between these two groups of kin. Marriage is not only the linking of two individuals but of whole kin network, and the kin terminology reflects this nature of the kin universe in Bengali society. As the relatives on father's side and those on the mother's side are clearly distinguished in the use of kin terms, a person would be able to designate accurately even the distant kin members in a few words. The explanation of various kin terms used in Srirampur village of north Bengal is very helpful towards the understanding of the pattern of behaviour and the kinship structure. Though some kin terms vary from place to place according to variation in dialect as well as in many aspects of social organization and kinship behaviour, it is apparent from the above study that kinship terminology prevalent in Srirampur conforms to the pattern of other regions in northern of Bangladesh.

The above discussed Bengal categories of relationship can best be described in a logical way through a semantic analysis of the terminologies concerned, which may lead to a deeper understanding of the meaning of a set of terms as well as of the way speakers use them. However, in the analysis of kin notations in Bengali village society, the procedures as used by Aziz (1979:93-95) have been followed and used as a base the eight genealogically closest relationships designated in standard English, i.e., father or *abba*: Fa, mother or *ma*: Mo, son or *chele*: So, daughter or *maiya*: Da, brother or *bhai*: Br, sister or *on*: Si, husband or *svami*: Hu, and wife or *parivar*: Wi.

The following chart shows the semantic analysis of kin type notations in Srirampur.

Chart 5.1
Semantic Analysis of Kin Type Notations in Srirampur

Kin Terms	Consanguineal Vs Affinal	Lineal Vs Collateral	Sex of Kinsman	Generation	Speaker's Sex	Patterned Behaviour by Villagers in Srirampur
FaFaFa	C	L	M	+3	Both	Respect
FaFaMo	C	L	F	+3	Both	Respect
FaFa	C	L	M	+2	Both	Joking permitted
FaFaWi	C	L	F	+2	Both	Joking permitted
MoFa	C	L	M	+2	Both	Joking permitted
MoFaWi	C	L	F	+2	Both	Joking permitted
Fa-in-law's Fa	A		M	+2	Both	Joking permitted
Fa-in-law's Mo	A		F	+2	Both	Joking permitted
Ma-in-law's Fa	A		M	+2	Both	Joking permitted
Ma-in-law's Mo	A		F	+2	Both	Joking permitted
Fa	C	L	M	+1	Both	Respect
Mo	C	L	F	+1	Both	Respect
FaYBr	C	C	M	+1	Both	Respect
FaYBrWi	A	C	F	+1	Both	Respect
FaEBr	C	C	M	+1	Both	Respect
FaEBrWi	A	C	F	+1	Both	Respect
FaSi	C	C	F	+1	Both	Respect
FaSiHu	A	C	M	+1	Both	Respect
MoSi	C	C	F	+1	Both	Respect
MoSiHu	A	C	M	+1	Both	Respect
MoBr	C	C	M	+1	Both	Respect
MoBrWi	A	C	F	+1	Both	Respect
Fa-in-law	A		M	+1	Both	Respect
Mo-in-law	A		F	+1	Both	Respect
Fa-in-law of all types of Br&Si	A		M	+1	Both	Respect
Mo-in-law	A		F	+1	Both	Respect

Kin Terms	Consanguineal Vs Affinal	Lineal Vs Collateral	Sex of Kinsman	Generation	Speaker's Sex	Patterned Behaviour by Villagers in Srirampur
of all types of Br&Si						
Hu	A		M	0	F	Respect
Wi	A		F	0	M	Consideration
Br	C	C	M	0	Both	Mutual support
EBrWi	A	C	F	0	Both	-
HuBrWi	A		F	0	F	-
Si	C	C	F	0	Both	Protection
ESiHu	A	C	M	0	Both	Joking permitted
YSiHu	A	C	M	0	Both	Affection
HuEBr	A		M	0	F	Respect
HuYBr	A		M	0	F	Joking permitted
				0	F	Respect
HuESi	A		F			
HuYSi	A		F	0	F	Affection
WiEBr	A		M	0	M	Respect
WiEBrWi	A		F	0	M	Joking permitted
WiYBr	A		M	0	M	Joking permitted
					M	Joking permitted
WiYBrWi	A		F	0		
WiESi	A		F	0	M	Respect
WiYSi	A		F	0	M	Joking permitted
WiYSiHu	A		M	0	M	Mutual respect
Fa-in-law of Ch, in-laws of Br&Si of all types	A		M	0	Both	-
Mo-in-law of Ch, in-laws of Br&Si of all types	A		F	0	Both	-
So	C	L	M	-1	Both	Affection
SoWi	A	L	F	-1	Both	Affection
Da	C	L	F	-1	Both	Affection
So-in-law	A		M	-1	Both	Affection
BrSo	C	C	M	-1	Both	Affection
BrSoWi	A	C	F	-1	Both	Affection

Kin Terms	Consanguineal Vs Affinal	Lineal Vs Collateral	Sex of Kinsman	Generation	Speaker's Sex	Patterned Behaviour by Villagers in Srirampur
BrDa	C	C	F	-1	Both	Affection
BrDaHu	A	C	M	-1		
SiSo	A	C	M	-1	Both	Affection
SiSoWi	A	C	F	-1	Both	Affection
SiDa	A	C	F	-1	Both	Affection
SiDaHu	A	C	M	-1	Both	Affection
WiEBrSo	A		M	-1	M	Affection
WiEBrDa	A		F	-1	M	Affection
WiSiHuSo	A		M	-1	M	Affection
WiSiHuDa	A		F	-1	M	Affection
Resident So-in-law	A	L	M	-1	Both	Consideration
Da-in-law's Br	A		M	-1	Both	Affection
Da-in-law's BrWi	A		F	-1	Both	Affection
GSo	C	L	M	-2	Both	Joking permitted
GSoWi	A	L	F	-2	Both	Joking permitted
GDa	C	L	F	-2	Both	Joking permitted
GDaHu	A	L	M	-2	Both	Joking permitted
GrGSo	C	L	M	-3	Both	Affection
GrGSoWi	A	L	F	-3	Both	Affection
GrGDa	C	L	F	-3	Both	Affection
GrGDaHu	A	L	M	-3	Both	Affection

5.3 Kinship Terminological System in Bengali

The Bengali kin terminology reflects the close relationships in the family structure and kinship system in Bengali society. Age, generation, sex, social status, taboo, distinctions between blood and affinal kin, degree of affection and intimacy, and a superior-peer-inferior scale are the basic factors, which determine and classify the usage of kinship terminologies. Muslims and Hindus in Bengali society use some common kin terms. But the differences are significant. However, the

general feature of the use of Bengali kinship terminology is that the Muslims in Bangladesh society have accepted and adopted many terms as well as expressions derived from Sanskrit and Prakrit, which were originally used only by the Hindus. But Hindus seldom accept and adopt any word or expression derived from Urdu, Persian and Arabic. Therefore, the usage of kin terms in Bengali society, especially in Muslim families is composed of two sets of words, such as one, derived from Urdu, Persian and Arabic; and the other from Sanskrit and Prakrit.

Different types of kinsmen prevail in Bengali society. But they overlap one another. Likewise, the classes of terms for kinsmen overlap. These overlapping areas represent the intersection of different contexts as well as systems of classification as shown in the following figure.

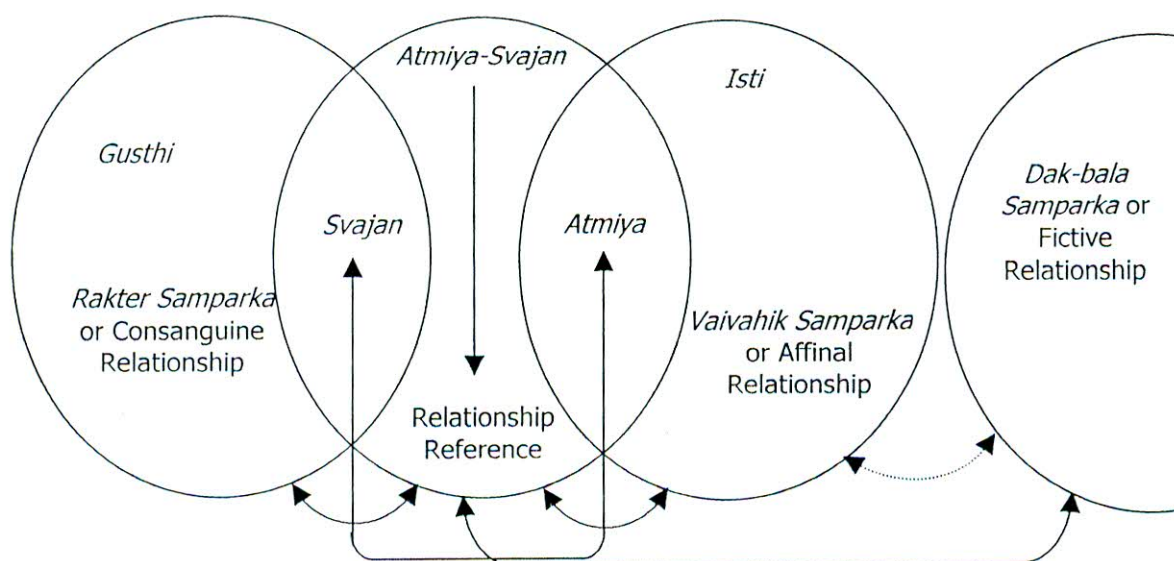


Figure 5.1 : Inter-relationships of Kinship in Bangladesh

Source : Aziz, 1979: 96

The concepts involving kinship in Bangladesh are *atmiya*, *kutumbu* and *sarik*. It should be mentioned that the kinsmen who are referred to as *sarik* fall within the

bounds of *gushti*. Thus, the term *sarik* is used to indicate all the *bari* members patrilineally related sharing the property of their ancestors. However, the *gushti* and *kutumbu* are mutually exclusive sets with the exception of acquired *gushti* membership of the wife. The word *svajan* means *nijerlok* (own people), which refers to *gushti* membership. Those who are consanguineally related are considered as *svajan*. People who are affinally related are considered as *kutumbu* in Bangladesh society. The term *atmiya-svajan* is overlapping with both consanguineal and affinal relations (i.e., *gushti* and *kutumbu* relations). It indicates a relationship reference and this relationship in addition especially indicates the consanguineally related people of the ego's mother as well as the out marrying consanguineally related women of the ego. For example, ego's mother's brother and ego's sister are considered as *atmiy-svajan*. Besides consanguinal and affinal kin, the people of Bangladesh are also related through another relationship that may be referred to as *dak-bala samparka/dharma-atimiya*. If a man makes personal and intimate contact with anyone by uttering kinship terms considering age and status, it would eventually result in the formation of intimate bond of union in kinship universe in Bangladesh society. Such relationship may be referred to as fictive relation. In this context Aziz states, "*Dak-bala samparka* is a fictive relationship with no relations by either blood or marriage, comparable to the "residual" *ātmiya-svajan*. Members of such *dak-bala samparka* do not fall under the classes of either *gushti* or *isti*. All the members of the *gushti*, *isti* and *dak-bala samparka* may be grouped as "kinsmen" or relatives" (1979:96).

All kinsmen in Bengali society (i.e., relatives of paternal line and those of maternal line) are clearly distinguished in the use of kin terms and all of the kin terms are originated from words describing the eight basic classes of kin which include father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother and sister (Inden and Nicholas, 1977: 90). The Bangladeshi Muslim "descriptive kinship terminology" includes more than one thousand and five hundred kinship vocabulary words (Aziz, 1979: 99), which exhibit a kind of opposition, e.g.

consanguineal kin words versus affinal kin words, lineal kin words versus collateral kin words, kin terms for male relatives versus kin terms for female relatives, and so on.

The Bangladeshi Muslim kinship terminology includes synonyms and alternate terms to generate the descriptive kinship terms by a variety of forms of modification, including the use of suffix or prefix, gender change, semantic alteration, word composition with two or more parts, and terminology composition with component word other than kind term indicating gene sharing or non-sharing of parents, age sex, social status, degree of affection and intimacy and so on. However, most of the kin terms used in Muslims kinship terminology would have the use of prefixial adjuncts like *apan*, *chachato*, *jethato*, *phuphato*, *mamato* and *khalato*. The above kin terms are known and used by all adult Bangladeshis in the special contexts. Through the usage pattern of descriptive kin terminologies all kinsmen become like the eight basic kin terms as mentioned earlier. Thus, one can find aggregating of the kin terms along with the terms for their spouses. However, in the ego's ascending generation the following kinship terms are included: *baro bap*, *baro ma* (+ 3 generation), *dada*, *dadi*, *nana*, *nani* (+2 generation), *abba*, *amma/ma*, *chacha*, *chachi*, *jetha*, *jethi*, *phuphu*, *phupha*, *mama*, *mami*, *khala*, *khalu*, *talui*, *maoi* (+1 generation). In the ego's generation these terms included *baro bhai* / *miya bhai*, *bhai*, *bau*, *bubu/apa*, *dula bhai*, *beyai*, *beyan*. Such terms of address for the descending generation included *bauma*, *jamai*, *putra* and *jhiari* (-1 generation), *bauma*, *jamai* (-2 generation). The above discussion reveals that it seems much more adequate to look at kinship terminologies as ways in which people classify their kinship universe and such classification may give an accurate picture to the significant categories of kin types in the kinship universe. When an individual would like to differentiate the *kutumbu* members acquired at marriage from the individuals of *gushti* members, he should have to use some kin terms such as: *talui*, *maoi*, *dula miya*, *beyai*, *beyan*, *bouma*, *jamai*, *putra*, and *jhiari*. A son, grandson and great-grandson would be frequently addressed by their name but their spouses would

be addressed by the term *bauma*. Likewise, the male members of the descending generation of one's *gushti* are generally addressed by name. On the other hand, the female members coming through the establishment of affinal relationship are addressed by the term *bauma*, which indicates a formal intimate relationship with her. But the males being addressed by their names usually enjoy an intimate informal relationship with the members of the ascending generation. The out marrying females of the *gushti* are addressed by name, whereas the members of ascending generation as *jamai* address the spouses of these females.

5.4 Use of Pronouns in Bangladeshi Kinship Terminological System

Bangladeshi kin terms used by the villagers of Srirampur have been discussed from the standpoint of male ego and the married female ego. It was found that the villagers have used some forms of address and pronouns. Since they are related to kinship terminologies as well as their use, it is necessary to consider them as a set of special vocabulary. The terms of reference and forms of address in Bangladesh society vary from place to place according to variation in dialect and kinship behaviour. Furthermore, they are very complicated in Bengali and indeed in most of the languages of the subcontinent. It should be mentioned that these concerned issues are determined by several factors ranging over religious, social and economic status of the people in a linguistic activity. They are also influenced by certain social restrictions and taboos. Therefore, the degree of familiarity as well as formality between the speakers and the complex structure of the Bengali society itself has contributed to the development of several forms.

In the study village it was observed that the second personal and third personal pronouns were frequently used to address in or outside the household. The usages of pronouns have been found as a part of daily conversation among the people of all ages and both sexes in the study village. The first important feature to be noticed in the usage of Bengali kin terminology is in its use of second personal pronouns. It should be noted that Bengali has three forms in second person, i.e., "*apni*" "*tumi*" and "*tui*", all these three terms mean "you". The difference of these

three forms are relating to discrimination along the scale of superior (*apni*), peer (*tumi*), and inferior (*tui*). Likewise, there are two forms in the third person, such as: '*tin*', and *se* all meaning "*he*", the first form being honorific and the second form used in referring to peers and inferiors. The description of the usage of Bengali kin terminology includes demonstrative pronouns in its addressing form, which considered being important. There are two demonstrative pronouns, i.e., "*e*" (this), and '*o*' (that) that may also mean he or she. The honorific counterparts of these two pronouns are '*in*' and '*un*', which are used to refer to persons to whom the addresser wants to pay respect or should show respect under certain social obligations. On the other hand, the peer and inferior forms of kin terminology are used by superior to younger or by a person belonging to higher status (i.e., people of *Barolok* and *Bhadrolok* category) in the society and to a person belonging to a relatively lower status category (i.e., *Gariblok* category). It has also been noticed that the peer form is used reciprocally by the members of a family between themselves as well as between friends and between kinsmen of the same age group. The men and women who reciprocally use this peer form among them are well known to each other.

As per observations made in the field, it may be said that in many cases the pronoun "*tumi*" which means '*you*', is used by younger people to their superiors inside the family but outside their home the form of this pronoun tends to change to the honorific form. For example, it is not unusual for a boy who addresses his parents or elder brothers as "*tumi*" in many families in Srirampur, but at the same time he would use the pronoun "*apni*" which means '*you*', to his teachers or to any other persons older than himself and belonging to his social class or of greater social distinction. It is mentionable that some corresponding form of addressing words, such as sir, madam, *apa*, *shaheb* etc. are necessary with the pronoun "*apni*" (you).

There are certain patterns of the use of inferior form "*tui*", meaning you, among the villagers. This form is usually used by the superiors to younger people, between intimate friends, reciprocally by brothers as well as sisters in some

families, and by a master to his servant. In some cases, a husband to address his wife to express the feeling of intimacy, love and affection also uses '*tui*'.

Almost all wives in the village under study do not address their husbands by their name or nickname. According to village custom, addressing one's husband by name is considered inappropriate. Therefore, a village wife refers to her husband by the demonstrative pronoun in a respectable manner as "*uni*", which means '*he*'. Similarly, the wife cannot address her husband's superior by their first name or nickname also. When a wife has to refer to them, she needs to use the demonstrative pronoun "*uni*" (he). In such cases, she addresses her husband quite often as "*ogo sunchhan naki*" (hello! are you hearing?) and simply she does almost the same by saying "*sunchhan?*" for the husband's superiors.

It should be mentioned that the tendency to address or refer to one's husband by his name or nickname is noticed among some young and educated people, but addressing one's husband by name or nickname has not yet been established in most of the families in the village under study.

5.5 Some Kin Terms Used in Extensive Form

There are extensive patterns of the use of certain kin terms for some categories of people in the society. Some Bangladeshi kin terms used in Sirrampur, are extended to express some meaning different from their usual meanings. As per observations made during field visits that the villagers following certain rules commonly use this pattern of kin term usage. Therefore, such extensions of some kinship terminology appear to be a universal phenomenon, though its extent is not the same in every speech community of rural Bangladesh. However, an explanation of various extensive kinship terms used by the villagers reveal that in some cases these are used as expressions of abuse. For example, the terms '*salā*' (wife's younger brother or her male cousin) and '*sall*' (wife's younger sister and her female cousin) often serve as abuse words, terms of address or reference for friends, or just exclamatory or joking expressions used in speech. It

should be noted here that these two important abusive kin terms have a high frequency of occurrence in Bengali and these words can never be used as address forms. Therefore, these two expressions are sometimes avoided because of their pejorative association and they seem to have extended their areas of denotation and become a kind of taboo words in Bengali.

Sometimes the same term is used for two or more kind of relatives holding different relationships with 'ego', who are thus included in a single terminological category. For example, 'ego' calls his male and female cousins (i.e., *bhai* and *apa*, *bu*, *bon* *bubu*) by the same words as used by him (ego) for his male and female siblings (i.e., *bhai*, and *bu*, *bon*, *apa*, *bubu*), respectively. Likewise, the word 'uncle' is used for both the father's brother and the mother's brother and also by extension for the husband of an 'aunt' (for both father's sister and mother's sister).

In Bengali kin terminological system 'ego' addresses the in-laws of his brothers and male cousins as he does for his own. The same is true of a woman for the in-laws of her sister and female cousins. Husbands of sisters' (addressing each other as *bhai* or brother) and wives of brothers' (addressing each other as *bubu*, *apa* or sister) address each other's patrilineal kinsfolk as if they were his or her own.

Another kind of extension is noticed in Bengali kin terminological system, which is the extension of kin terms to persons with whom 'ego' has some affinity or friendship, and even to acquaintances as well as strangers. These extended relatives of 'ego' are addressed and referred to by himself as well as by other members of his family in a manner as if they were relatives by birth or by marriage.

The extension of kin expressions is also found at the educational institutions. Sometimes the kin terms is used to address teachers. For example, while male teachers are addressed by the term 'sir' by both boys and girls, both boys and girls almost always address female teachers as '*apa*'. This sort of extension of kin words is found in schools and colleges.

The terms '*bhai*' (ego's elder brother), '*dada*' (ego's father's father), '*da*' (elder brother) and '*apa*' (ego's elder sister) are frequently used outside the family and also with newcomers. These kin address terms are usually used to a newcomer or acquaintance of one's own age group or a little older.

Another situation of the extension of kin terminologies is their use to address the domestic servants and maidservants. This kind of extension reveals that it is not restricted to ego's own social class alone. The domestic servants or maidservants in Bangladesh society often are addressed by ego's children as '*bhai*', '*chacha*' and '*apa*', '*khala*' etc., as if they were related to ego's family. Similarly, a rickshaw-puller/van-puller, or a village hawker or even an elderly beggar is addressed by words such as '*bhai*', '*chacha*/'*kaka*, '*khala*', '*beti*, '*ma*, '*baba*, '*bapu* etc., depending on their sex.

Sometimes, the kin term is applied for non-human creatures and inanimate objects. An example of extension of a kin word to an inanimate object is the use of the term *mama* to address and to refer to the moon or sun, especially by children. Likewise, parents or other relatives of children, while playing with the children or telling the stories, often use the kin term '*mama*' (mother's brother or her male cousin) after the Bengali word for the moon or the sun.

The foregoing description about the extension of kin terminology reveals that the kinship terms serve the purpose of address in rural society of Bangladesh. There most of the families tend to live together as close-knit clans, though they have no connections of blood or marriage, but the relationship between the families bears a close resemblance. Therefore, the people in village society invent artificial relationships, known as "village relations", which is manifested in their use of some kin address terms. For example, ego's father's friend is called '*chacha*' or '*kaka*' (uncle) and a friend would almost always address his friend's daughter by the kin term '*vasti*' (niece) or '*beti*/'*meye* (daughter). On the other hand, the elderly persons

often call almost all women younger than themselves by their names, and the members of a lower social class very often call them as *bu*, *bubu*, *apa* (elder sister or female cousin), *khala* (mother's sister), *bhabhi* (elder brother's wife), *chachi*, *kaki* and so on, depending on the age of the persons involved and thus the artificial village relation existing between the addresser and the addressee. When the younger woman has a child, she is often addressed and referred to as *ma*, *amma* (ego's mother). Sometimes, she is addressed as child's *ma* (child's mother). The women is also addressed and referred to by such a kin address from inside the family by *shashur* (father-in-law), *shasuri* (mother-in-law), and also by the husband. Thus, nearly everyone in a village is related to all others.

5.6 Prohibition on Use of Certain Kin Terms

A study on prohibition on use of certain kin terms is essential in understanding the terminological pattern of kinship network, which is still a universal aspect of the rural social structure in Bangladesh. Therefore, the prohibit kin terms found in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh are considered important as a social phenomenon. However, a study like this would reveal that there are some categories of relatives in our society for whom the social tradition has forbidden the use of certain kin terms as well, though there are terms of reference for them. For example, a wife must not address or refer to her husband, husband's elder brother or elder male cousin and her father-in-law (husband's father) or uncles of her husband by their names. In this context, Afsaruddin also states, "Wives never call their husbands by name. *Ogo* (hey) or *shuncho* (are you listening) is usually uttered to call the husband. Most of the time, husbands are called by the name of his eldest offspring" (1990:83). Similarly, she must not address or refer to the elder female lines of her husband by their names. There is also prohibition on addressing elder relatives as well as strangers by their names. It is also applicable to males as well.

However, it is mentionable that the first kind of prohibition or taboo mentioned (i.e., addressing husband by name) seems to be weakening in some families in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh, especially in those living in the urban areas. Furthermore, with the growth of female education, the influence of western culture and the traditional rigidity in this respect has changed to a great degree in the cities; and the impact of city life on Bengali village life is felt these days. It was found that the educated women in Srirampur address or refer to their husbands by their names or nicknames.

But the number of families in which this particular usage has changed is very small indeed. In most of the families residing in cities as well as towns, wives still respect the social norms and values forbidding them to address or to refer to their husbands by their names. And in the Bengali village the prohibition on the use of names of husbands as well as certain other affinal relatives continues to hold and is obeyed by women. Thus, the traditional custom about not addressing them (ego's husbands and elders) by name is still strong and always respected.

Kinship terminology describes social relationships created through descent and marriage and those relationships are established by analogy of familial ones. In fact, it is a special vocabulary complex, which designates not individuals but status relations between persons. From this point of view Khanum (1994) has rightly pointed out:

In Bangladesh, kinship pattern is a classificatory system. It commonly extends kinship terminology to all the members of the society, where names of individuals, especially those for the elders are rarely used. For example, all the elderly men are considered and treated as grandfathers, middle aged men as uncles, those belonging to same generation as brothers and the next generation as sons. Similarly women of different age groups are considered as grandma, auntie, sister and daughter respectively. The young ones are referred to according to their respective names but in affection they are addressed as *Baba* (dad); *Ma* (mum); *Bhai* (brother) and *Boin* (sister)" (Khanum, 1994:408-409).

Thus, with the help of the kinship terms as prevalent among the people in rural Bangladesh a person would be able to designate accurately even the distant kin members in a few words. Seniority in age in one's own generation in South Asian societies, especially in Bangladesh requires an appropriate respectful form of address just like those senior in generational status which is very important in the usage of kin terms. The use of kin words for relatives indicates the order of seniority and the relative position of the speaker in the kin hierarchy. Through the descriptive as well as the terms of address an individual can differentiate the affinal relatives (who are acquired at marriage) from the individuals of *gushti* members. It should be mentioned that although most of the Bengali kin terms show semantic and descriptive precision, in certain cases terms for a relative are expressed by circumlocutions. And finally, the results of the investigation of the kin terminologies have revealed significant clues to the linguistic, psychological and cultural components of the social system in Bangladesh.

Chapter 6

Kinship Organization and Its Impact on Economic, Political, Religious and Socio-cultural Sectors in Rural Bangladesh

6.1 Kinship and Kin Network

The kinship system is an important aspect in the social structure of South Asian societies, especially in Bangladesh, and therefore, the rules of descent or alliance play a significant part among relatives' network. In a society where kinship is supremely important, loyalties to kin supersede all other loyalties, and for this reason alone kinship must be the enemy of bureaucracy (Fox, 1967:10). The bureaucracy bows down itself to the kinship in under developed countries like ours, and the nepotism is found to the activities of the kin groups. It has been observed that the presence of a substantial number of patrilineal and agnatic kin lend some degree of 'local' character to the Bangladesh kinship system. Such a local concentration of kin, in turn, not only enhances kinship solidarity and reciprocities in aid but also increases an ability to cope with any crisis, which emerges in the context of rural social life. Thus, the kinship organization includes a group of interacting personalities who usually make socio-psychological interchange and put in a significant role to satisfy their goals and needs. In this regard, Dyer states, "True, the significance of kin ties and relationships today still varies a good deal from rural to urban communities, from one class to another, and among ethnic groups" (1983: 335).

However, a study of socio-economic roles and relationships is essential in understanding the organization of Bangladeshi kinship groups (i.e., household, family and lineage). Because of the help and cooperation of a wider kin circle, one may enhance his social, economic and political power in rural Bangladesh. Likewise, it is expected that an adult son should make some economic contribution to his parents whether he lives with them or not. In this regard, Khanum (2001), Chowdhury (1995), Anwar (1979), Sharma (1987) observe that it is common for

those members of a household resident in urban areas to send money to the 'main' village household. In turn, they will receive produce from the land and both parts of the household thus contribute to the production of 'commodities' or 'services' as well as to their consumption. Alavi (1973) showed how the kinsmen interact with one another during festivals and how they complement one another by mutual help on the eve of some important occasions, such as birth, marriage, circumcision and funeral. He also analysed kinsmen as a cohesive kin group that performs economic, political and ritual activities. At the same time, he placed enormous importance on the significant institution '*Vartan Bhanji*' as it echoes the solidarity of the fraternity and the contemporaries in participation in a ritual of exchanging good and other materials. The concept '*Vartan Bhanji*' has been described by Anwar (1979), Eglar (1960) and Werbner (1988). Regarding this concept Anwar has pointed out:

Although '*Vartan Bhanji*' is basically a relationship developing out of an exchanging of gifts, the same term is applied to another kind of relationship in which no gift needs to be exchanged, but in which two individuals, two families, two villages, feel free to ask favour of each other... So in popular usage, '*Vartan Bhanji*' may have various meanings. It may mean the relationship, or the way of dealing, or the articles of exchange, or behaviour on certain occasions (Anwar, 1979:68).

For the practices of exchanging goods and other materials among relatives' network Khanum (2000:211) used the term *Udlaa Baadlaa* (exchange of gifts, labour and services) and thus she showed how relatives' network and its functions provided a clue to understanding kinship behaviour under a variety of circumstances in the present social organization. However, I will include such type of works in *Udlaa Baadlaa* (the literal meaning of *Udlaa* is 'bare', 'uncovered' or 'totally finished', while the *Badlaa* means 'return'), which are not considered as immediate duty but a moral obligation, like, paying visits and inviting relatives/friends at their form and departure to homeland and in other family occasions. It also includes visiting and providing services at the time of their illness/post natal periods etc. In addition to that, gift exchange is a crucial part of *Udlaa Baadlaa*, which Werbner (1988) has identified as *Lena Dena* in Pakistani community. We see that exchanging gifts is an integral part of people's life in

South Asian societies as in Bangladesh also. If some one fails to afford the gift from housekeeping money or from any other extra sources, one is expected to manage it by ignoring one's own needs, if necessary, finding the money by curtailing next day's essential expenditures (i.e., by making pocket or the gain bin empty). For this reason it is very common in Bangladesh also that when a family fails to manage a gift from the family pocket, its members do not hesitate to go into debt to provide it. In fact, a kinsman always tries to maintain link with another kinsman within home and from abroad. After migration members of the emigrant households continued to maintain strong financial, cultural, and even political relationships with their relatives as well as with members of political parties in Bangladesh (Carey and Shukur 1985, Chowdhury 1995, Eade 1989; 1990a; 1990b, Khanum 1994). A large number of Bangladeshis prefer major social activities like weddings and funerals to take place within the setting of their main households in Bangladesh (Khanum 1994). Frequent gift exchange is also a way of maintaining links (Gardner 1992; 1993, Khanum 1994), but the crucial medium through which such links are maintained is land. The majority of emigrants invest a proportion of their earnings in purchasing land in Bangladesh in the hope of returning to their homeland in the future. At least one adult son or first wife will then be left behind in Bangladesh to manage the land (Khanum 1994). Khanum also observes that in such cases the individuals living in England and the sons and/or wives in Bangladesh remain single households as they are bound together by the contribution of labour and services and by joint budgeting. This approach tallies with that of Jansen who in the context of allocating an individual's membership within a household wrote that 'we put more weight on the economic links between members of the same "budget" unit than on the joint residential and cooking relationship' (Jansen, 1990:92). Regarding this matter, Khanum (1994) states that the household members living in England and those in Bangladesh are reciprocally dependent upon each other: those living in Bangladesh remain financially dependent on those living in the UK, while the latter remain dependent on the members of the main household to expand and manage their arable land. There is no question that this type of household differs from the existing pattern of extended households that prevails in Bangladesh.

The entire post natal behaviour of a woman in rural Bangladesh depends largely on women she is related to by bonds of kinship, affinity fictive kin, friendship, and good neighbourliness. In this context, Jeffery *et al* (1989) noted that a woman's postnatal care largely depends on the nature of her kin relations. As in other South Asian families, among Bangladeshis also, consanguine and affinal relatives (e.g., mother, mother-in-law, brother-in-law's wife, sister-in-law etc.) provide such support to a new mother.

The emotional function among kin members also varies considerably among societies. The focus and strength of emotional ties among kin may differ greatly. In societies where one kin line has close authority and control over the individual, his or her closest emotional ties may be with members of the other kin line. For example, in the patriarchal society like ours one's closest emotional ties are of then with members of the mother's kin line. In rural Bangladesh today, close emotional ties continue between an adult and his/her parents, and to some extent between adult siblings, but less so among secondary kin. Likewise, at the time of disaster the affected kinsmen seek the help of other kinsmen. The kinsmen also offer a wider opportunity of economic cooperation. The wealthier sections of the kinship groups eagerly stand by the side of the affected kinsmen and extend the helping hand. In fact, in giving economic favour during disaster one always considers one's own relatives with a feeling of priority. On the other hand, if misunderstanding is arised between the couples and if it may turn about divorce, the relatives and friends of the couples do their best to prevent a divorce. One of the main ways of doing so, to appeal to the uncertainty of livelihood for the divorced woman.

From the above discussion it is apparent that the kinship groups has three major dealing with the following concepts regarding its roles and relationships in South Asian societies, especially in Bangladesh, such as: (i) financial support, (ii) emotional support and (iii) labour contribution and services.

It is a general norm in South Asian societies as in Bangladesh society that monetary aid is exchanged mostly between consanguineal kin and especially between brothers or between sons and parents. The mutual help pattern between consanguineal kin, especially between father and son are very strongly institutionalised. It may be that mutual aid among consanguineal kin is not only based upon affective ties but also on institutionalised expectations while relations with affinal kin are based on affection alone (Ramu, 1977:143). Thus, the help is usually extended to close relatives. As a consequence, brothers as a group converged in Srirampur village as well as in Bangladesh as a whole. In fact, the presence of siblings and their families can give comfort and insurance in the way of help when need, and many respondents in the researched village reported such occurrences. They spoke of a sense of not being alone when their relatives were close by. Not all respondents however, felt this way and many respondents indicated that the presence of their brothers could be more of a liability than that asset.

The respondents who were involved in one or another way in monetary help were asked during informal discussions to indicate the reasons for the support, especially if the remittance was large. In general, two basic motivations lend to operate here, such as (i) moral obligations and (ii) reciprocal expectations. The aiding function is based on the normative expectation that kin are obliged to help each other in times of need. Such an obligation varies greatly from society to society and also within societies. In strongly familistic societies, one's kin obligations may be to parents and grandparents, to siblings, and even to other relatives. The strongest sense of kin obligations in contemporary Bangladesh appears to be between aging parents and their adult offspring. For example, the helping of parents is generally looked upon as an inescapable moral responsibility. Just as fathers are morally obliged to assist their sons until they are occupationally settled, so sons are morally obliged to help their parents. But this reciprocal arrangement is not only moral expectations but also mutual regard. At least ideally, typically, the father likes to help his son, as much as his son likes to provide for his father. In view of this, mutual help patterns between father and son are very

strongly institutionalised. This view is supported by the following kind of statements by Mr. Khademul Islam, an officer of Bangladesh Sonali Bank:

My parents brought me up in relation to all kinds of trials and tribulations. They sent me to educational institutions to be learned. I have not forgotten how my parents toiled to educate me. What I am today is because of their kindness. How can I be comfortable without returning their help? It is my duty to help them. Now if I do not help them they will get shocked.

However, the sense of moral obligation is buttressed by kinship norms and expectations. Among consanguineal kin, brothers, parents and children are expected to assist each other and the failure to do so often subjects them to social criticism. Also, the sense of reciprocity built into such transactions tends to compel kin not to ignore their obligations. Such reciprocity is non-contractual. If one fails to fulfil an obligation, he is understood to have broken a trust and is subjected to pressures to conform. As a result of which, kin interaction becomes not only voluntary in many cases but also selective. The discussion on mutual help pattern between parents and children made above shows a close applicability of the following observations by Dyer:

This aid pattern included direct financial assistance for such larger expenditures as the purchase of a home, or gifts of money, or such less direct financial assistance as gifts of furniture or household equipment, and providing services, such as baby care or provisions for vocations. Few married children received monetary gifts regularly, however. After an initial financial gift at marriage, most parents limited their financial contributions to birthdays and anniversaries, or for their grandchildren, or for emergencies (1983:339).

In western countries there exist old age security measures, which are fostered by the state and voluntary agencies. While in South Asian societies as in Bangladesh the responsibility of old age is vested upon the children especially on the sons under the given social system, values and norms. In a peasant society like Srirampur, elderly parents depend largely on their offspring especially sons for care and assistance. It has also been observed in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh that dependence on sons is more common than dependence on daughters. Regarding the mutual aid pattern between parents and their married children, Sussman and Burchinal (1962:331-32) conclude that financial aid exchanged between parents and their married children constitute one of the

activities that bind nuclear families with their kin along generational lines, especially among middle-class people. During the earlier years of the child's marriage the aid generally flows from parents to their children; then, as the married children become middle aged, the stream of aid may become reversed and they will now provide help for their aging parents. For the most part aid by parents is offered voluntarily on the basis of sentiment and affection. Such aid is intended to assist rather than to influence the recipients, and is generally given with no strings attached. Here it would be relevant to mention Caldwell's intergenerational 'Wealth Flow' theory. According to Caldwell's interpretation of 'Wealth Flow' theory it is apparent that both the unemployed/poor class and other section of people equally depend on their respective children and this dependency has an equal importance. Children are considered to be the main source of future security in a country like Bangladesh where social security benefits or old homes are absent. In respect of class and demographic residence the value of children is equally important for both financial and physical care. Empirical data show that this importance is equally great among the rural landless and the urban poor and among the farmers and the urban commercial elites (Caldwell, 1983). The rural landless and the urban poor have no other means of survival except to depend on their children. The farmers and the urban commercial elites depend much on their children to continue their business when they become too weak to work in their old age. In his 'Wealth Flow' theory, Caldwell (1983) explained that the parents' dependency is not the sole contributory factor of high fertility. He includes other services as well,

In pre-transitional societies the net value of intergenerational wealth flows (labour and services, money and goods, and present and future guarantees including old age support) is upward, whereas in post-transitional societies it is downward (Caldwell, 1983:459).

He argues that as long as the wealth flows from children to the parents, parents' desires for additional children rises. In Bangladesh only sons are expected to provide all the services indicated above.

Although mutual aid patterns usually exist primarily between parents and children, or among siblings, several respondents indicated that they could also look for help, on unusual occasions, from others in a position to extend help. Among the affinal kinsmen, a brother-in-law and a mother's brother are generally the most dependable kin at such times. The brother-in-law has a respected place in one's life and it is common for an individual to seek help from a brother-in-law in monetary help as well as other terms. It seems among the relatives' network that more and more kinship ties are being established with those kin only who bring certain amounts of gratification to them. Visits and the exchange of goods and services serve as reinforcing factors. The significance of kin ties today has been said to reside, "in visiting, in recreation, in exchanging of news and advice, in attendance on ceremonial occasions and at the crisis of life" (Queen & Habenstein, 1974:341). On the other hand, in the case of linked households the members have ties with relatives' households, which they may regard as their own 'man' household. When they come to the village, they stay with their relatives and share their food, i.e. they share both 'hearth' and 'residence'. Sharma (1987) found in Simla that women living in the urban areas travel to their 'main' households in the villages at harvesting time in order to help their mothers-in-law.

In the light of the above discussion regarding financial, emotional and labour contribution supports of relatives' network, I will now focus on various roles and relationships of kinship groups and categories in relation to its socio-economic role in South Asian societies, particularly in Bangladesh.

6.2 Kinship in Socialization Process

Kinship relations and socialization are important aspects at every stage in the entire life cycle of individuals in the/a society. Socialization, process by which people, especially children, learn acceptable and unacceptable behaviours for a given environment (Encarta 2004). Therefore, the continuity of life of individuals is sustained through accepted patterns of social relations as well as common

beliefs, goals and rules of behaviour. Actually, the basic social structure and values of rural Bangladeshi societies are anchored in a system of kinship relations; particularly those in the household and family play a crucial role in the society. We may also trace the importance of this role at every stage in the entire life cycle of any person. The degree of emphasis on kinship and socialization, as well as the nature of these relations, begin right/just at the time of the birth of a baby in rural society. There is no private clinic or hospital in Srirampur village. As mentioned in Chapter 2 that the Community Clinic has been set up in the study village where the health assistant of the 'Upazila Health Complex' (UHC) visits once or twice in a week but no delivery activities are performed there. Very few women in Srirampur are able to go to a clinic or hospital outside the village at the time of childbirth. Under such circumstances, the members of the household as well as family have to render all major services of childbirth. Such cooperation is an important aspect within the household and within the wider kin circle in Srirampur as well as in rural society of Bangladesh. During the delivery period in the village society, a *dai* (traditional birth attendant) is usually called to attend. Hunte (1981:17) identifies *dai* as, 'one of the most active indigenous medical practitioners'. They are the elderly illiterate women, usually widowed hailing from families of low economic standing. They are nonetheless very experienced in the art of delivering infants. The art and technique are usually learned from a close relative as mother, and cousin and so on. Thus, during pregnancy of a woman, the kin relations play an important role. When the people of the family know the pregnancy of a woman, she is asked to follow some advice of elderly women. During pregnancy a woman has to depend on other kinsmen in the household and on neighbours. In addition, since after delivery the uterus remains in a delicate state, there is every chance of its prolapsed was the mother to carry out heavy work. This means she has to take full rest for a couple of weeks and other women have to help her with her chores. However, when the child is born, the rituals associated with the birth, i.e., *azan* (call for prayer) *akika* (naming ceremony), *milad* (a gathering of Muslims in which the details of Prophet's life and his qualities of character are described by *maulavis*) etc., are performed by

the members of the respective household and family. Other categories of relatives, such as matrilateral, affinal and fictive also cooperate during the period of above-mentioned rituals performed.

The children are brought up amidst the members of their kinship groups (i.e., household, family and lineage), who are their chief caretakers. It is said that children's care is the responsibility of the whole family, not of any one individual. In this context, we may reveal the comments of Julian and Kornblum, "A primary agent of socialization in our culture is the family-specifically, parents. A number of studies have sought to determine how parents socialize their children into traditional sex roles. . . . when the child is born, the socialization process takes a number of obvious forms: Little boys are given toy trucks, while little girls are given dolls; boys are encouraged to play ball, while girls are told to play house" (1983:329). The villagers say that the children's kinship groups, especially household and family should provide their necessities according to their socio-economic status, such as food, clothes, medical treatment etc. When the children are grown up, kinsmen start worrying about their schooling. If possible, they should also send them to the institutions of formal education, secular as well as religious. On the other hand, the children gradually imbibe whatever is there in their family environment. They should obey their kinship groups. They should not do anything, which may bring shame to their kinship groups, mainly to their parents. They should also remember that their identity is known by their parents, particularly by their father. Therefore, they should not hurt them by their misdeeds. In the family environment, the children are taught and are supposed to follow a particular code of conduct as well as discipline and adhere to the customs and culture prevalent in the society around. However, it is not that only the household and family members but all members of the network of kinship relationships contribute to the socialization of individuals in the society.

Kinship groups, especially the household and the family play a crucial role in building up the behavioural pattern of any person in the village society. There each and every household as well as family include a group of interacting

personalities who constantly make socio-psychological interchange among them and put in action specific efforts to satisfy their goals and needs. However, most of the inter-personal relationships belonging to kinship groups (i.e., especially in the household and the family) have been discussed in Chapter 3. Of all the kinship groups and categories, the household, as a basic unit of kinship organization plays the most important role in imparting to a person the necessary skills in running his/her separate household on his/her maturity. The parents, especially the mother is affectionate to all the children. She has more interaction with her daughters than with her sons. However, when the daughters reach the age of about twelve years, they are expected to observe *purdah* (veil). From this period onward they pass most of their time inside the home. They also become free in talking with the mother who begins to train the daughters for the future role of the wife. She tells them the virtues of a good wife and her proper code of behaviour with different persons in the family of her future husband and also trains her in cooking. A village daughter thus, learns from the parental household her future role to be performed after the marriage. Likewise, a village son is taught and supposed to follow the manner and customs of the society. When the son grows up, he is learnt what will be his future role at the time of establishing his own household.

Kinship groups and categories enlighten a person in the village society about the various activities, such as economic, political and religious. By joining the above mentioned important activities members of individuals kinship groups further strengthen their already existing strong social bonds. Thus, the role of family is very much important in these social affairs. Ideally, the family provides its members with protection, companionship, security and socialization. In this context, Aziz states, "... all family systems aim to gain one common goal, considered essential for the survival of society, which is procreation and the rearing and socialization of children" (1979:46). It should be noted that for social security purposes inter-household cooperation within the family is essential also. However, an agrarian family performs many functions, such as: economic

production, education, religion and recreation. But jobs are usually separate from the family group; family members often work in different occupations and in locations away from the home. Education is provided by the state or by private groups. Religious training and recreational activities are available outside the home, although both still have a place in family life. The family is still responsible for the socialization of children (Encarta 2004). The family is a property owning group in the village, which has some common immovable property, such as: pond, parlour, garden, graveyard, homestead land, pathway within the *bari* (homestead) compound etc. The above-mentioned inherited parental properties are kept separate for common use with the objective of gaining maximum benefit. So, the family serves as a group for consumption. An individual gets the knowledge of management, distribution and utilization of property from the family. The kinship groups, especially the family plays an important role in various religious activities. It also teaches a man about religion and provides him formal as well as informal religious education in reciting the Holy *Quran*, and performing prayers, arranging various religious ceremonies, i.e., *milad*, *Eid-ul-Fiter* (Muslim festival celebrated on the first day following the month of fasting), *Eid-ul-Azha* etc. It also provides kin members the knowledge on funeral rites to be performed. The kin members have certain obligations towards the deceased kinsmen. They pray to the Almighty to forgive the deceased men and make their entry into heaven safe and sure. Politics is another important aspect in the society, which a person learns from the family environment. The family plays a crucial role in the village politics. As mentioned earlier, in the case of inter-household relationships in a dispersed family (see Chapter-3), some important aspects, i.e., discretion, rivalry, conflict, jealousy and diplomacy among the households of a dispersed family are common happenings. However, all these aspects have bearing on the family member who becomes a social person.

As the kinship groups include in it the rights, duties and behaviours of relatives in relation to one another, they extend helping hand whenever required. The kinship groups in the village society occasionally depend upon one another for

loans of food grain, exchange of labour, cash, sharing of utensils, sharing of agricultural implements and bullocks to overcome the bottlenecks of agricultural and familial operation. Thus, the kinship groups teach an individual about the cooperation among kindred.

The kinship groups are, however, the main pillars of strength of an individual in the village society. When a person in kinship groups comes across any problem regarding familial, social, and economic or other affairs, he may go to some elderly men of his kinship groups to seek his advice as well as help for resolving the problem. A tendency towards close integration among the members of kinship groups happens to be in trouble or quarrel with the member(s) of others in or outside the village. At the same time, it acts as controlling agencies to prevent its members from the acts, which are viewed as being unsound for the society. A person gets advice and suggestions for him regarding merits and demerits from the kinship groups. Therefore, the kinship groups and categories contribute towards social stability by safeguarding their members from attack, violence or threat. It also acts towards the kinsmen by restraining them from going astray. At the time, however, the kinship groups generally do not encourage its members in doing acts, which may go against their reputation. Contrary to this, it teaches them the manners and customs of the society. Kinship groups thus, provide knowledge not to do anything, which may bring shame to them. All the kinsmen should remember that their identity is known by their parents who belong to kinship groups. So, they should not do anything, which may loose the reputation of kinship groups.

Blood relations tie the members of kinship groups. However, the kinship groups in the village society act as a school for raising collective values among their members. They consult each other before taking any decision in every important issue regarding familial, social, economic, religious, political and other affairs. Before taking any decision on above mentioned affairs, the *malik* (literally, owner; in this context, head of the family) of the family usually consults and

takes opinion of its members by paying much attention on them as to the right decision. Thus, their joint actions and movements help to strengthen their bond among themselves as well. It is noteworthy that the kinship groups perform a significant role in teaching about qualities of leadership through the management of their own activities in the village society. Moreover, they try to capture the management of the public institutions of the village (i.e., school, mosque, *maktab* etc.) on the basis of their reputation. The kinship groups and categories thus, provide knowledge regarding social, economic, political, religious and other affairs throughout the entire life cycle of any person.

All these, however, do not mean that all the members of kinship groups have always harmonious relationships among themselves. They have their negative side too. There are also clash of interests, rivalry as well as jealousy among them. The lack of harmony between them may exhibit itself in several ways. In spite of the negative sides within the kinship groups, its members have a sense of belonging to it as a collectively.

Therefore, kinship relationships, particularly those in the household and family act as a cohesive force in integrating the individuals into the village society at large and also make a significant contribution to the socialization of individuals.

6.3 Kinship and Economic Connections

Kin members maintain economic connections with each other throughout the entire life cycle. In fact, the Kinship groups play an important role on different occupations as well as in economic cooperation among relatives. So, an attempt has been made to evaluate how and to what extent the kinship organization in a village cooperate and help each other in economic activities at every stage of life. It should be noted here that the main economic activities of the villagers' are agriculture, business and fishing. On the other hand, there are a few other activities, such as salaried service (in teaching, banking, army, police, NGOs,

garments etc.), seasonal traders on boats, (in rainy season) making the fishing gears, rickshaw pedalling etc. It was observed that in conducting these multidimensional activities the villagers are assisted and helped by their relatives in various ways. In fact, the villagers live in a relatives' network. Some are poor and some are rich also. It is found in the village society that most of the labourers are hired from among one's poor relatives in order to provide them with the work opportunity. On the other hand, the relatives are more reliable as well as sincere labourers and they look after the interest of their rich relatives. In this context, I agree with Khanum when she states, "In an agriculture-based production system, kinship relations demand certain consideration and entail mutual dependence. ...when it comes to leasing land for share-cropping or engaging a day labourer for farm work, a landowner gives priority to his poor relatives. Similarly, the poor support and help their wealthier relatives..." (2000:202). However, by giving preference to relatives, one gets one's own benefit as well as providing benefit to them effectively.

Money lending is also an important factor in the economic system in the village society. When an individual requires a personal loan, first he may approach his near relatives within the village or outside the village. Such close relatives may be one's own brother, parental uncle or cousins. On the other hand, the maternal grandfather and maternal uncle are the potential providers of a loan among the relatives. It was observed in Srirampur that when a man has no suitable blood relatives for providing a loan, he normally would ask for the same from father-in-law, son-in-law, wife's sister's husband, wife's brother or sister's husband and so on. Thus, relatives provide economic assistance since this is viewed as a normal duty, fulfilling which earns one virtue. The next in line after relatives are neighbours and friends, who play an important role in everyday activities (*ibid*). As the kinship ties provide a wide range of support to one another, they demand

a set of services and help from each other. When a woman runs into debt (mostly grain, a little money, utensils, etc.), she usually first seeks help from her neighbours (White 1990). It is mentionable that when any loan in cash or kind is obtained from affinal relatives, one makes every effort to return the taken loan at the time due. Otherwise, he feels ashamed. Sometimes, delay in repayment of a loan amount from affinal relatives may lead to a strained relationship. On the other hand, an individual usually has a greater personal understanding and wider common interest with a consanguineal relative within or outside the village. As a result of which, delay in repayment of a loan amount from consanguineal relatives usually does not lead to strained relationship before liberal extensions of the time for repayment.

Table 6.1
The Major Sources of Money Lending for the Respondents

Sources of Money	Respondents	Percentage
Personal Savings	232	32.04
Relatives	211	29.14
Village <i>Mohajons</i>	63	8.70
Banks	84	11.60
NGO's	134	18.51
Total	724	100.00

During the fieldwork 724 household heads were asked regarding the sources of money lending and their economic activities and it was found that 232 (32.04%) of the total respondents had made overcome the needs and crisis from their personal savings. Of the remaining 492 head of households, 211 (29.14%) had taken money from relatives, 63 (8.70%) from village *mohajons* at high interest rates, 84 (11.60%) from banks and 134 (18.51%) from NGOs with interest rates. Thus, the Table shows that relatives are the highest source of loans for the villagers.

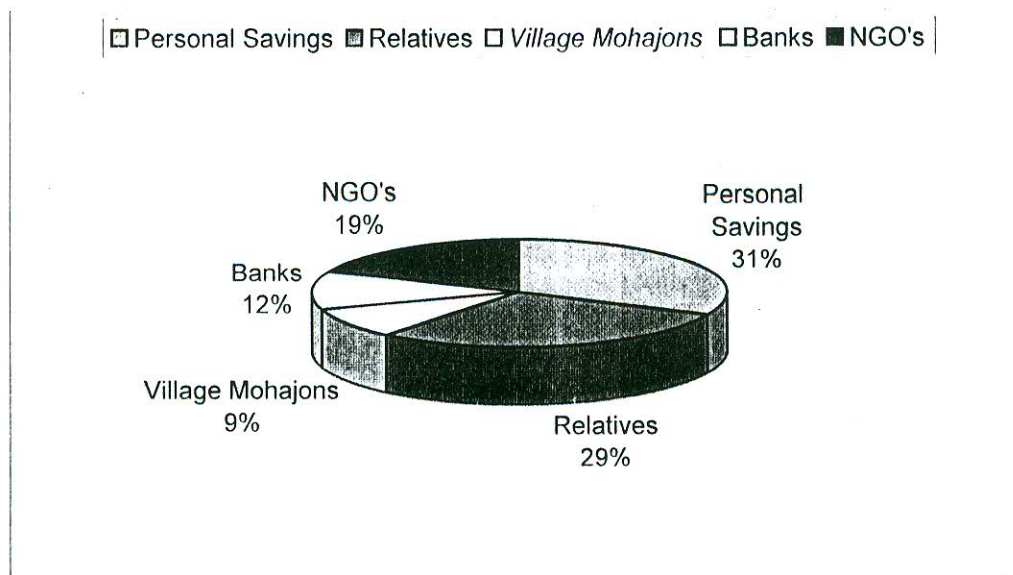


Figure 6-1 : Pie Chart for Table 6.1.

However, in the study village there are certain sources from where the villagers' manage loans, which include personal savings, relatives, banks, NGOs, and village *mohajans*. Generally, the villagers do not wish to go to a bank or a village *mohajan* because of its high interest rates. So the villagers requiring a loan they first approach their relatives. No interest is charged here and through *lane -dane* (taking and giving) among the relatives the existing relationships become more effective. This money lending is considered as *hawlat* (interest free loan). However, only a few relatives in the village were found to have charged some interest either in the form of cash or as a share of the profit accruing out of the villagers' economic activities. Besides money, other things in kind are also taken as *hawlat* (loan without interest) from villagers.

Table 6.2
Causes of Giving Preference to Close Relatives for Money Lending

Causes	Respondents	Percentage
Loan Without Interest	203	28.04
Regarding as <i>Hawlat</i>	187	25.83
Getting Facilities to Return	214	29.56
Communication Survives Through <i>Lane-Dane</i>	120	16.57
Total	724	100.00

Out of 724 household heads, 203 (28.04%) of them had preferred money lending from relatives as it was interest free loan, 187 (25.83%) support in favour of regarding as *hawlat*, 214 (29.56%) villagers give their opinion in favour of getting facilities to return. If any relative who takes loan from their relatives become failure to return it in time, he informs them about his problem and get enough facilities to return and the remaining 120 (16.57%) villagers support in favour of communication survives through *lane-dane*. Thus, the villagers make their opinion for money lending among the relatives.

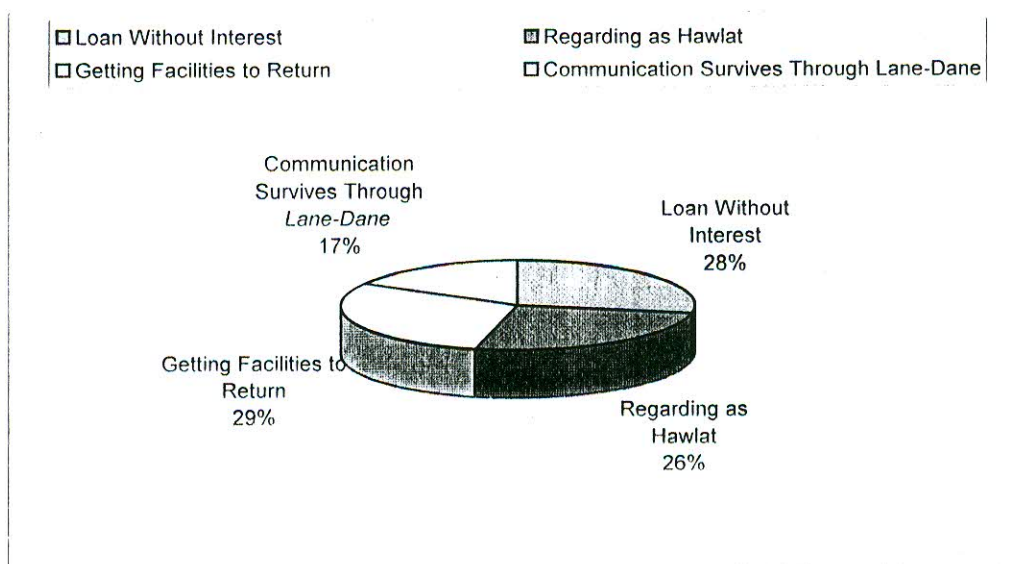


Figure 6-2 : Pie-Chart for Table 6.2.

For selling landed property within the village or outside the village the villagers at first approaches their relatives, especially the consanguineal relatives are

received certain preference for the sale of cultivable land. Rahaman also reports, "Usually, when he decides to sell a piece of his land he informed his family members. Therefore, he contracts his other patrilineal kinsmen. If he fails there he goes to the affines. Fictive are approached the last" (1990:270). If the villagers do not find any possibility of selling their cultivable land to any relatives, they afterwards wish to go to other persons to sell it. Thus many villagers in the study village were found to play their role in buying and selling the properties among themselves. If any one wishes to sell land he must offer his close relatives first who are willing and capable to buy the same. The first preference goes to a blood brother. If such brother has strained relationship then the '*samaj*' leaders will create compelling circumstances to sell it to the brother (Aziz, 1979:131). In the case of selling house and household effects as well as other properties also, (such as ornament, livestock, boat, shop etc.) the villagers at first try to find out customers among their relatives. In this regard, Khanum states, 'Certain transactions, such as selling or buying land/jewellery, giving/receiving credits, etc., usually take place between relatives' (2000:202). The competent relatives also become agree because of less rates of price than the prevailing market rate. That is why, Aziz also reports, "The normal rule is that when one wishes to part with landed property, house, or household effects the same must be offered to a suitable close relatives at a lesser price than the prevailing market rate," (1979:131). It should be noted here that by selling the cultivable land within the village or outside the village, although the individual is losing the ownership of the properties, the possibility remains that he may obtain some benefits in the future from the relatives who bought it and such benefits also include:

- (1) The villagers may expect to back the land, which once sold to a relative. In the study village it is found that if a villager sells a piece of land among the relatives due to an economic crisis and when the crisis is over, he may get the opportunity to back the sold property by paying money.
- (2) The seller may retain his hold on the land as a sharecropper. So, preference for selecting a buyer among the relatives is that he may become a sharecropper of the sold land.

- (3) The villagers also feel that though they sell their property to their relatives, it is not actually selling but rather a transfer to their relatives.
- (4) The sellers think that they do not lose the prestige by selling their property. Because this is happening among the relatives or among those who are their own people.

On the other hand, kinship organization plays a vital role in providing business partners or assistants, jobs as well as other economic opportunities within the village or outside the village. The kin business partners are usually trusted at a higher level than non-kinsmen. If a villager has a businessman relative with good business outside the village, he can send his son or some other relatives to him to seek employment (Rahaman, 1990:271). Not only that an influential man himself may provide a job for the relatives. It should be noted here that if a man does not have any highly placed near-relatives, he may seek for a distant relatives or even a fictive kinsman to approach in order to gain a job and the relatives may be instrumental in providing a job elsewhere. In this context, Aziz states, "To get a suitable employment in any office or organization the job seeker may approach a fictive kin who is already employed to get a favourable consideration" (1979:135). Further he states, "If any relative happens to have the authority of employing a person in a public concern, it is very likely that he will make every effort to employ one of his near relatives. In such appointments sometimes a wife's younger brother may be preferred to a brother" (*ibid.*: 131). When a kinsman goes to another kinsman with the expectation of getting a job, he may usually take him some food items, such as fruits, big fish, a fine variety of rice, *ghi* (purified butter) etc. However, it is important to note that all the relatives are not helpful in providing economic opportunities. During the fieldwork the villagers give their opinion that the *mama* (mother's brother) as well as *khalu* (mother's sister's husband) are more helpful among the relatives in providing a job. A man considers himself lucky if he happens to have some *mamas* as well as *khalus* in the high positions. In addition to that the villagers' view to be favourably inclined on some other relatives, such as *chacha* (father's brother),

dulabhai (elder sister's husband), *shumundi* (wife's elder brother), *shasur* (wife's father), *chacha-shasur* (wife's father's brother), and *mama-shasur* (wife's mother's brother).

Economic assistance is usually provided to consanguineal or affinal kin. Sometimes, it is also provided to fictive kinsmen. In fact, economic assistance to kinsmen is considered as religious virtue and through this connection one may get maximum benefit from relatives. It is found that kinsmen (both consanguineal and affinal) are sometimes allowed food and accommodation for certain periods as a support for education. Such relatives may be a nephew, daughter's son, wife's brother, son-in-law's brother, wife's sister's son, wife's brother's son and so on. Such a relative in return may do the job of house tutor for children of the host household. Some fruit and agricultural items are also made for transactions between relatives who are residing within or outside the village. Among the fruit items- mango, jackfruit, green and ripe coconut, banana, litchi, water melon, papaya, apple, pineapple, grapes are the prominent and among agricultural products- *atap* rice (a special kind of rice which is made from un boiled paddy) for making rice cake, fish, milk products, paddy seeds, a special variety of paddy for making *chira* (parboiled flattened rice) and *muri* (fried rice) etc. are the main items. It should be mentioned that certain relatives are given preference to send the above mentioned fruits and agricultural products, e.g., a married sister's house, married daughter's house, or sometimes father-in-law's house. It was observed in the study area that the kin members not only maintain economic connections within their own village but also residing outside the village. For example, if the owner does not directly manage land, it is managed with the assistance of relatives living in the nearby village. And in that matter both consanguineal and affinal relatives residing outside the village may receive certain preference. If the relatives are not willing to undertake the responsibility then only non-relatives get the opportunity to take it.

However, the relatives residing outside the village help the villagers in various ways. It was observed that a large portion of total cultivable lands of cultivators

is owned in other village areas. For example, Amimul Haque, the head of a household in *Sarkerpara* of Srirampur has five *bighas* of cultivable land in a marsh in Maria village, which is far from Srirampur. So, it is impossible for him to cultivate that land by regularly going to that place. Hence, he hands over the responsibility of cultivating that land to one of his relatives there and this relative cultivates it. During harvest time Amimul with his own household labourers goes there for bringing his share of the crop from his relatives. In addition to that sometimes, Amimul sharecrops out that land and either his relative himself sharecrops it or he himself (relative) arranges for some other sharecroppers. In this case his relative informs him in time and once in a while Amimul with his manpower goes to his relative's house and brings the amount of money from the relative for the sharecropping of the land. However, it was found that by giving actual preference to relatives one gets one's own share of benefit and providing benefit to them within the village or outside the village.

The villagers not only receive the help in land cultivation but also they receive help in different aspects from their relatives. It is usual for the kinsmen of neighbouring villages that they send a plough and bullocks even with labour free of cost to assist them. Such relatives may be a married sister, a married daughter, the father-in-law, and sometimes even the wife's married sister. The relatives of neighbouring villages along with other fellow villagers might come forward to weed or harvest agricultural fields at the request of the kinsmen when there is a labour shortage within the village concerned. The advantage of managing the manpower in this way is that the required service is available at the time of need. However, these people are entertained with special food and no cash payment is made in the exchange for labour but special care is taken of them. This system of labour utilization is locally called *begare dheya* (giving free labour service).

As mentioned earlier that some landless people of Srirampur move for seasonal employment outside the village which leads to the establishment of affinal connections outside the district. In Srirampur, this happened in the case of certain landless labours who moved out to the districts of Chittagong, Jessore,

Bogra, Rajshahi and other places for seasonal employment. Because they felt that they would achieve a better standard of living in those areas. It was also found in the study village that a few landless families even moved to the neighbouring villages in which they found work for a better standard of living than that of their original village. These families usually counted on the goodwill of affinal or less frequently consanguineal relatives to help them in their new residences. If an individual fails to achieve a reasonable level of economic advantages in spite of the cooperation of kinsmen, sometimes he may return to his original village to live permanently. In fact, the kinsmen are always welcomed back enthusiastically and accommodated in their original *baris* (homesteads). The following case will help to make the point clear.

Niyamat Ali of *Uttarpara*, is a landless labourer. He is now 40 years old. He is the progenitor of 5 children. As he is landless labourer, he has to face economic hardship to maintain his household. Therefore, he shifted his household in Chaskoir village in which he found work and felt that he would achieve there a better standard of living. He passed there 7 years together but failed to achieve a reasonable level of economic advantages in spite of the cooperation of relatives. Being failure to achieve a reasonable level of economic advantages, he returned to his original village and accommodated in his original *bari* (homestead). He is welcomed by the *bari* members and living there at present.

We have seen earlier that there is some occupation of the villagers in Srirampur village, like carpenter, weaver, tailor etc. in which a skilled kinsman is sometimes approached within or outside the village for acceptance as an apprentice. Such apprenticeship is usually allowed for young relatives, like *sala* (wife's brother) *bagne* (sister's son), *nati* (daughter's son), and *putri* (son-in-law's brother). Thus, specialized occupational skills are transmitted to certain relatives within or outside the village for economic considerations. However, all these aspects reveal that economic connections help to maintain cordial relations among relatives and through the economic assistance among kinsmen; a wealthy man may gain the support of kinsmen (i.e., social, political, matrimonial and in buying and selling goods and services) as well as the respect of other members of the society. Almost all the kinsmen in the society have a significant role for mutual economic betterment. It was observed that if a relative suffers financial hardship or

disaster, the other kinsmen try their best to overcome the problem. Here I want to mention an incident to make the economic consideration clear.

In 1998 the farmers of Srirampur village faced a lot of problem regarding paddy plantation, because in that year the prolonged flood damaged small paddy plants. It also caused heavy damage to the houses and properties of the village people. During the flood of 1998 two-third of upazilas of the country were inundated including Baraigram upazila and standing crops were damaged. In fact, the flood of 1998 was dangerous and lasted for more than two months. During that flood human beings, cattle and other domestic animals passed their days with unlimited suffering. Some people of the village took shelter on the high land, on high school building. Some also took shelter on their relatives' houses outside the village. After flood the farmers of the village had to face problem regarding paddy plantation. They could not find any way out of planting paddy in their land. Therefore, the farmers went to collect plants from other upazilas of the district, which were not affected by flood. The relatives in those upazilas extended their helping hands and provided paddy plants to the villagers. Thus, the people of Srirampur overcome their problem regarding paddy plantation.

As the villagers live in a network of relatives' within or outside the village, they obtain help from their relatives in several other fields. Kinship bonds also make a claim on people's loyalties. All members of kinship groups understand each other and feel comfortable with one another. They feel they can count on one another for support at the time of various needs and crisis. It is common that even if after a land dispute relations between two brothers sour, in times of real need one brother rushes to help the other. In fact, a blood relation is as precious and indestructible as a gold coin. One may cut off all his relations with the brothers, but in times of need he may find them a great source of security. Therefore, on different occasions as well as in different fields in economic sectors kinship members maintain economic connections with other kin members residing within or outside the village. If one relative suffers financial hardship due to the natural calamity or for any other social phenomenon, the other relatives in South Asian societies including Bangladesh society try to do their best to make him overcome from the needs and crisis. Under such circumstances, within the wider kin circle the economic/monetary cooperation is an important aspect of life for efficient household management. Other things are also exchanged significantly among relatives' network in rural Bangladesh. Khanum (2000:211) states that such practices open up new areas of communication and opportunities of *udlaa baadlaa* (exchange of gift, labour, and services). It was observed that a number

of small traders/shopkeepers and the other sections of people had received the monetary help from their relatives' within or outside the village. A wealthy kinsman may give monetary help to a needy one among relatives in order to maintain the prestige of the family and for him. He also provides such economic assistance to economically weak kinsman as it is considered a religious duty. In fact, a wealthier kinsman is a helper at the time of various needs and crisis especially in monetary crisis.

Children are the main form of insurance for the parents in their old age in South Asian societies, especially in Bangladesh also. Here kinship bond generates a sense of responsibility in such a way that it provides shelter as well as financial help in times of need and crisis. Parents also invest their labour and resources in their children in the expectation of a return in their old age. In this context, Khanum rightly comments, "In an agriculture-based production system, male children are considered an investment for present labour and future insurance" (2000:207). In fact, 'a commitment of long-term mutual responsibility'- that may encompass financial and/or labour commitments between parents and children in South Asian societies including Bangladesh. Caldwell (1983) also argues that since 'more hands grow more food' in an extended family, the older members, who do not have to bear the 'cost of raising children, enjoy more 'benefits' from a child's contribution than do the child's own parents. As a result they encourage couples to have more children. Some parents in South Asian societies including Bangladesh want more children to strengthen their *gushti* power. They have also high aspirations to beget some 'high quality children' (term used by Schainberg and Reed 1974) who will successfully compete in the present job market.

Kinship is a source of amity and cohesion in the society and at the same time, it is a source of discord, conflict and dispute regarding social, political, religious and socio-cultural issues. However, kinship plays an important role to minimize any kind of disputes among its members. In rural Bangladesh an affinal relation is usually compared to an earthen pot, which is fragile and easily replacement. With a formal divorce, a woman is obliged to cut off relations with her in-laws

(Khanum, 2000:206). This affinal relationship can be broken if a woman fails to prolong the lineage by giving birth (especially to a male child). In this context, Khanum further states, "Incapability to bear a child, especially a son, is one of the socially acceptable causes of a divorce in rural areas and since relatives also try their best to prevent a divorce when a woman has children (for the letter's sake), women feel disgraced and also insecure as long as they do not bear children" (*ibid*). Thus, it is found that the conflict may be raised between husband and wife due to incapability to bear a child or for any other causes; the relatives of the concerned families try their best to minimize the conflict and also to prevent a divorce between them.

Apart from the above issue of dispute, there are a considerable number of issues of dispute among relatives in the rural society of Bangladesh, such as damage to crops caused by domestic animals, distribution of agricultural production and business profits, lending of money, on several ceremonies (i.e., wedding, feast, *milad* etc.), quarrels between children or youth, different political ideology, hospitality of relatives and so like. For the causes of these issues in rural Bangladesh disputes take place between kinsmen. All these phenomenon are also common among relatives regarding socio-economic issues in Srirampur village as well as in other parts of country but the relatives always try to minimize it because a long term dispute enhance the bond of *gushti* and its reputation. Sometimes a few disputes over property distribution may continue over generations. However, during the disputes among the relatives, some of them come forward and try their best to minimize the happened disputes. The concerned parties may also seek the help of others. Thus, the village people want to live within mutual dependence, and also they try to provide a background of cohesion among them by carrying on economic transactions in times of needs and crisis and thereby consolidating the interests of all the members of the kin groups. It should be mentioned that this sense of responsibility usually does not exist among non-relatives in South Asian societies as in Bangladesh also.

The kin members have certain specific types of participation on some rituals and ceremonies. When a kinsman arranges ritual or ceremony in his house, he invites his relatives, friends and neighbours. By joining on such occasions members of individual kin groups further strengthen their existing strong social bonds. In this context, I agree with Ahmed when he states, "Among the *biradaris*, on the other hand, the fraternal solidarity and amity supposed to prevail among their members and anticipated by their kinship links is expressed through appropriate social rituals" (1976:337). It has been observed that during the ritual/ceremony an individual of kin groups usually becomes anxious to receive suggestions and advice for the successful completion of it. In rural Bangladesh most of the rituals/ceremonies which involved kin members provided feasts and exchange of gifts. The intensity of gift-exchange and feasting is lower the higher a family's level of poverty. But in spite of poverty every family makes maximum effort to celebrate every ritual/ceremony in a befitting manner. Under such circumstances, an economically weakened member of kinship groups may expect financial cooperation from a wealthy kinsman at the time of such rituals and ceremonies. The economically wealthier kinsman also extends his helping hand for the completion of the ritual and ceremony. In fact, on such occasions, an individual of kin groups wants consultation, cooperation and participation of relatives and other allied persons, and thus the ties of kinship are cemented by the exchange of economic assistance and visits between the members of the kindred in South Asian societies including Bangladesh.

At the time of fieldwork I asked the heads of 724 households in the study village about the main fields in which the villagers usually seek relatives' help. On the basis of their opinions I would like to present a Table showing the major helping fields by the relatives. The findings are shown below.

Table 6.3
Distribution of the Major Helping Fields for the Villagers by Relatives

Main Helping Fields	Respondents	Percentage
Financial Assistance	167	23.07
Support in Disaster	210	29.00
Mitigation of Dispute	93	12.85
Ritual/Ceremony	233	32.18
Not answered	21	2.90
Total	724	100.00

Out of the 724 household heads, 167 (23.07%) are helped financially by the relatives in times of needs and crisis and 210 (29.00%) are helped by relatives during disasters, such as in economic disasters, shortage of food during the drought, prolonged flood and at the loss of small trade and huts in the market, 93 (12.85%) persons are helped by their relatives in the mitigation of disputes, 233 (32.18%) heads are helped by the relatives in celebrating rituals and ceremonies. Only a few numbers of household heads 21 (2.90%) did not give their opinions of the asked question.

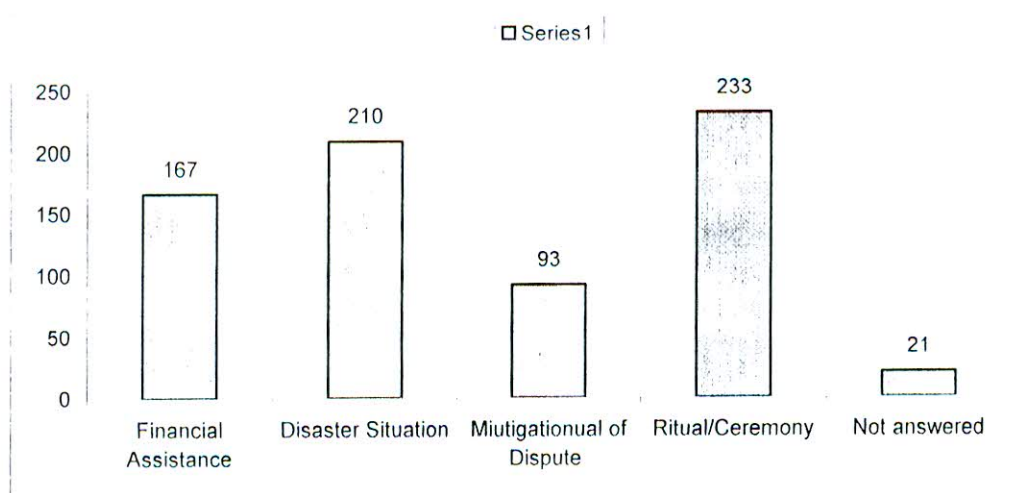


Figure 6.3 : Bar-Diagram for Table 6.3.

However, in discussing the kinship in economic connection reveals that whether consanguineal, affinal or fictitious, kinship relations are prominent in the social network of the village. The patterns of interaction among relatives are interpersonal patterns and the ties among them are kin ties with or without the biological tie of kinship.

6.4 Kinship in Political Participation

Kinship organization has a vital role in village politics and the politics plays an important role in the power structure of Srirampur village. In the rural society where the politics is dealt by powerful persons as well as by the dominant *gushtis*, both the two should have some qualities also. According to Rahaman, 'The village leadership is determined by several qualities, such as age, sex, wealth, education and relation with wider organizations' (1990:286). For the extra qualities of the leader, he can wield social influence in the society. Not only that the leader may play the significant role in the power distribution in society. And the power in the society as well as in the community can be sensed by their day-to-day relationships and political activities on the specific village political situations effectively.

‘However, a person also needs other qualities of leadership in the society, which are supported by the kinship organization (household, family, lineage) and cross-cutting relationships. Besides, it was noticed in the study village that a village leader seldom gets support from other people without the help of her/his kinship groups.

In the village politics *gushti* is an important factor especially in terms of power as well as influence in various aspects of social life and it has also the tremendous influence in the village politics. In fact, the village political scenario is characterised mainly by the alliances, re-alliances and rivalries between big *gushtis* on different village issues. Of the various village issues, the public institutions of the village i.e., school, mosque, *maktab*, college, *madrassa* etc., the affairs of the Union Parishad and national politics, social welfare activities are

prominent in the village politics. The celebration of rituals, ceremonies and festivals are also to be considered as prominent aspects in village politics. As the phenomenon of kinship relations among *gushtis* is closely visible in the political organization of village society and where the kinship organizations are functioning as cohesive units in all aspects- political, economic as well as ritual, an attempt has been made in the present section to illustrate how the different village issues are politicised by the village *gushtis*. At the *para* (ward) or the village level political control of kinship has a special significance. Political control is exercised by a handful of persons who belong to the higher and stronger kinship group. The leaders of the influential *gushtis* are titled *prodhans* of the *para* /village, whose status, power, and position stem from the holding of land and of much property and resources (Mashreque, 1980: 237).

In Srirampur village large *gushtis* are cohesive and united at least as a member of the Union Parishad (a local self government institution). The villagers give their opinions that during the Union Parishad election each of the big *gushtis* puts forwards its candidate and all of them together campaign for their respective *gushti* candidate. The same also happens in the national politics. At the time of national election each village *gushti* collectively decides the candidate to whom they should support for their benefits.

On the basis of the opinions of 724 household heads I would like to present a Table regarding Union Parishad and national elections.

Table 6.4

**Causes of Negotiation in both Union Parishad and National Elections
among *Gushtis***

Causes	Respondents	Percentage
Increasing Power & Authority	68	9.39
Maintain Solidarity	363	50.14
For Reputation and Status	217	29.97
Availing more Benefits	42	5.80
Other	34	4.70
Total	724	100.00

Of the total 724 household heads, 68 (9.39%) have given their opinions of in favour of increasing power and authority, 363 (50.14%) in maintaining solidarity, 217 (29.97%) are in favour of their reputation and status, 42 (5.80%) in availing more benefits and 34 (4.70%) for other reasons.

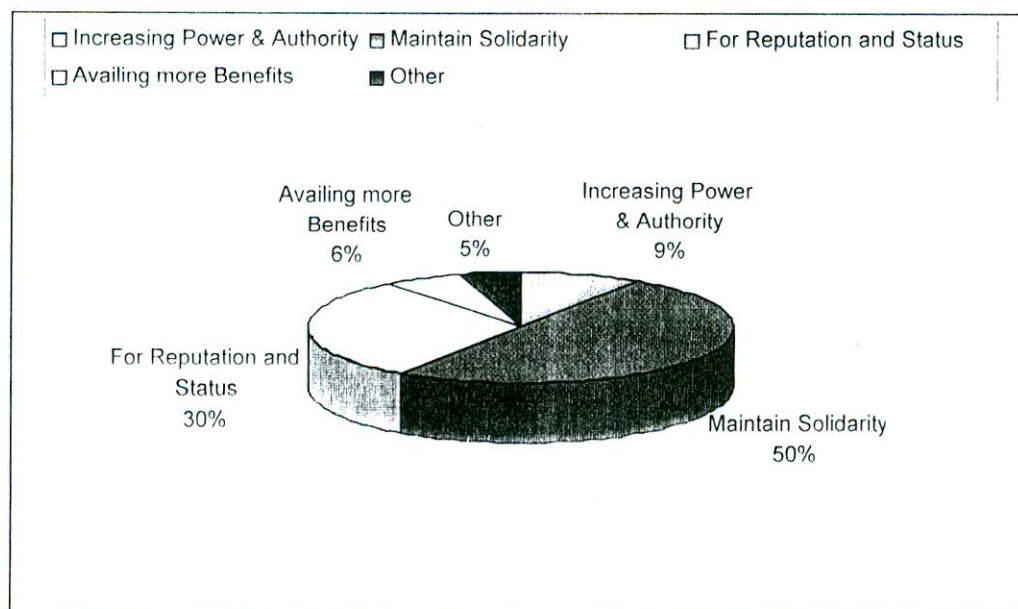


Figure 6.4 : Pie-Chart for Table 6.4

However, It was observed in the study village that the kinship organization has a tremendous influence on the socio-political institutions and the concerned head of the household may exercise his authority effectively over all the members among *gushtis*, even in the *para* level as well as in the village level. All these aspects together reveal that the dominant *gushti* is a much stronger indicator of political power and influence in Srirampur.

There are some public institutions (i.e., school, *madrassa*, mosque, *maktab*) in the study village where the *gushtis* are involved in various activities. The kinsmen among the *gushtis* always try to capture the management of these institutions on the basis of their reputation and support from villagers of the study village. The activities of the *gushti* men reveal the considerable and strongly movement among the *gushtis*. For example, there is a *jumma-masjid* (The mosque for weakly prayer) on the periphery of *Sarkerpara*. It is also very close to the

homestead of *sarker gushti* of that *para*. There is a formal managing committee to maintain the mosque smoothly but the members of *sarker gushti* occupy all the main posts in the managing committee of the mosque. On the other hand, other *gushti* members occupy some other opposites. It is interesting to note that the members of the managing committee of other *gushtis* always keep an eye on the funds and functions of the mosque committee. And they never fail to criticise the members of the main posts whenever there is a lapse or having done any wrong by them. Sometimes, they go to the extent of making public the malfunctions of the members of *sarker gushti* of *Sarkerpara* under the study village. So, it is found in Srirampur that the conflict as well as confrontation characterise the village politics and also the *gushtis* having low socio-economic status find it hard to share power and influence in the rural affairs.

The villagers hail the social welfare activities, such as construction of a road, construction of a bridge, digging of a canal, construction of a building of school, club, *madrassa* etc. The villagers who have the connections with the rural elites and local administration get the opportunity to those social welfare activities. All the activities are politicised by the village *gushtis* but he who initiates those activities has to face opposition from rival *gushtis*. Generally, the rival *gushtis* consider it as politically motivated. They also think that he is doing it merely for the sake of enhancing his *gushti's* reputation and he would use it for getting elected to some office of the Union Parishad in the next time. That is why the rival *gushtis* try to participate in the activities to take credit for it or to create difficulties for the person initiating the activities. Thus, still Bangladesh rural people have strong *gushti* affiliations as a suitable mechanism to survive in the rural body politics (Mashreque, 1980: 19).

Sometimes, the village *gushtis* may also politicise the functions like: celebration of ceremonies, gatherings and festivals, which are held in the village on some special days. To make this point clear, I would like to recall about a function of *Uttarpara*. Once the youths of *parmanik gushti* of *Uttarpara* arranged a drama on

the victory day. The youths from some other *gushtis*, namely *fakir* of the same *para*, *parmanik* of the *Madhapara* cooperated with them. But some other *gushtis* of the village such as *mullah*, *sarker*, *faraji* created disturbances in the celebration. Those who opposed the function thought that the youths organizing the function were doing bad and showing the advice of their *gushti* elders to enhance their *gushti's* reputation. They also thought that the youths organizing the functions influence the common village-folk. So, the *para* exists as a political entity and it is definitely a unit of political organization and also it leads us to understand the internal structure of the village politics.

It was observed that the political activities are most prominent in both big and small *gushtis*. It is interesting to note that the smaller *gushtis* always like to unite themselves with the bigger *gushtis* because of their small size as well as less power. However, on some political issues and social interests, such as power, economic assistance and proper guidance demand that one *gushti* be united with another. On the other hand, it was also observed that the *gushtis* are not always united with one another on all political issues because of their political ideology. However, one may change and other may replace it according to their opportunity on political affairs. Any kind of election such as local/national (Union Parishad & national election) provides the scope for understanding the rural political behaviour and it gives new opportunities for the villagers to participate in its process. At the time of election the leaders have to do careful study of kinship composition of the villagers (including all *paras*) because they know that the kinship consideration is reflected during the time of election in rural community. Thus, the *gushti* leaders may be a source of political support as well as are able to regulate the political attitudes and behaviour of their close kinsmen among the *gushtis*. Therefore, we may regard the *gushti* leaders as a 'Vote Bank'. The villagers are primarily loyal to their respective *gushti* leaders who give them

advice and emotional support. During any election, local or national, the *gushti* leaders in the rural society play a crucial role. On the eve of election, they try to guide their *gushti* members in favour of a candidate to whom they are committed to support. In fact, to convince a number of *gushti* leaders in the village society is to ensure heavy procurement of votes. Consequently, a respective candidate of any local/ national election first try to convince a number of powerful *gushti* leaders in the village to ensure heavy procurement of votes.

However, my interviews with all the household heads have enabled me to justify the voting behaviour of the villagers. It was found that the majority voters of the village do not follow their personal choice at the time of local and national election. It should be noted that I observed the political situation of the village during the national election of 2001, which gave a fresh opportunity for understanding of the alliance among *gushtis* in Srirampur village. Some political leaders including the elected members of Baraigram Union on behalf of "Awamileague" started mobilising voters coming down to the study village. But most of the *gushti* leaders of the village who supported the then opposition party "Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) tried to form an alliance. However, the rural political situation was marked by the fairness of the different political parties around *gushtis*. During this election period I came to know that most of the villagers would like to vote as a group. Through conversation with the villagers I could guess that some *gushtis* would support government alliance and some would support the opposition. The election result of Srirampur polling centre also showed a tough contest between the government alliance as well as the alliance of the opposition. Thus, the voting behaviour denotes the consciousness of the people of Srirampur and they exercise their voting power by the expression of their loyalty to their leaders among *gushtis*.

6.5 Kinship in Religious Affairs

Kinship organization has a vital role in various religious activities. As the villagers of Bangladesh are devoutly pious, they are very much heartfelt as well as respectful in performing religious activities. That is why, the religion acts as the best controlling agency in social life. However, the kinsmen have certain specific types of participation among themselves on some religious occasions and they may strengthen their existing strong social bonds by joining in the various religious functions.

Eid-ul-Fiter and *Eid-ul-Azha* are two principal religious festivals among Muslims. On the occasion of these *Eids* the members of individual kin groups try to visit the village home. The same is also happened in Srirampur. However, these two *Eid* festivals are the occasion for special as well as relatively sumptuous feasts for the Muslims. It is observed in the study village that both multilateral and affined kinsmen join these feasts. During the *Eid* days the ties of kinship are cemented by the exchange of food and visits between the members of the kindred (Aziz, 1976: 42). Thus, at the time of religious festivals the kinsmen find an opportunity to join and enjoy it among themselves together for a common religious purpose.

Of the religious festivals the *Eid-ul-Fiter* is important one. The Muslims following the month long fasting in the Arabic month *Ramadan*, *Eid-ul-Fiter* is celebrated on the first day of *Swayal*. On this very day the Muslims enjoy with the family and with fellow villagers together. Generally, the Muslims take the breakfast early and wear new clothing on the day of *Eid-ul-Fiter* and they go to the *Eid-gah* or mosque for their *Eid* prayers. Following the prayers the Muslims embrace each other. The relatives cordially visit one another's house and are served with good food. Aziz reported, "On this day sweet preparations are made including vermicelli. These sweet dishes are shared with friends and relatives. Both consanguineal and affinal relatives who live reasonably nearby visit each other during the day to exchange greetings and to enjoy traditional sweets" (1979:32). However, at the time of *Eid-ul-Fiter* '*fitra*' is given to the poor fellow Muslims so

that they can enjoy *Eid* with others. In fact, it is a significant yearly occasion among the villagers of Srirampur. The villagers make special mid-morning prayer on the day of *Eid-ul-Fiter* in an open field, which is in front of the *jumma masjid* in *Sarkerpara*. The people of every *malot* submit their *fitra* to the head of the *malot* before the *Eid* prayer and the head distributes it among the poor villagers. It should be noted here that according to Islamic rule '*fitra*' has a special rule, which is followed in Srirampur. It indicates a prescribed quantity of food grain or equivalent amount of money payable for every member of the family. According to religious precept, *fitra* has been made compulsory for the wealthy Muslims. The price of 1.75 kg of wheat or its equivalent price for each member of the family is given to the poorer sections by the wealthy as *fitra* on the day of *Eid-ul-Fiter*, which comes after *Ramadan*. The '*fitra*' is also given to the deserving poor relatives. If a wealthy man in the society wishes to donate food or money according to religious prescription, he must consider first among his nearest relatives those who are poor.

Zakat is one of the distinct institutions of Islam, which is performed by the wealthy Muslims for safeguarding their lives and properties. *Zakat* has been made compulsory for the wealthy Muslims. A Muslim male/female who becomes the owner of fifty-two and half of a *Tolas* (measurement of weight) of silver or seven and half of a *Tolas* of gold or if he becomes the owner of its equivalent price, which belongs to his/her hands all the year round, then *zakat* has been made compulsory for him/her. According to religious precept, 1/40th portion of the movable and immovable property should be given as *zakat*. It should be taken into consideration that those who are in debt are exempted from paying the *zakat*. The poorer section, of course, cannot pay *zakat* and nobody expects them to do so.

I got the opportunity to observe as well as to enjoy the *Eid-ul-Fiter* with the villagers and observed that some relatives from other villages come in Srirampur to celebrate the *Eid-ul-Fiter* with their relatives. Similarly, the villagers of Srirampur go to other villages to celebrate it with their relatives.

Table 6.5
**Distribution of the Relatives who usually come to Celebrate *Iid-ul-Fiter*
 with their Relatives in Srirampur**

Relatives of the Villagers		
Consanguineal	Affinal Relatives	Fictive Relatives
1. Ego's daughter, her husband, children.	1. Ego's wife's parents	Ego's some fictive relatives including neighbours and friends of male line. Female Ego's some fictive relatives including neighbours and friends of female line.
2. Ego's sister her husband, children	2. Ego's wife's sister, her husband, children	
3. Ego's father's sister, her husband and children	3. Ego's daughter's husband, children.	
4. Ego's father's brother, his wife and children	4. Ego's daughter's husband's sister, her husband, children	
5. 5. Ego's brothers who reside in separate households.	5. Ego's son's wife's parents	
6. Others	6. Ego's son's wife's sister, her husband, children	
	7. Ego's father's sister's son, his wife, children	
	8. Ego's mother's sister's daughter, her husband, children	
	9. Ego's mother's sister's son, his wife and children	
	10. Ego's father's daughter's daughter, her husband and children	
	11. Others	

Note : 'Ego' is the male head of the household

Table 6.5 shows different types of relatives who generally come in Srirampur and go to another villages to celebrate the happy *Eid-ul-Fiter*. It also shows that affinal relatives constitute the majority in celebrating this occasion. The daughters of Srirampur, their husbands, children and in-laws come to Srirampur village. On the other hand, the daughters of other villages married into Srirampur, their husbands, children and in-laws go to celebrate this occasion from Srirampur.

Eid-ul-Azha comes after two months and ten days from *Eid-ul-Fiter*. This occasion is celebrated on the tenth day of the Arabic month of *Zilhaj*. It should be noted here that there is a controversy regarding the day on which to celebrate the *Eid-ul-Azha*. However, the general belief of the Muslims in Srirampur is that it should be celebrated on any three days after a period of two months and ten days from *Eid-ul-Fiter*. Muslims males get up early in the morning to celebrate this special occasion and offer their *Eid* prayer in a big congregation at the *Eid-gah* with the villagers. They embrace each other after following their prayers with the villagers. After returning from *Eid-gah* the people are engaged in animal sacrifice and later in distribution of sacrificial meat among the poor villagers of the society. On this special day, the villagers sacrifice cows or goats in the name of *Allah* (God). There is a rule of sacrificing the animal on this day. The Islamic rule is that a cow can be sacrificed on behalf of seven persons and a goat of one person. In addition, a prescribed sacrifice may be offered for each adult member of the household. It is also approved in Islam that in the case of inability to do so, a sacrifice is offered in the name of the head of the household only.

However, it is observed in the study village that traditionally the meat of the sacrificial animal is divided into three equal parts. Out of the three equal parts: one part goes to one's own house, one part to relatives and friends, and another one part to the poor of the '*samaj*'. The household members prepare specialized meals including the meat of sacrificial animals in large quantities for consumption. They also distribute the prepared dishes among kinsmen as well as friends on this very day. It is observed that sometimes the cooked meat of the sacrificed animal is sent to close relatives who are staying in distant places.

The *Shab-e-barat* is the occasion of special prayer for the villagers. It is one of the important religious festivals of the Muslims and is performed on the night of the fourteenth day of Arabic month '*Sabar*' on every year. The villagers believe that *Shab-e-barat* is that fateful night on which *Allah* (Good) determines the fate of his followers for the coming year. On this night along with the adults, the children of the study village also go to the mosque and ask for *Allah's* blessings

so that they grow to be virtuous, happy, wealthy as well as successful in future life. At the time of this occasion the Muslims offer some sweets and bread to the poor, relatives, neighbours and to others who come to the mosque to offer their prayer. According to religious precept the villagers distribute these items of food in the name of their dead relatives. Rich people of the village offer food and cloths to the poor in the name of almighty *Allah* for the salvation of their deceased kin. On this occasion the villagers visit their graves and offer prayers for the peace of their departed souls. On this holy occasion the Muslims offer night-long-prayers in mosques as well as houses for beseeching the mercy and the guidance of the Almighty *Allah* (God). It is believed that the spirits of the departed souls come out to see their relatives and the Muslims also pray for the salvation of the soul of their deceased relatives (Ahmed, 1981: 145).

Shab-e-Qadar is another important religious festivals of Muslims, which is performed during last ten days of the lunar Arabic month of *Ramadan* every year. On the *Shab-e-Qadar* prayers continue for whole night in the mosque and homes. Special food items are prepared and the kinsmen invite each other to participate in *ifter* party on that day. All Muslims believe that on this night of *Ramadan* 27, 1400 years ago the Holy Quran was exposed to mankind through the prophet of Islam Hazrat Mohammad (sm.). According to religious precept this night is considered as the most blessed of all nights of *Allah* (God) and also it is a special divine blessings of *Allah*. On this Special night, the Muslims also visit the graves of their near and dear relatives offering prayers for the salvation of the souls.

Akika (naming ceremony of a newborn baby among Muslims) is another Islamic ritual, which is occasionally performed in the study village. However, it is an Islamic ritual connected with the newborn baby. The *akika* is prescribed in the books of Islam on the seventh day after the birth of the baby (Gibb and Kramers, 1961:29). But it is noteworthy that the *akika* is rarely observed on the seventh day after the birth of the child. The people of the village observe it according to their own convenience. According to Islamic/religious precept animal sacrifice is

made to the God for the safeguarding of the newborn baby. In celebrating this occasion two goats are sacrificed for a male child while one for a female. In the case of some well-to-do Muslim families, the kinsmen coming from other villages at the time of birth are requested by the household head to stay till the *akika* celebration. Other relatives as well as allies are also invited on this occasion as an improved feast is arranged in the house including the meat of the dedicated animal(s). Sometimes an elaborate feast may be arranged, and the meat of the dedicated animal(s) is distributed among the relatives, friends, neighbours and fellow villages (Rahaman, 1990: 277). On this occasion, the invitees usually bring some gifts for the child; especially the *mamas* of the child are expected to bring gifts for the child. However, according to religious precept the meat of the sacrificed animal is divided into three equal portions out of which one share goes to the relatives (Kinsmen, affines, and fictive relatives), one share to the poor people of the village and the rest of the shares goes to the household family of the newborn baby. The mother of the child, whose *akika* is performed by sacrificing the animal, does not eat this meat. There is no religious bar on the mother for taking the *akika* meat, but the women of Srirampur believe that if she takes it, this may bring misfortune to the child. They feel that they should not take the meat of the animal sacrificed in the name of their own children. The people of Srirampur village also do not observe *akika* for all the births in their families, but usually for the first one or two children.

Musalmani (circumcision of Muslim boys) is a religious ritual of the Muslims community connecting with male child only. Usually, after attaining the age of five or more the circumcision is performed. The actual circumcision involves only the cutting of the foreskin of a boy. Circumcision is prescribed for Muslims in the books of their religion. This is a *Sunna*, i.e., a directive of the prophet (Gibb and Kramers, 1961:254-255). The operation is performed by a '*hajan*' (The man who is expert to perform circumcision of male children). Now a day, this task is also performed in the medical centre or in a clinic. However, most of the villagers of

Srirampur depend on *hajam* in doing circumcision of their male children. It is mentionable that there is no '*hajam*' in Sirampur. Therefore, a '*hajam*' is called from outside the village to the boy's house. This is an occupation of the *hajam* and he takes remuneration for his works. In Srirampur, the circumcision is called *musalmani*. All the families of the village circumcise their boys when they become 'eligible' for it (usually between the age of five to twelve). People think the circumcision as a mark of becoming a Muslim. On the seventh day after circumcision, the barber is called to give the boy a hair cut. After the hair cutting, the boy is given a ceremonial bathe. After the bathe he is carried back to the house and then he wears new clothes. Usually he wears the clothes received as gifts on that day. To observe the ceremony of *musalmani*, a *milad* as well as a function are arranged in the male child's households. A feast is arranged on this day. The circumcision ceremony is an occasion of joy, and the family of the circumcised boy remains in festive mood on this occasion. Sometimes, people make elaborate arrangement for this occasion. The close relatives, friends and neighbours are invited on this occasion. However, the invited people usually bring some gifts for the boy.

Namaj-e-zanaja (pre-burial prayer) is a religious ritual of the Muslim community. When a man dies in the village, his relatives, neighbours and others come to attend his *namaj-e-zanaja*. Among all the participators the relatives generally participate in all the activities connected with the burial of the deceased. After the death of a person his *gushti* members and relatives are informed about the death news. Those who are very close to the deceased start crying and others try to console them. Some also read the holy *Quran* commence reciting it. According to the Islamic tradition elderly relatives of the deceased start preparing for the burial as soon as possible. After completing most of the preparation for placing the deceased's body in a grave, he is taken for the last bath. After completing the bath the dead body is covered with new cloth, which is white in colour and it is scented. The face of the deceased is left uncovered for some time so that the

mourners may see it for the last chance. Afterwards the deceased is brought for the *namaj-e-janaja* and then it is taken to the graveyard. According to religious precept the member of the second generation of the deceased (such as son's son, daughter's son, brother's son's son, and brother's daughter's son) generally carry the coffin on their shoulders. The other relatives, friends of the deceased and the common villagers who attend to the *namaj-e-janaja* go behind the coffin. After the coffin reaches the graveyard the deceased is placed inside the grave. In the grave, the head of the corpse should be in the North. Its face is turned towards the *Quaba* (the holy place of Muslims in Mecca). This position ensures that the corpse's face remains turned towards the *Quaba* while it rests on its right side. The grave is covered with bamboo sticks and peels from banana plant. Then soil, dug from the grave, is put over these things. This soil is placed on top of the grave. After this, some water is sprayed over the grave. The grave is often fenced by bamboo sticks to protect it from animals, such as dogs and foxes. Before leaving the graveyard the people pray for the departed soul. However, after the burial majority of the persons leave the place but only a few relatives elderly neighbours and some villagers come to the house of the dead man and talk to the household member about various problems they may face in the absence of the deceased and give suggestions to solve the problems. Some of them who are very close to the dead man assure of their assistance in future. The persons of the deceased's household do not take their food before the burial is over. In fact, lighting of fire is forbidden in the deceased's household on the day of the death. In some cases, the persons of the deceased's household do not light of fire in their households for three days. Therefore food is usually sent by some neighbouring relatives or friends. The persons from the neighbouring households may also bring the cooked food for the people in the deceased's household. Sometimes rice from the deceased's household is given to a neighbouring household for cooking.

According to religious precepts the Muslim performs a ceremony of *challisha*. . Locally it is called *bepher* (a big feast arranged for the salvation of the deceased's soul). This occasion is celebrated on the fortieth day of death. On this day a feast is prepared in the house of the deceased. Generally, the deceased sons arrange the feast. However, all the close consanguineal, affinal relatives of the deceased and neighbours, poor are invited to the feast. It should be noted that those relatives as well as allies who attended to the burial must be specially invited and they are expected to attend on this occasion. The main significance of this occasion is that the entire participant will pray to *Allah* for the release of the deceased soul and accommodating him in the *bahest* (heaven).

Milad is a common religious festival in the village society. The kin members play an important role on this occasion. Usually, the Muslims gather to a mosque, field or a courtyard for this purpose. At the time of this occasion a *maulavi* (a pious Muslim) recites several verses from the holy *Quran* and the others who are present at the occasion follow him. All the discussion of this occasion is about the great prophet Mohammad (sm.) and his relation with *Allah*. However, the *milad* is organized by both public and individual initiatives. The villagers from all social strata participant in public initiative *milad* and after the completion of this *milad*, sweet rice or some other sweet are distributed among the people. On the other hand, in an individual initiative *milad* other villagers are not commonly invited. Mainly the relatives as well as allies of the sponsor are invited and after the completion of the *milad* the improved feast is served among the participants. The food differs depending upon the economic status of the man celebrating the ceremony. However, the other kinsmen are associated with the sponsor of the individual *milad* and in the whole management of the *milad* they play a significant role. It is found in the rural society that it is mainly an occasion of male kinsmen. So, they get special importance than the female kinsmen.

Table 6.6
**Distribution of the Relatives who participate at the *Milad* arranged by
 Individual in Sripampur**

Relatives who Take Participation				
Male Relatives		Female Relatives		Fictive Kin
Consanguineal	Affinal	Consanguineal	Affinal	
1. Ego's father,	1. Ego's father-in-law	1. Ego's married sisters.	1. Ego's sisters' daughters.	1. Fictive kin including neighbours and friends of male line.
2. Ego's brother,	2. Ego's brother-in-law	2. Ego's father's sisters.	2. Ego's father's sisters' daughters	2. Fictive kin including neighbours and friends of female line.
3. Brother's son				
4. Father's brother,	3. Ego's sister's husband, husband's father.	3. Ego's father's brother's daughters	3. Ego's mother-in-law.	
5. Father's brother's Son.				
6. Ego's grandfather	4. 4. Ego's son's wife's father, her brother	4. Others	4. Ego's brother-in-laws' wives	
7. Ego's son.	5. 5. Ego's brother's wife's father, her brother.		5. Others	
8. Son's son.				
9. Sister's sons.				
10. Others	6. Others			

Note : 'Ego' is the male head of the household.

During the fieldwork, it has been observed that generally the male Muslims participate in the *milad*. Only a few women among the kinsmen participate in it. It has also been observed in Sripampur that some other persons not having any kinship relations with the sponsor of the *milad* have joined in it for the sake of personal relationship. It is mentionable that these people may be friends, neighbours or fictive kin.

Jhalsha (religious meeting) is a religious function and occasionally it is observed in the village. The villagers organise it individually or jointly to inform the Islamic ideology among the villagers so that they can be aware about Islamic ideology.

On this day people of the village meet each other in an open field in a *pendal* where religious leaders deliver speeches on the life and teaching of the prophet (sm.) as well as on the Islamic Ideology. Some *aleems* (learned men of Islam) attend the *jhalsha* and deliver lectures on Islamic ideology. Thus, the participants of the *jhalsha* receive suggestion and advice towards Islamic ideology. However, from the above discussion it is understood that kin members play an important role in various religious festivals. The religious role of kinsmen is not confined into the lifetime of a man. The kinsmen have also some duties even after the death of a man. According to religious precept the kin members among the Muslims have certain obligations towards the deceased kinsmen and they arrange feasts for the salvation of the departed soul. During the fieldwork I participated on several religious functions, which involved kin members provided for feasts and exchange of gifts among themselves. Thus, the villagers make maximum effort to celebrate every religious occasion in a befitting manner.

6.6 Kinship in Socio-cultural Sectors

The kinship organization (household, family and *gushti*) has an important role in the socio-cultural sectors. The socio-cultural roles of the kinship groups in the society are innumerable which are to be identified through the whole life cycle of them. A child grows up through the whole relatives' network and his socialization starts from the tender age. Then the education of family life as well as the basic learning of the greater social life is taught by relatives' network. However, all these aspects of the social life reveal the socio-cultural identification of kinship organization and the kinsmen play a significant role.

The villagers arrange many socio-cultural ceremonies in their houses and their relatives (both consanguineal and affinal), friends, neighbours and well-wishers are cordially invited. All of them are expected to be present on the occasion. Not only those, the villagers are also generally anxious to receive advice and suggestion from the participants especially from kinsmen for the successful completion of the ceremony.

The wedding is one of the principal socio-cultural ceremonies in the village society. A villager of the eligible son and daughter expects his relatives not only on the wedding day but also in all ceremonies connected with marriage. It has been observed in the village society that in the case of a daughter, most of the relatives become active even before receiving information about the marriage. However, the guardian of a son or daughter in Srirampur wants consultations, cooperation and participation of his relatives as well as other allied persons in completing the marriage of his son or daughter. From the primary stage the guardian informs his relatives and other allies for the successful completion of the marriage. If the guardians of both sides come to the decision along with the relatives and other allies, further necessary steps of the marriage are taken and in all the steps the cooperation of relatives, friends and well-wishers are expected.

The news of first pregnancy is hurriedly despatched to the girl's father and there is always much enthusiasm on such occasion. However, the pregnant woman is sent for her first child delivery to her parents but subsequent deliveries generally take place in her husband's home. When the pregnant is taken to her father's house, a function is held to the husband's home and on this occasion the relatives are invited. After the birth of the child the relatives of the husband go to bring the newborn baby. At that time the same function is arranged.

The female relatives (including consanguineal, affinal, and fictive) of a village daughter or wife play a significant role during the delivering a child. The number of village women of Srirampur taken to a modern hospital or clinic for delivery is very small. Only seven daughters or wives had been taken to the modern hospital or clinic for delivering the child in the last one year (Annual Geographical Observation, G.R.Register-1, 2002 of Baraigram Upazila Health complex-BUHC). However, a few months before the expected delivery times the prospective mother is kept under the care of some elderly women. If the delivery is to take place in her natal home, her mother, brother's wife, elder sisters as well as *gushti* wives constantly keep a watch on her physique and health. A few other elderly

women including her mother-in-law come to see her in her natal home. Her husband also frequently visits her native home. She herself and some other members of her natal home discuss with him about her physical condition. However, every such woman expects that her husband will remain by her side at the time of delivery. On the other hand, when a village woman is to deliver a child in her husband's home, her mother-in-law, grandmother (if alive), husband's elder sister and close *gushti* wives make keep a watch about her physical condition or any other problems. In this case her natal family members also keep in touch. It is observed that sometimes the natal family sends a maidservant to help her. A few other women including her mother visit the daughter's husband's home a few days before the delivery is expected.

Though the village has a 'Community Health Clinic' but it has no trained nurse or doctor. Only the 'Upazila Health Assistant Worker' (UHAW) visits once or twice in a week. A few numbers of women are taken to a hospital or to a modern clinic for delivery, which also mentioned earlier. That is why; most of the pregnant women depend on village *dais* (traditional birth attendant) during the time of delivery. It is mentionable here that there are a number of traditional village *dais* in Srirampur who are elderly women, mostly widows. Generally, the village *dai* is requested by the pregnant woman's guardians to come to house to attend to delivery and she comes for such work. Some of the important female relatives are also requested to come and help while a village daughter's or wife delivers child. The *dais* receive a few gifts, usually a *saree* for her work. She is also invited to the wedding of the children whose deliveries she had attended.

When a baby is born in any family of Srirampur, he is offered the invitation of Islam through *azan* (an invitation and reminder to the people of the timing of prayer). Both male as well as female children are equally treated in the matters of offering *azan*. Regarding this matter Afsaruddin states, "When a child is born in a Muslim family, *azan* is given just after the birth with the expectation that

message of God reaches the ear of the newborn baby”(1990:111). However, it can be offered by anybody irrespective of sex and status whereas in normal situation only a Muslim male offers it. It is mentionable that *azan* is offered loudly in the case of a male child under the belief that the child will become straightforward, intelligent and religious. On the other hand, in the case of a girl, it is said softly into her ears under the belief that she will grow to be a traditional woman, will observe *pardah* and speak softly, as prescribed in the Islamic codes so that the voice of the girl is not heard outside the house.

The well-to-do families of Srirampur perform a ceremony of *mukhey bhat anusthan* (a ceremony of child's rice eating). This ceremony is observed in the concerned household when the child attains at the age of six months or so. They arrange good feasts on this occasion and relatives, friends and neighbours are invited to attend on the ceremony. On this occasion the invitees bring some gifts for the baby and pray to *Allah* for his/her well-being.

Seasonal festivals are also celebrated in the study village. Out of the seasonal festivals the two festivals are major, one in winter season and the other in summer. The villagers celebrate a festival in the winter season, which is called *natun-pitha* (new cake). This festival is celebrated in the village during the paddy harvest. On the other hand, the villagers celebrate a festival in summer, which is called the celebration of *am-khathal* (mango-jackfruit). It is celebrated at the harvest of mango, Jackfruit and other seasonal fruits. The villagers invite their relatives to their home in both the festivals. They also attend the celebration. Sometimes friends and well-wishers are invited in those festivals. However, among the relatives the daughters and their husbands get high preference in both the festivals. Generally, the villagers invite their married daughters to come on a *naiyor* (daughter's visit to her natal home). When a daughter is on a *naiyor* (daughter's visit to her natal home), she is treated as a guest. Because after the marriage a daughter joins her conjugal family and she visits the natal home once

or twice a year. However special food is prepared for her during her stay, and she may receive some gifts, such as a *saree* from her natal home. In the first few years after marriage, a daughter visits her natal home quite frequently. Her husband may or may not accompany her in her subsequent visits. Gradually, the daughter becomes more involved in her husband's family and ultimately her visit to the natal family becomes less frequent.

Mela (village fair) is an annual gathering of the people. It is a source of great attraction to the villagers in many ways. During the time of *mela* the people gather to sell and buy local products. The villagers usually arrange the *mela* once a year on the occasion of some religious festivals and on the death anniversary of a *fakir* (saint) or in the month of *Baishak* (first month of Bengali Calendar), *Pous* (ninth month of Bengali calendar) and *Chaitra* (last month of Bengali calendar). Men, women and children gather in the *mela*. The women and children spend the whole day in shopping and in participating in various funs. There are no permanent sheds in the *mela*. Temporary shads are built for the sale and display of various goods. The dolls, wood works, earthen pots and jars, bamboo-made baskets and sweetmeats are sold in the *mela*. Besides, *jatra* (drama), circus, kite flying, merry-go-round, magic show are the main attraction of the *mela*. Flutes and toys are also the attraction to the children. Thus, the *mela* brings excitement and amusement to the village people in many ways. In fact, the *mela* provides one of the very few opportunities when most women and children of a *bari* (homestead) can make a trip outside the village together with the goals of religious gain and entertainment. In the *mela*, the members of one *bari* happen to meet members of other *baris*, particularly those related by afinal connections, they invariable exchange greetings and entertain each other in addition to inquiring about the welfare of the respective family and *bari* members. During such occasion married daughters also make particular effort to visit their *baper bari* (father's house).

Jatra (drama) is a special source of recreation to the village people. It brings excitement and amusement also. Generally, the villagers arrange it once a year during Baishaki *mela*. Sometimes, it is arranged in winter season. Usually, the local people act as the *jatra* players. Sometimes, the *jatra* players also come from outside the village. However, the practice of *jatra* has been coming from long past among the village people for the sake of recreation. The *jatra* stage is built in an open field and the villagers take their seat in front of the stage and enjoy the entire period of the function. Through this function an important long history is expressed in front of the people. The people gather not only for enjoy but also take learning from this cultural function.

Kabialer-Lorai (a fight between two poets through *kabi ghan*) is a recreational and instructive socio-cultural function for the villagers. The occasion of *Kobialer-Lorai* may be arranged either in the village *Bhaithok khana* (sitting room) or in an open field. Usually, the *kabials* (the writer of the *kabi ghan*) come from outside the village and express the *ghan* (song). It should be made clear that the writer of the *kabi ghan* is called *kabial*. In fact, the *kabials* make it regarding the present situation of the fact and tell it among the participators according to the dramatic way. They are contracted with advance money before arranging the function. The *kabials* come on the fixed date and tell the *kabi ghan* (song of poet). During the *kabialer Lorai* the *kabials* are divided into two groups and they fight each other through their thought. The nature of this cultural show is that one group ask question and another group answer the asked questions. However, it provides enjoyment to the village people.

Sometimes, *Puthi path* ('*puthi*' means book and '*path*' means read; in this context, reading a special literature, which is written by the mixed of Arabic and Persian words) is arranged by some elderly people in Srirampur village. The *puthi shahittha* is one kind of folk literature in which the establishment of *peer-fakirs* (saints) is expressed. At the same time, it discusses the romantic as well as

tragedy history of the ancient kings and his surrounding people. However, some the elderly people of Srirampur village usually arrange the *ashore* (gatherings of people) of *puthi path* on a veranda or in a *baithakkhana* (sitting room) or on the yard of a *bari* compound. At the time of *puthi path* other elderly people who are interested to enjoy it may gether. Some women also enjoy *puthi-path* from long distance of the gatherings because they observe *purdah* (veil). When the pathetic history of the *puthi shahittha* is expressed, some of the participants tear.

Nabnnow (literally, '*naba*' means new; and '*annow*' means rice, in this context, '*nabannow*' means a traditional ceremony of village people, which is observed after the paddy harvest period) is a ceremony, which is performed by the villagers to mark just after the paddy harvest. It is a long practiced ceremony of rural Bengali people. In fact, this ceremony is conducted among the villagers when they finish the paddy harvest. After the paddy harvest the village people have less work. The harvesting time in the village is *Agrahayan* (mid-October to mid-November) and *Poush* (mid-December to mid-January). During this time the villagers observe the ceremony of *nabannow*. At the time of *nabannow*, the villagers make different kinds of local *pithas* (cakes) in their respective households. However, relatives, friends and neighbours are invited on this occasion. Among the invitees, the *jamai* (son-in-law) and *meye* (daughter) may get preference.

In Srirampur village, several religious festivals as well as other cultural occasions take place outside the household and *bari* (homestead) premises supported by the collection of *chanda* (contribution) from all most all the households of the village *gushtis*. We have seen earlier that most of the *gushtis* in the study village are extended kin groups through marital alliances. Thus, by organizing major religious festivals and other cultural occasions the kin groups and categories of rural Bangladesh find an opportunity to join together. Thus, the villagers always want to maintain a good solidarity and cooperation among relatives within or outside the village. On the other hand, it has been found in Srirampur that

relatives (consanguineal, affinal and fictive) come here at the time of crisis for the villagers. In the case of sickness the relatives visit one's house with different kinds of fruits. They sit beside the suffered man, inquire him about his health and pray to God for his well-being. Not only that in the case of poor relatives the well-to-do relatives also help them by giving economic support.

The present Chapter has explored different aspects of kinship networks and its impact on the entire life cycle of human beings. It is obvious from the ongoing discussion that a male's/female's entire life cycle is largely influence as well as controlled by these networks. We have seen that the kinship networks demand a set of services and expected norms from its members and at the same time, they provide them with wide range of aid and a secured shelter within the community. Therefore, it is usual for any member of kinship groups to expect help and cooperation when needs and crisis arise. The wealthier kinsmen also extend their helping hands at the time of needs and crisis. It should be mentioned that conflict and cooperation co-exist among the kinsmen. We have also seen that bad relationships with other kinsmen deprive a man/woman of necessary support in his/her every walk of life. Thus, kinship relationships play an important role on the entire life cycle in a peasant society like ours. The above discussion reveals that the phenomenon of kinship relations is clearly visible on the various aspects of kinship networks of the peasant societies which continue to cling to traditionalism and where the traditional lineage groups are functioning as cohesive units on the economic, political, religious and socio-cultural sectors of the society. In fact, the kinship ties have an important role in many social spheres in the rural areas of Bangladesh. It has also bearing on socialization, economic cooperation, in both local and national level politics, rituals and ceremonies and so on. In this way, it involves certain obligations on the part of each kin in the above social spheres.

Chapter 7

Summary and Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to describe the kinship organization, a basic aspect of the human society, with a focus of its socio-economic role in a village in Bangladesh. It is, however, a description as well as analytical study of kinship organization (i.e., household, family and lineage) relating to its socio-economic role in the village Srirampur. The study village is located in Bariagram upazila of Natore district in the northern part of Bangladesh. The village is entirely Muslim populated. It is educationally and culturally backward. Moreover, traditional organization still prevails in the village, where power and leadership are exercised by *samaj prodhans* (heads of the sub-society) and *parmanik*. The political control of kinship has a special significance at the *para* or village level. It has been found in Srirampur that political control is exercised by a handful of persons who belong to the higher and stronger kinship group. The leaders of the influential *gushtis* are titled as *prodhans/matabbors* (heads of the society) of the *para*/village level, whose status, power and position stem from the holding of land, and much property and resources. However, all the people living in Srirampur have been divided into four categories on the basis of social status (i.e., *Barolok*, *Bhadrolok*, *Grihestolok* and *Gariblok*).

I have discussed the village economy and have shown it to be a key determinant of social honour or prestige, political power and economic power. The wealthy persons in the village have more power because of their wealth. Agriculture is, however, the principal economic activity of the people in Srirampur, and therefore, access to and control over land is a critical source of power and social honour or prestige in the rural society of Bangladesh. Land is the most visible form of wealth in Srirampur and in fact, as a whole of Bangladesh, and also a person's status is significantly related to landownership. I have also found wide disparities between

households in the amount of land they hold. It is significant that less than one-third of the households in Srirampur, occupied more than 80% of total land (see Table 2.7) and the inequality of land distribution is the basic source of power, social honour or prestige. It has been observed that the *Baroloks* who are land-rich in the village acquire power through patronage. They lease land to the sharecroppers, and sometimes they lend money or grain, and offer employment to the *Garibloks* who do physical labour for them at very low wages.

As stated earlier, the kinship organization includes in it the household, family and lineage (Patrilineal kin group). There are also different types of those basic units of kinship organization varying in their kinship composition, their size, and manner of their common life. The right, duties and behaviours of relatives in relation to one another are a part of kinship organization. In the society, a person lives within a large number of relatives' network and all of them in this universal system play a crucial role on socio-economic sectors (i.e., economic, political, religious, socio-cultural and so on), although a number of modern forces such as the development of better communication, urban and peri-urban contacts, modern education, and expansion of regional market economy have brought changes on socio-economic sectors. On the contrary, there are some conflicts, disputes, quarrels, intra-group alliance and re-alliance in kinship organization of Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh. In spite of those factors happened among relatives' network, there is a good solidarity among them. The nature and functions of kin ties as well as the interactions of kinsmen become apparent from the obviations of Keesing (1958), which are as follows:

The prescribed interaction between any given pair of kinsmen may be marked by such features as restraint or intimacy, propriety or freedom, strictness or indulgence, super-ordination or subordination. Such kinship arrangements differ vastly as regards the types of kinsmen so linked, and degree to which their relations are fixed or elective. Also differing is the degree to which kinship systems tend to work smoothly or to foster tensions such as rivalries and jealousies, a sense of limitation in personal freedom, or even factionalism and conflict (Keesing, 1958:272).

I have discussed the interrelations of household, *parivar* (family) and *gushti* (patrilineal kin group) in such a manner as if they are discrete units of kinship organization (see Chapter 3). But in reality all these three basic groups are not always like that. For example, a small *gushti* of one or two households is a *parivar* (family) as well as a *gushti* as found in Srirampur village (see Table 3.9). Consequently, the villagers sometimes use the words *parivar* and *gushti* interchangeably. Nevertheless, I have discussed them as discrete groups for the sake of convenience in my analysis. It should also be made clear that every household in the village may not develop into a *parivar*, and similarly every *parivar* into a large *gushti*. However, household, *parivar*, and *gushti* co-exist in the village and for a proper understanding of their interrelations, they should be analysed in the context of their developmental process.

The household in Srirampur is usually small in size and simple in kinship composition. It has been seen in the village that the majority of the households (593 of the 724 households) are simple (see Table 3.1) and the majority of the households (431 out of 724) are composed of a man, his wife/wives and their unmarried children. Thus, the majority of the people in the village (2228 out of 3035) reside in the households of the above mentioned type. It is not only that small and simple households in Srirampur are preponderant; even among the complex ones the majority of these households are each composed of parents (one or both) and only one married son with his children (see Table 3.3). However, the ideal household in the village is the household of parents and all of their married sons. It is also the ideal norm of the household formation that each and every simple household may develop in course of time into a large and complex household of the above type (i.e., households formed by parents and married sons), but it does not always continue to remain like that. The married son and his wife may start residing separately from his parents and siblings a few years after his marriage. This also may happen due to a number of factors. Thus, we have seen that the norm of co-residence of two or more married brothers during and after the death of parents is not quite strong in Srirampur. However, it is noteworthy that although 'premature'

separation between brothers may take place, the brothers try to see that the old father or mother is looked after by at least one of the sons. We have seen that eight households (see Table 3.3: 5, 12) in Srirampur where two married brothers reside together after the death of parents.

It is stated earlier that the household is not an isolated unit of the *parivar* (family). On the contrary, it is one of the several dimensions of the *parivar* (family). Therefore, the household is connected with other social structures in and outside the village in a number of ways. Almost every household is a part of a *parivar* (family), which includes in it a man, his wife, their sons and daughters, sons' wives and children, and the grandsons (sons' sons), their wives and children. It should be made clear that after a man's death, his sons (i.e., brothers), their wives and children and their married sons, sons' wives and children continue to be the members of the same family and after the brothers' death, their sons do not continue a *parivar* (family). However, two types of families, i.e., filial family and fraternal family are found in Srirampur village (see Chapter 3). All the members of a *parivar* need not reside together in a household. They may reside in different households belonging to a *parivar* are located in a *bari* (homestead), but sometimes they may be dispersed in different *paras* (wards) of the village due to a number of reasons, such as shifting of a household due to expansion of the family and shortage of space in the *bari* (homestead).

However, we have seen in Srirampur village that the members of a *parivar* have a number of things in common. They also use the same patronymic with their name (if they have any). Sometimes the members of a *parivar* own certain things in common, such as land, homestead, parlour, pond etc. and manage them as joint property. Sometimes, the people of a *parivar* take food cooked at a single kitchen. For example, during some festivals, such as *Eid*, and on other occasions the senior most man in the *parivar* may invite the people of other household. Sometimes, they may exchange some items between different households, such as cooked food, vegetables, grains etc. This exchange may be in the form of help from one household of the *parivar* to another or in the form of gifts. The people

in the *parivar* (family) of the village can expect help and cooperation from the members of their *parivar* when contingency arises. We have seen in Srirampur that the people generally prefer to borrow things and also take loans from the members of one's *parivar* (see Table 6.2). This may happen due to a number of opportunities, which they usually get from their family members. For example, the money, which they receive, is not treated as a loan and here no interest is charged. On the contrary, the things, which they borrow from their own family members, are considered as *hawlat* (interest free loan). It does not, however, mean that the members of a *parivar* do not approach outside the *parivar* for such thing. A man usually approaches someone outside his *parivar* for such things only when he fails to get them from some one within the *parivar* (family). Thus, they maintain the social as well as economic dependency among family members and also their interrelationship in connection with the daily activities and other socio-economic affairs.

Despite the above harmonious relationship among the family members, sometimes a number of unexpected incidents may be happened, such as the clash of interests, rivalry, jealousy and so like. Therefore, the lack of harmonious relationship between the different households of a family may exhibit itself in several ways in the rural society of Bangladesh. However, it is noteworthy that in spite of jealousy, rivalry, clash of interest and hostility within a *parivar*, its members have a sense of belonging to it as a collectively due to their common ancestor. It should be made clear that the cooperation and conflict co-exist within the *parivar* relating to its inter-household relations. However, the *parivar* (family) in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh consists of the allocation of a pattern of rights and duties defining that area of life concerned with marital, parental and domestic relationships and also all members of a *parivar* perform certain functions and fulfil obligations to each other, which interlock them into different network relationships for constitutions the social structure.

The third important as well as a larger unit of kinship organization is the *gushti*. A *gushti* in Srirampur is a patrilineage, which designates a group of households, or

families and the members of the *gushti* are agnatically related. However, a male ancestor is usually the common referent for the members of a *gushti* and these common descent provides a sense of belonging that binds together them of a larger group called *gushti*. Although the *gushti* may be inclusive and exclusive groups (see Chapter 3), its core is always the patrilineal descendents. Usually the members of a *gushti* share a common *baris* (homestead) and thus reside close together in a cluster of *baris*, but it is not unusual for a prosperous household of a *gushti* to settle down on a residential plot in the different *paras* of the same village or in different villages, who can identify and trace their common ancestry to the same *gushti* (patrilineal kin group).

A *gushti* is not an isolated group. There are 38 *gushtis* (see Table 3.8) in Srirampur, which are also interrelated with one another in a number of ways. It has been seen in the village that a number of marriage ties are established between the members of different *gushtis* over the years, and obviously they enhance the unity of the *gushti*. It has been found in Srirampur that a small *gushti* usually wants to establish marital relationship with other large *gushti* to receive patronage and support of the latter, which obviously increase the strength of the former in the village. On the other hand, a large *gushti* wants to establish marital relationship with other *gushtis* in the village to extend its power and influence. Thus, an inter-*gushti* marriage has political significance in Srirampur, a village under study as well as other parts of the country. As stated earlier, a number of members of some *gushtis* (i.e., members of *sarker gushti*, *abbasi gushti*, *fakir gushti*) of Srirampur reside in other villages, peri-urban and urban areas. The Srirampur members maintain contact with the outside members of their *gushti*. They visit each other often and on important occasions, such as *Eid*, weeding and so like.

However, a *gushti* has a number of co-activities among its members. In this context, Bhuiyan states, " . . . *gushti* is a patrilineal kin group and its members have a number of co-activities. The unity of a *gushti* can be noticed in the fact that the *gushti* members want to retain their ancestral land among themselves"

(1978:386). They have also constant face-to-face interaction, which increases the possibility of cooperation as well as conflict between them. Nevertheless, during disputes and quarrels with other in and outside the village one can expect to get the support of his *gushti* members. The *gushti* ties in rural Bangladesh are looked upon as the most important bonds that are looked upon as the most important social bonds that are used to mobilize and maintain political support. Particularly in rural hinterlands the members of the same *gushtis* are on the same side of the faction and support their leaders in their conflicts with other factions. Factions are primarily kinship groupings, which carry on important social, economic and ceremonial functions in addition to their factional struggles against one another (Lewis, 1958:17). Likewise, when one seeks an election for an office for any committee (i.e., member of UP, member or president of school committee, *madrassa* or *masjid* committee), he can hope to get the support of his *gushti* members. It should be noted that it is almost obligatory on the part of the members of his own *gushti* to support him during such a situation.

All these, however, should not be taken to mean that the relationship within a *gushti* in Srirampur always goes on smoothly. The inter-household relationship within a *gushti* is also marked with tension, rivalry, conflict, jealousy, quarrel, etc. These events may arise because of several issues, such as property, political differences, legal battle etc. There is also alliance and re-alliance among some groups of a *gushti*. It has been found in Srirampur that consideration of family prestige prompts the lineage leaders to organize their immediate followers in order to face any eventuality. A long term dispute over land and other asserts between two *gushtis*, lengthens antagonism between them. The inter-*gushti* antagonism thus creates fierce on the occasion of development activities. On many occasions it is found that long standing cleavage between two dominant *gushtis* turns into a serious one, which ultimately hampers the construction, and development works. Furthermore, the controversies over the allocation of materials and goods divide the village into a number of conflicting groups, thus enhancing the group interest to the detriment of the interest of the village. The

important point is that in a *gushti*, as in a *parivar*, conflict and cooperation co-exist. Despite all these conflicts, disputes, quarrels, rivalry, jealousy, intra-group alliance and re-alliance, there is solidarity among the members of a *gushti* on a number of social issues in Srirampur village. In Srirampur, the members of the *gushtis* are cohesive kinship groups basically to which each leader and member contributes his share of political power and influence. Emotional closeness arising from *gushti* relationship organizes the *gushti* members into a cohesive body and thus enables them to work in close cooperation. The internal conflict amongst the agnates undermines the status of the *gushti* leaders. Furthermore, the relationship of exploitation among the interacting households is also detrimental to the status of *gushti* and the leadership position of the *gushti* head at the village level. The cohesiveness of a dominant *gushti* is the main source of strength to the lineage leaders. The interaction among kin during festive occasions provides the background of cohesion and cements consanguinal relationships among the interacting kin. The ritual exchange of gifts and reciprocal cooperation foster a strong sense of consanguinity amongst them. The solidarity of the agnates expressed in various rituals unite them into one entity to counter act their strong opponents.

Srirampur, a village under study includes several categories of relatives, i.e., relatives of *nijer bari* (relatives of one's own homestead), relatives of *nanar bari* (relatives of one's affinal homestead) and *dharma-atmiya* (fictive relatives). Apart from these categories, the villagers of Srirampur conceptualise another category to group and cluster their relatives. They call the relatives of this category own people compose of *atmiya*, *svajan*, *gyati*, and *kutumbu*. Therefore, a person in Srirampur and in fact, as a whole of Bangladesh is surrounded by a large number of relatives. Thus, he/she is related with a number of persons by blood, based affinity, and fictive relationship and there are indigenous categories to group and cluster these relatives (see Chapter 3). The relatives belong to the different groups and categories and each of them has almost different relative composition. Its inter-personal relations, roles, functions, duties or obligations

etc. are also different. However, the different categories of relatives play significant roles in multifarious social, economic, religious and political activities in the village. These roles often become very decisive and crucial also. It has been observed in Srirampur that the relatives' network often plays a positive role in the day-to-day village affairs. But at the same time, it has negative impact as well. At the positive side, there are elements of unity, cohesion and integrity in the relatives' network but on the other side, it has also the elements of discord, dispute and conflict. It should be noted here that due to recent socio-economic changes and due to economic mobility in the villages of Bangladesh this relationship is now swiftly declining and becoming very flexible (see for more detail, Jahangir 1979, Arefeen 1986, Karim 1990, Rahaman 1990).

We have seen that most of the *gushtis* in Srirampur are interrelated through a number of marriage ties. Thus, the people of different *gushtis* become each other's *kutumbu* (relatives). But at the political level, there is competition and conflict for power between them. There are four large *gushtis* in Srirampur namely, *parmanik*, *mondal*, *sarker* and *mullah* (see Table 3.8). Among these *gushtis*, *sarker* and *mullah gushtis* are the most powerful in the village. However, the four large *gushtis* are competing with each other for power and influence in the village though the people of those *gushtis* are interrelated through several marriages. These inter-*gushti* marriages play the role of cohesion between them. On the other hand, the small *gushtis* in the village are aligning and realigning themselves with other principal *gushtis*. It has been observed that the people of different *gushtis* who are each other's relatives, they maintain the relationships, which are expected between relatives. For example, they invite each other on important occasions, such as wedding, *Eid*, *akika*, *musalmani* etc. When the question of economic as well as political interest arises, they compete and if necessary, fight with each other. The foregoing discussion reveals that the people in the village are related to each other by blood and marriage and have amity and cooperation at the ritual level, but competition and conflict at the economic and political level.

In Chapter 4, I have discussed marriage in Srirampur. Here I have briefly recalled some important features of marriage among the people in Srirampur. As mentioned earlier, Srirampur is Muslim populated village, the process of marriage beings following Islamic codes. In Islam, marriage is considered to be a religious duty. Therefore, the prophet (sm.) of Islam said that when a Muslim man marries, he perfects half of his religion. It is the duty of the *wali* (lawful guardian) to find a suitable spouse for his 'marriageable' ward. The proposal for marriage and *kabul* (acceptance of the marriage proposal) are two necessary formalities in an Islamic marriage. However, they must be made at one meeting. The *wali* arrange the marriage for his wards in consultation with his close relatives. In fact, he is more concerned about the marriage of a 'marriageable' ward than the ward himself/herself. During the finalisation of a marriage proposal in Sriampur the consent of the groom is considered in some cases but the girl's consent is seldom given importance, though the consent of the groom and the bride for their marriage is necessary in Islamic marriage. The *walis* take it for granted that their wards will obey their decisions as well. Thus, the decision for finalising a proposal requires a negotiation and consultation among the relatives, friends' even fellow villagers. *Mohar* (bride's money) is also fixed in every marriage in Srirampur, though its payment is deferred.

However, the above discussion about marriage reveals that it is an important institution in Srirampur. This is also arranged, and in most cases monogamous, patri-virilocal. Polygyny is permitted in Islam to the extent that a man can have a maximum of four wives at a time. It has been observed that polygyny was practiced by some people in the study village (see Table 4.1). But a woman can have only one husband at a time. It should be mentioned that although polygyny is permitted in Islam but it is usually looked down upon by most of the people in Srirampur. While talking with the mass people regarding this matter, I came to know that normally a polygynous man is not a person of good repute in the village. It is, however, accepted in some special situation in Srirampur as well as

in Bangladesh, i.e., wives' prolonged illness, wife's infertility, neglecting of husband by wife etc. (see Table 4.9).

As mentioned earlier, in Islam marriage is regarded as a contract between two parties. Likewise, as regards the choice of spouse, it is an open system in the sense that one can marry anyone else except a few close relatives, i.e., marriage between full siblings is prohibited in Islam (see for more detail, Chapter 4). However, cousin marriage is preferred in Islam. A good number of marriages have also been occurred between cousins in Srirampur. In twenty-one cases, the man has married his father's brother's daughters, in twenty cases, his father's sister's daughter, in seventeen cases, his mother's brother's daughter, and in sixteen cases, his mother's sister's daughter (see Table 4.5). It is clear from the analysis of 74 marriages that marriage between a man and his two different kinds of cousins, i.e., patrilineal and matrilineal have almost equal incidence and likewise, parallel and cross have almost equal incidence and all the above mentioned cousin marriages bear enough importance in the village. The marriage preferences between relatives are, however, tilted in favour of patrilineal and matrilineal cousins due to a number of factors, such as keeping paternal property within the kin circle, bride's beauty, easier adjustment etc.

Although there is a preferential bias to get a spouse from a close geographical range, there is no territorial barrier for arranging a marriage. Therefore, it may be arranged within the same village, in the adjacent villages, in a remote village or even in a town. The maximum age difference at marriage between husband and wife is found about 7 years (see Table 4.2). The choice of a spouse in a marriage in Srirampur and in fact, as a whole of Bangladesh, is influenced by various factors, such as the reputation of the spouses, their lineage or family identity, beauty, age, education, economic assistance, kinship and economic relations, socio-economic status, personal skills etc.

In Srirampur, marriage is not merely a bond between two parties, not an alliance for performing new social roles, which have been discussed in Chapter 4. In the

discussion on rituals and ceremonies of marriage, it has been pointed out that they are greatly influenced by the indigenous customs and traditions as prevalent in the rural society of Bangladesh. However, it is much more, a socio-cultural consequence gets involved the family, lineage etc., but also the entire social world of the parties concerned.

In Srirampur, divorce is practised by a considerable number of men. It is solely a man's privilege. I have found 96 cases of divorce in Srirampur (see Table 4.8). However, divorce may be taken place due to a number of factors. Of them, practise of polygyny by husband, wife's bad character, non-payment of promised gifts/dowry, wife's infertility, neglecting of husband by wife and vice-versa, long age gap, sickness of the wife are principal factors (see Table 4.9).

Regarding Islamic marriage in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh, it is important to point out that being a Muslim village, there are prescribed codes for marriage institution in Srirampur, but these codes are often contradicted by the prevailing customs of the society on a number of reasons, such as marriage transaction, registration, practice of polygyny by husband, divorce, separation etc. and frequently, this is custom rather than codes that guide the marriage behaviour in the rural society of Bangladesh including the study village.

In Chapter 5, I have discussed the pattern of kinship terminologies used in Srirampur village as well as in the northern part of the country. Here I have briefly recalled some important features of kin terms as prevalent among the villagers in Srirampur.

As stated earlier, kinship is one of the universals in human society and its terminologies give us valuable clues to the understanding of human relationships and ways of linguistic and cultural differentiation. We have seen that the kinship terminology reflects the close relationships in the family structure as well as kinship system in our society. However, the kinship terminologies that have been described in a logical way through a semantic analysis are useful in understanding the persistence of certain kin types and terminologies in the

northern part of the country. Therefore, the relatives of father's side and those on the mother's side are clearly distinguished in the use of kin terms and one has no difficulty in tracing the line of kinship as prevalent in the society.

The analysis of kinship terms as prevalent in the society reveals that there are two types of kinship terms. At one group, the kinship terms serve both as terms of address as well as terms of reference (i.e., the words for father and mother) and on the other group, the kinship terms have further two forms also; one used as a term of address and a different form used as a term of reference. It is mentionable that the address form is often taken from the first group and among this group there is a sub-group where the first name/nickname (call name) of a person is used for address. It was also observed in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh that there is reciprocity in the kinship terms used by father for sons and sons for father (i.e., *abba*, *baba*) by mother for daughters and by daughters for mother (i.e., *ma*, *amma*, *ammu*) by grandfather for grandsons and by grandsons for grandfather (i.e., *dada*, *dadu*) by grandmother for granddaughters and by granddaughters for grandmother (i.e., *dadi*, *bu*) and so on. There are also certain prefixes (i.e., '*baro*', '*mejo*' '*sejo*', '*choto*' etc.) in the kinship terminological system in our country, which are used for indicating order of seniority by age. It should be made clear that this order of seniority depends on the position of the speaker or addresser in the kin hierarchy. But the difference of age is negligible or if there is no difference of age between two relatives, the first names or nicknames are used to address or to refer them. All these, however, mean that seniority in generational status is very important in the usage of kinship terms in the kinship universe. Thus, the kinfolk of the ascending generations in our society have to be addressed as well as referred by certain appropriate kin terms but the relatives of the descending generations are usually addressed by name or nickname. However, the results of the analysis of kinship terms used in relatives' network in Srirampur have revealed significant clues to the linguistic, psychological and cultural components of the social structure in Srirampur as well as in the northern part of the country.

In Chapter 6, I have discussed kinship in relation with some major aspects (i.e., economic, political, religious, socio-cultural etc.) in rural society where the kinship groups are functioning as cohesive units. However, kinship is of importance in Srirampur, which is recognised both from father and mother's side although relationship with agnates is emphasized. All obligations, rights and duties are defined and sanctioned in kinship. Therefore, It can be said that in Srirampur, kinship is a value in itself. One's kinsmen are a source of his/her strength and he/she can expect their support when needs and crisis arise.

Kinship groups and categories (i.e., household, family and *gushti*) play a crucial role in the socialization of individuals in society. We may trace the importance of this role at every stage in the entire life cycle of any person in the society. The socialization process begins right at the time of the birth of a new baby and goes on at every stage in the entire life cycle of him/her. The child is brought up amidst the members of his/her kinship groups, mainly the household and family, who are his/her chief caretakers. These groups perform an important role in building up the behavioural pattern of a person in the village society. In fact, due to the kinship ties the child acquires not only a position in the family but also a status in larger society. The child acquires the status as a son or daughter. To his/her parents' or kinsmen he/she may be a grandson, a nephew, a brother, a cousin and son. We have seen in Srirampur that the kinship groups are the main pillars of strength of a person. They extend helping hand whenever required. Thus, the mutual rights and obligations go along with kinship connections. At the same time, they act as controlling agencies to prevent its members from acts, which are viewed as being unsound for the society.

Kinship groups and categories in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh play a significant role in economic cooperation among relatives. As stated earlier, the main economic activity of Srirampur is agriculture and in conducting it the villagers are assisted and helped by their relatives in various ways, such as to manage labour, in buying and selling of goods and services, matrimonial matters,

to look after household property and so on. In addition to that there are a few other activities in the village, such as small trading, rickshaw-van plying, salaried service in various sectors etc. in which they do the same manner. Money lending is also important in any economic system. We have seen in Srirampur that there are certain sources from where the villagers can borrow loans to meet up their need, i.e., personal savings, relatives, village *mohajans*, banks, NGOs and so like (see Table 6.1). Generally the villagers requiring loan, first approach their relatives because in most cases, the money, which they received is not treated as a loan and no interest is charged here. On the contrary, the loan is considered *hawlat* (interest free loan). In addition to money, other things in kind are also taken from relatives as *hawlat*. However, the helping patterns involve the giving of 'soft goods' in terms of companionship, care in times of illness, pregnancy and childbirth, and consultation on matters related to marriage, and advice in buying and selling property. In such situations the help usually be on a voluntary basis, not in response to formal requests. And this reaction may lead to more firmly established kinship ties.

As regards buying or selling of a piece of land, the usual custom is that the villager at first speaks to his relatives. Usually, if a villager decides to buy or sell a piece of land, the usual custom is that he first informs his family members. Thereafter, he contacts his other patrilineal kinsmen and then affines and fictive relatives are approached the last. If a villager does not see any possibility of selling his land to any relative, then he goes to other people. It was observed in Srirampur as well as in Bangladesh that three motives work behind this custom, such as (i) selling land outside the kinship networks' weakens the unity of kin tie and through it the economically weakened *gushti* may become politically weakened; (ii) villagers often discourage outsiders from gaining access to village lands; and (iii) village land is more accessible than buying it further away in another village. Likewise, the relatives are helpful in providing business partnerships, jobs and other economic opportunities as well.

Kinship groups are also helpful for arranging wedding, *milad*, birthday, *akika* and such other rituals and ceremonies in the village. When a villager arranges such ritual and ceremony in his house, he is usually concerned to receive suggestions and advice from the relatives for the successful completion of the ritual and ceremony. Moreover, kinsmen extend their helping hands in some other rituals and ceremonies in the village, such as *idul-fiter*, *idul-azha*, *musalmani*, *shab-e-barat*, *shab-e-kadar*, *wazmahafil*, *namaj-e-zanaja* etc. It should also be made clear that in some occasions, like funeral, *wazmahafil* and so on the villagers do not always invite their relatives formally. Many relatives in rural society including my study village join them and participate in the celebrations even after an informal invitation or message.

Kinship groups and categories also play a crucial role in village politics. As stated earlier, the village politics is characterised mainly by the alliances, re-alliances and rivalries between big *gushtis* on various village issues. Of them, the affairs of the Union Parishad and national politics, the public institutions of the village (i.e., school, *maktab*, *masjid*, *madrassa* etc.), social welfare activities, celebration of rituals and ceremonies and festivals are the principal issues. In all the above mentioned issues all the *gushti* members generally campaign for the interest of their respective *gushti*. The larger *gushtis* tend to dominate village politics. In fact, the conflict and confrontation characterise village politics, and at the same time, the *gushti* ties polarise the people into political groups. The ties of *gushti* appeal much to the villagers and the rural leaders. Regarding the impact of *gushti* ties on village politics Zaman comments, "Rural politics is basically a politics of kinship. The use of kinship ties in manipulating and structuring politics is vital for leadership" (Zaman, 1977:134). In the different elections to the Union Parishad it becomes evident how these *gushtis* play a vital role. While talking with the *gushti* members in Srirampur village regarding the Union Parishad and national election, I came to know that each *gushti* usually supports collectively

for their respective *gushti* candidate (if has any). Regarding the Union Parishad election the following case will help to make the point clear.

At the time of the last Union Parishad election in 2001, there were eleven candidates for the post of three members in a ward. Of them, there were four candidates in Srirampur village. Among these four candidates, Md. Ashraf Ali of *parmanik gushti* was the most prominent. He is now 32 years old. The name of his father is late Azizol Haque who was also a prominent *gushti* leader in the village. As stated earlier that *parmanik gushti* is a large one. These *gushti* members collectively want its member to be elected as a member of the Union Parishad (a local self government institution). During the UP election, each member of the *parmanik gushti* puts forward its candidate named Md. Ashraf Ali *parmanik*. All the *gushti* members collectively campaign for their respective *gushti* candidate and as a result of which Md. Ashraf Ali *parmanik* was elected as a member of the Union Parishad. Still now he is acting as a member of the Union Parishad.

The above case reveals that kinship consideration is reflected in the voting behaviour of the *gushti* people and also they may be a good source of political support at the time of election in rural society of Bangladesh. Apart from that, social welfare activities (i.e., construction of a road, making of a barrage, construction of a bridge etc.), and celebration of ceremonies, gatherings as well as festivals are sometimes politicised by the village *gushtis*. It has been observed in Srirampur that the political activities are most prominent in the biggest *gushtis* and at the same time, the small *gushtis* are not also any way free from involving in politics. But in most cases, the smaller *gushtis* usually like to unit themselves with the bigger *gushtis* because of their small strength. It does not, however, mean that a *gushti* is always united with another regarding on political issues or any other. One may change and other may replace it. In fact, the role of kinship is not only important but also crucial as well as a decisive in the socialization of human beings in the productive organization, to the establishment of politics, to the observance of ritual and rites and so on. It should also be mentioned here that the role of kinship in socio-economic sectors is not confined to the demarcation of the village but it is scattered to the wider social environment. However, in the field of social mobility, and all these functional aspects of kinship help to maintain community stability, and provide security to all to enhance social

solidarity in the rural areas of Bangladesh. In this way, kinship serves as a basic model for relating to one's fellowmen and among the kin groups; one cannot take part in the life of the community.

The above discussion regarding the role of kinship organization on economic, political, religious and socio-cultural sectors reveals that the kinship groups and categories in Srirampur as well as in rural Bangladesh are groups of cooperation in many ways. It has social, political and other activities among its members. At the same time, however, it does not mean that the relationship within relatives' network always goes on smoothly. There are many issues of dispute among relatives in the village, which bring tension, rivalry, jealousy, quarrel etc. The above mentioned events may also arise due to a number of several issues, i.e., property, political ideology, legal battle etc. Therefore, the alliances, re-alliance among kinship groups are only common occurrences. In this context, I do agree with Rahaman when he states, " . . . kinship relationships have in fact two sides, like two sides of a coin. On one side are the elements of amity and cohesion and on the other are the elements of discord, dispute and conflict" (1990: 297).

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that kinship groups and categories (i.e., household, family and *gushti*) and its several aspects play important roles in traditional as well as modern economy, politics and in other socio-cultural sectors in Srirampur. The kinship ties also emanate from the household. It is mainly through the membership of the household that the people organize their relationships with others at different levels of social organization. The relevant literatures of kinship also suggest that the bonds of kinship play vital roles in South Asian societies including Bangladesh (Alavi 1972, Anwar 1979, Aziz 1979, Ellickson 1972, Inden 1976, Islam 1974, Jeffery *et.al*/ 1989, Sharma 1971; 1980; 1986, Vatuk 1969, Werbner 1988). In fact, kinship ties in Bangladesh determine the entire socio-economic life of a person, the demographic set up of a family,

even then of a marriage and the health status of a woman. It also determines the survival pattern of a newborn baby.

Finally, in this study, an attempt has been made at a systematic study of kinship organization and its socio-economic role in Bangladesh. It should be made clear that I have refrained from building any theory or making wider comparison and generalization about kinship in Bangladesh as a whole because sociology and social anthropology are not yet sufficiently developed in Bangladesh and also whatever studies have been conducted so far do not provide adequate information on kinship organization. Therefore, the investigation on Bangladeshi kinship and its several aspects await detailed analysis. The present study is presented in such a way that it would stimulate further scholarly work in this little explored but important field of Bangladeshi culture. This is by no means a complete study on this issue. Therefore, the questions raised in this study are of general nature. Consequently, it calls for a number of studies covering the different sections of the society at an empirical level. The answer of the raised questions can be provided if a number of studies covering the different sections of the society and different regions of the country are made. Only then, it would be possible to make some generalizations about kinship and its socio-economic role in Bangladesh.

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Appendix I

Glossary of Selected Local Words

Local words have been explained whenever such words occurred in the text. Some of these words, however, have not been explained when they occurred subsequently. Therefore, an attempt has been made here to give a glossary of selected local words and also for the convenience of the text. It may be noted that no attempt has been made to follow consistently and rigorous phonetic system in explaining of these words.

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Agrahayan</i>	eighth month of the Bengali Calendar covering mid-October to mid-November
<i>Ai</i>	hello
<i>Akika</i>	naming ceremony in Islamic culture connected with newborn baby
<i>Aman</i>	a variety of paddy cultivated during the period mid-August to mid-September
<i>Aleem</i>	a learned and pious man of Islam
<i>Allah</i>	God
<i>Am-kathal</i>	mango and jackfruit (seasonal fruits)
<i>Anchal</i>	end of a <i>saree</i>
<i>Akht</i>	solemnization of marriage, weeding
<i>Asore</i>	gatherings of people
<i>Apni</i>	you (respectable manner)
<i>Atmiya</i>	relative
<i>Atmiya-svajans</i>	one's own people, relatives
<i>Atma</i>	soul
<i>Aus</i>	a variety of paddy cultivated during the period mid-January to mid-February
<i>Azan</i>	call for prayer
<i>Ashar</i>	third month of the Bengali Calendar covering mid-June to mid-July
<i>Assalamu-Alaikum</i>	a greeting exchanged by Muslims which means 'peace be upon you'
<i>Baithakkhana</i>	sitting room

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Bhalo</i>	something graded as better or good
<i>Baper bari</i>	father's house
<i>Bar</i>	groom
<i>Barolok</i>	literally, rich man, in social context; a category of people with wealth and resource.
<i>Bar-pakkha</i>	groom's side
<i>Baro</i>	big; with reference to person, senior
<i>Bari</i>	homestead, a large cluster of dwellings
<i>Bansha</i>	patrilineal lineage
<i>Baubhat</i>	feast on the occasion of bride's arrival in the conjugal home
<i>Bhat-kapur</i>	literally, <i>bhat</i> is cooked rice and <i>kapur</i> is cloth; in social context, basic necessities of life
<i>Bea</i>	marriage
<i>Beel</i>	marsh land
<i>Bahest</i>	heaven
<i>Bhadrolok</i>	literally, gentleman, a man of respect; in social context, a category of people with a particular life-style
<i>Bigha</i>	equivalent to 33 decimals of land
<i>Bismillah</i>	in the name of God
<i>Boro</i>	a variety of paddy cultivated during the period mid-October of mid-November
<i>Burqah</i>	an over garment used by the Muslim woman as a veil
<i>Chapra ghar</i>	one roofed house, usually built with bamboo thatch or tin/iron sheet
<i>Chouchala-ghar</i>	four roofed house
<i>Chaitra</i>	last month of the Bengali Calendar covering mid-March to mid-April
<i>Choto</i>	small, little
<i>Chata</i>	umbrella
<i>Chulla</i>	hearth, kitchen
<i>Challisha</i>	a ritual observed on the fortieth day of the death of a Muslim
<i>Cheley dekha</i>	seeing the groom
<i>Chanda</i>	subscription, donation
<i>Churi</i>	bangles made of plastic, glass, gold or silver
<i>Chaddar</i>	a long cloth
<i>Cheley</i>	son, boy

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Chira</i>	parboiled flattened rice
<i>Dalan</i>	building
<i>Dai</i>	midwife, traditional birth attendant in Bangladesh who acquire the skill by apprenticeship
<i>Dhan</i>	paddy
<i>Dhurba</i>	one kind of grass
<i>Dharma-atmiya</i>	religious relatives
<i>Dochala-ghar</i>	two roofed house
<i>Eid</i>	literally, happiness; socially, a Muslim festival
<i>Eid-ul-Azha</i>	a Muslim festival which is celebrated on the tenth day of the last month of the Muslim calendar
<i>Eidgha</i>	field for offering <i>Eid</i> prayer
<i>Eid-ul-Fiter</i>	Muslim festival celebrated on the first day following the month of Ramadan (fasting)
<i>Fardo</i>	literally, list; a piece of paper in which gift exchanges in a wedding are listed
<i>Fakir</i>	saint
<i>Fateha</i>	first verse of the Holy <i>Quran</i> (i.e., a holy book of Islam)
<i>Gamcha</i>	cotton towel
<i>Ganji</i>	vest
<i>Ghar</i>	room, house
<i>Ghar-jamai</i>	a son-in-law who resides in his wife's natal home along with his wife and children
<i>Ghati-samparka</i>	relationship among the members of a patrilineal lineage
<i>Ghatok</i>	mediator, match maker
<i>Ghomta</i>	a portion of <i>saree</i> covering women's face as a mark of modesty
<i>Gram</i>	village
<i>Grihesto</i>	a category of people who own and cultivate moderate land and enjoy an average life
<i>Gur</i>	molasses
<i>Gushti</i>	patrilineal kin group
<i>Graminbea</i>	literally, village marriage; socially non-registered marriage
<i>Gramin-kutumbu</i>	literally, village affines; socially, villagers' marriage related people
<i>Hailas</i>	seasonal laborers who work on owner's agricultural land on the basis of seasonal wage contract
<i>Hajam</i>	circumciser

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Hat</i>	village market
<i>Halud</i>	yellow, something that is yellow in colour
<i>Haludanushtan</i>	turmeric ceremony
<i>Hawlat</i>	interest free loan
<i>Imam</i>	a man who leads congregation prayers in the mosque
<i>IRRI</i>	literally, International Rice Research Institute; in social context, a variety of paddy
<i>Jatra</i>	drama
<i>Jumma-masjid</i>	mosque where Muslims say weekly prayer on Friday
<i>Jumma-prayer</i>	weekly congregation prayer held in <i>Jumma-masjid</i> every Friday
<i>Jamai-adhar</i>	hospitality for son-in-law
<i>Kabul</i>	consent, acceptance, to agree with
<i>Kabi gan</i>	a special kind of folk song in Bengali culture
<i>Kabial</i>	writer or singer of the <i>kabi-gan</i>
<i>Kabialer-Lorai</i>	fight between two singers of the <i>kabi ghan</i> through singing this folk song
<i>Kabin-nama</i>	Marriage Document, a piece of paper on which details of marriage are recorded by the Marriage Registrar
<i>Katcha</i>	literally, raw, uncooked; with reference to roads, unpaved; with reference to building construction, no concrete or steel; in general, low quality
<i>Kalma</i>	verse of faith in God and his prophet (sm.)
<i>Kamla</i>	landless laborer, daily wage earner; socially, a low status Muslim
<i>Kalshi</i>	picher
<i>Kafan</i>	cloth in which dead body is wrapped before burial
<i>Kamij</i>	upper garment of ladies
<i>Khana</i>	literally, food; in social context, "eating group", household
<i>Khatam</i>	literally, end; in social context, prayer for the dead through full reading of the Holy <i>Quran</i>
<i>Karigor</i>	artisan
<i>Kula</i>	bamboo tray
<i>Kabiraj</i>	a person who practices ayurvedic medicine
<i>Koney</i>	bride
<i>Koney-pakkha</i>	bride's side, her kinsmen and relatives
<i>Koi go?</i>	where are you?
<i>Lungi</i>	a long cloth wrapped around man's waist

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Lane-dane</i>	taking and giving
<i>Lap-tosok</i>	bedding
<i>Madrasa</i>	school for Islamic education
<i>Madur</i>	mat
<i>Mela</i>	village fair
<i>Mohar</i>	bride's money, usually a sum of money which the husband promises to pay his wife at the time of wedding
<i>Maktob</i>	primary center for Muslim religious education
<i>Moore</i>	turning point of the road
<i>Moota-Kapar</i>	ordinary cloth
<i>Moota-bhat</i>	sufficient food
<i>Mauza</i>	revenue village
<i>Mendhi</i>	henna
<i>Malik</i>	literally, owner; in social context, head of the family or household
<i>Masjid</i>	mosque
<i>Mamar bari</i>	mother's brother's home
<i>Milad</i>	a gathering of Muslims in which the details of prophet's life and the qualities of his character are described by <i>maulavis</i> (religious leader)
<i>Maulavi</i>	religious leader
<i>Mazar</i>	shrine of a Muslim saint
<i>Musalmani</i>	circumcision of Muslim boys
<i>Meye</i>	girl, daughter
<i>Meye dekha</i>	seeing the bride
<i>Manat</i>	promise for offerings
<i>Matabbar</i>	village leader, head of powerful family
<i>Mullah</i>	a Muslim trained in traditional Islamic laws and doctrines
<i>Muri</i>	fried rice
<i>Murubbi</i>	elder man, senior and respected man
<i>Nabannow</i>	literally, ' <i>naba</i> ' means new; and ' <i>annow</i> ' means rice, in this context, festival after harvesting/post harvest festival
<i>Naiyor</i>	Daughter's visit to her natal home after marriage
<i>Namaz-e-zanaza</i>	funeral prayer
<i>Nauka</i>	Boat
<i>Natun</i>	New
<i>Natun bau</i>	new wife/bride
<i>Natun-kutumbu</i>	new affines related by a recent marriage

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Natun-pitha</i>	New rice cake
<i>Nika</i>	Marriage
<i>Nikah nama</i>	Marriage document
<i>Nikah Registrar</i>	Marriage Registrar
<i>Nijerlok</i>	one's own people
<i>Pagri</i>	Turban
<i>Para</i>	ward, neighborhood, section of a village
<i>Pakka</i>	literally, ripe, cooked; with reference to roads, paved; to buildings of concrete construction; in general high quality
<i>paan</i>	betel leaf
<i>Paan-supari</i>	betel leaf and betel nut
<i>Parivar</i>	Family
<i>Pantha-bhat</i>	cold rice soaked in water, usually left over from the previous meal
<i>Pitha</i>	Cake
<i>Poolaow</i>	fine rice cooked with <i>ghee</i> .
<i>Podabi</i>	title, surname
<i>Pajama</i>	loose trousers used as men's lower garment
<i>Pourashava</i>	municipality which is incorporated and administered by the government as an urban area
<i>Painama</i>	Presentation for the bride in a marriage ceremony
<i>Poush</i>	ninth month of the Bengali Calendar covering mid-December to mid-January
<i>Prakrita-atmiya</i>	real relatives
<i>Puthi-path</i>	' <i>puthi</i> ' means book and <i>path</i> means read; in this context, reading a special literature which is written by the mixed Arabic and Persian words
<i>Purdah</i>	literally, screen, partition, veil; in social context, the practice of seclusion of woman
<i>Pati</i>	fine mat
<i>Punjabi</i>	a kind of dress used as men's upper garments
<i>Purathan-kutumbu</i>	affines related by a previous marriage
<i>Rajmistry</i>	Mason
<i>Rin</i>	loan on interest
<i>Roa</i>	transplantation
<i>Sadharan- atmiya</i>	ordinary relatives
<i>Salam</i>	salutation, Islamic greeting

<u>Local Words</u>	<u>Meaning of the Local Words</u>
<i>Samaj</i>	literally, society, in social context, informal council of village people headed by rural elites
<i>Salwar</i>	a kind of dress worn as women's lower garments
<i>Shadabhat</i>	plain rice
<i>Sherwani</i>	a kind of men's long overcoat
<i>Sharbat</i>	sweet cold drink
<i>Shirni</i>	sweet rice
<i>Shariat</i>	doctrine of duties for the Muslims
<i>Sil</i>	stone used for grinding spices
<i>Sunna</i>	practice of the prophet of Islam, his model behaviour
<i>Sura</i>	verse from the Holy <i>Quran</i>
<i>Surma</i>	holy soil from the sacred hills of Mecca
<i>Svami</i>	master, husband
<i>Shasur bari</i>	spouse's father's home
<i>Semai</i>	vermicelli
<i>sardar</i>	Headman of a <i>samaj</i> or of a village
<i>Saree</i>	a kind of long dress used by Bengali women
<i>Sunchhan?</i>	are you hearing?
<i>Tabiz</i>	Amulet
<i>Talaq</i>	Divorce
<i>Taka</i>	Bangladeshi currency, money
<i>Tali</i>	house covering made of soil
<i>Thalabati</i>	plate, dish
<i>Thana</i>	police station, an administrative unit
<i>Tui</i>	'you' in ordinary sense
<i>Tumi</i>	'you' in honorific sense
<i>Ukil</i>	literally, lawyer, pleader; in social context, initiator of a marriage proposal
<i>Vadro</i>	fifth month of Bengali Calendar covering mid-August to mid-September
<i>Bhalo-cheley</i>	good boy
<i>Bhalo-jamai</i>	good son-in-law
<i>Wali</i>	lawful guardian
<i>Waz</i>	Religious meeting

Appendix-II

Kinship Terminologies

An attempt has been made to reveal the various kinship terminologies as a glossary of kinship terms used in Srirampur, a village of the northern part of Bangladesh. However, for the sake of convenience they are included here indicating its types and preferred addressing form which are very helpful towards understanding the persistence of certain kinship categories and terminologies.

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
<i>Baro-abba, baro-bap, tawai</i>	father's father's father (FaFaFa)	<i>baro-bap</i>
<i>Dada, dadu, dadabhai</i>	Father's father (FaFa)	<i>dada</i>
<i>Abba, baba, bap, bajan, bapjan, baji, abbu, pita</i>	Father (Fa)	<i>abba</i>
<i>Baro-abba, baro-bap, baro- chacha, jetha, baro-kaka,</i>	father's elder brother (FaEBr)	<i>baro-bap</i>
<i>Chacha, kaka, chachajan, chachu, choto - kaka, choto chachu</i>	father's younger brother (FaYBr)	<i>chacha</i>
<i>Baro-ma, baro-amma</i>	father's father's mother (FaFaMo)	<i>baro-ma</i>
<i>Dadi, dadi-ma, bu</i>	father's mother (FaMo)	<i>dadi</i>
<i>Baro-phuphu, baro-bethti, baro-phuphu-amma, baro- phuphuji, baro-phuphi</i>	father's elder sister (FaESi)	<i>baro phuphu</i>
<i>Choto-phuphu, chto-betti, Chotophuphu-amma, choto- phuphuji, choto phuphi</i>	father's younger sister (FaYSi)	<i>choto phuphu</i>
<i>Baro-bhai, miyabhai, dadu, bhai</i>	father's brother's elder son (FaBrESo)	<i>miya-bahi</i>
<i>Bhaidi, chto-bhai</i>	father's brother's younger son (FaBrYSo)	<i>choto bhai</i> or nickname
<i>Bubu, bubujan, apa, bu, bon</i>	father's brother's	<i>apa</i>

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
	elder daughter (FaBrEDa)	
<i>Bondi, choto-bon</i>	father's brother's younger daughter (FaBrYDa)	<i>choto-bon</i> or nickname
<i>Baro-chachi, baro-chachima, baro-kaki, baroma, baro- amma, jethi, jethima</i>	father's elder brother's wife (FaEBrWi)	<i>baroma</i>
<i>Choto-chachi, choto-chachima, choto-kaki, choto-kakima, chachi, kaki, chotoma</i>	father's younger brother's wife (FaYBrWi)	<i>chachi</i>
<i>Phupha, phuphaji, jamai</i>	father's sister's husband (FaSiHu)	<i>jamai</i>
<i>Ma, amma, ammu, mata, Baro-bap, baro-abba, tawai</i>	mother (Mo) mother's father's father (MoFaFa)	<i>ma</i> <i>baro-bap</i>
<i>Mawaima, maima, baroma, baro-amma</i>	mother's father's mother (MoFaMo)	<i>mawai-ma</i>
<i>Nana, nanu, nanaji</i>	mother's father (MoFa)	<i>nana</i>
<i>Nani, nanuji, nanabu</i>	mother's mother (MoMo)	<i>nani</i>
<i>Mama, mamu, mamujan</i>	mother's brother (MoBr)	<i>mama</i>
<i>Khala, khala-amma, khalama, klalajan</i>	mother's sister (MoSi)	<i>khala</i>
<i>Miya-bhai, mamato-bhai, baro- bhai,</i>	mother's brother's elder son (MoBrESo)	<i>miya-bhai</i>
<i>Mamato-bhai, bhaidi, choto- bhai</i>	mother's brother's younger son (FaMoYSo)	nickname
<i>Miya-bhai, baro-bhai, khalato- bhai</i>	mother's sister's elder son (MoSiESo)	<i>miya-bhai</i>
<i>Choto-bhai, bhaidi, khalato- bhai</i>	mother's sister's younger son (MoSiYSo)	<i>choto-bhai</i> or nickname
<i>Apa, bubu, bu, bon, mamato-</i>	mother's brother's	<i>apa</i>

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
<i>bon</i>	elder daughter (MoBrEDa)	
<i>Mamato-bon, bundi, choto-bon</i>	mother's brother's younger daughter (MoBrYDa)	<i>choto-bon</i> or nickname
<i>Khalu, khaluji, khalujan, jamai</i>	mother's sister's husband (MoSiHu)	<i>khalu</i>
<i>Mami, mamani</i>	mother's brother's wife (MoBrWi)	<i>mami</i>
<i>Baro-bhai, miya-bhai, dada, baro-miya, bhai</i>	elder brother (EBr)	<i>baro-bhai</i>
<i>Bhaidi, choto-bhai</i>	younger brother (YBr)	<i>choto-bhai</i> , or nickname
<i>Bhaipo, bhaiput, vaste, baba, bhatija, bhair beta</i>	brother's son (BrSo)	<i>baba</i> or nickname
<i>Bhaijhi, vasti, bhair beti, bhatiji, ma</i>	brother's daughter (BrDa)	<i>ma</i> or nickname
<i>Bhabi</i>	elder brother's wife (EBrWi)	<i>bhabi</i>
<i>Bau, bauma, choto-bau</i>	younger brother's wife (YBrWi)	<i>bauma</i> or nickname
<i>Apa, bu, bubu, apu, bon, buji</i>	elder sister (ESi)	<i>apa</i>
<i>Chotobon, bondi</i>	younger sister (YSi)	<i>bondi</i> or nickname
<i>Bagne, bhagina, bonput, baba</i>	sister's son (SiSo)	<i>bagne</i> or nickname
<i>Bagni, bonjhi, ma,</i>	sister's daughter (SiDa)	<i>ma</i> or nickname
<i>Dula-bhai, miya-bhai, bhaishab, banu</i>	elder sister's husband (ESiHu)	<i>dula-bhai</i>
<i>Dula miya, jamai miya; boiner jamai</i>	younger sister's husband (YSiHu)	<i>jamai miya</i> or nickname
<i>Chele, put, pola, baba, abba, bajan, abbu, beta</i>	ego's son (Ego's So)	<i>baba</i> or name
<i>Nati, puta</i>	son's son (SoSo)	name
<i>Natin, puti, putni,</i>	son's daughter (SoDa)	name

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
<i>Puti</i>	son's sons' sons (SoSoSo)	name
<i>Putin</i>	son's sons' daughters (SoSoDa)	name
<i>Bau, bauma</i>	son's wife (SoWi)	<i>Bauma</i> or nickname
<i>Beai, bhai</i>	son's wife's father (SoWiFa)	<i>beai</i>
<i>Beyan, bhabhi</i>	son's wife's mother (SoWiMo)	<i>beyan</i>
<i>Mea, beti, jhi, ma, maiya</i>	daughter (Da)	<i>ma</i> or nickname
<i>Nati, puta</i>	daughter's son (DaSo)	name
<i>Natni, puti, putin</i>	daughter's daughter (DaDa)	name
<i>Jamai, jamai-beta, baba, abba</i>	daughter's husband (DaHu)	<i>baba/jamai</i> or nickname
<i>Beai, bhai</i>	daughter's husband's father (DaHuFa)	<i>beai</i>
<i>Beyan, bhabhi</i>	daughter's husband's mother (DaHuMo)	<i>beyan</i>
<i>Puti, natircheley</i>	daughter's son's son (DaSoSo)	name
<i>Puti putiner cheley</i>	daughter's daughters' son (DaDaSo)	name
<i>Bau, istri, bibi, parivar, ginni,</i>	wife (Wi)	child's mother or name
<i>Abba, shashur, shashur-abba, babaji, baba</i>	wife's father (WiFa)	<i>abba</i>
<i>Ma, amma, shashuri, shashuri- amma, ammajan, shauri,</i>	wife's mother (WiMo)	<i>amma</i>
<i>Svamundi, miya-bhai, baro- bhai, dada</i>	wife's elder brother (WiEBr)	<i>miya bhai</i>
<i>Sala, shalok, bhaidi</i>	wife's younger	name

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
	brother (WiYBr)	
<i>Apa, apu, baro-apa, bubu, bujan, baro-bon</i>	wife's elder sister (WiESi)	<i>apa</i>
<i>Sali, bondi choto-apu</i>	wife's younger sister (WiYSi)	name
<i>Bhabi</i>	wife's elder brother's wife (WiEBrWi)	<i>bhabi</i>
<i>Sala-bau, choto-bhabi-</i>	wife's younger brother's wife (WiYBrWi)	name
<i>Svamundir meya, svamundirjhi, ammu</i>	wife's elder brother's daughter (WiEBrDa)	name
<i>Baro-bhaira, bhaira-bhai, dula-bhai</i>	wife's elder sister's husband (WiESiHu)	<i>dula-bhai</i>
<i>Bhaira, choto-bhaira, bhai</i>	wife's younger sister's husband (WiYSiHu)	name or nickname + <i>bhai</i>
<i>Bagne, bhagina, bhairar chela, baba</i>	wife's elder sister's son (WiESiSo)	name
<i>Bagni, bhairar-meya, ammu, ma</i>	wife's elder sister's daughter (WiESiDa)	name
<i>Bagne, bhagina, bhairar-chela, baba</i>	wife's younger sister's daughter (WiYSiDa)	name
<i>Bagni, bhairar-meye, ma, ammu</i>	wife's elder sister's son (WiYSiDa)	nickname
<i>Svami, damad, bhatar, dulha</i>	husband (Hu)	name or chid's father
<i>Shashur, abba, baba, abbaji</i>	husband's father (HuFa)	<i>abba</i>
<i>Shashuri, ma, amma, shauri, ammajan</i>	husband's mother (HuMo)	<i>amma</i>
<i>Bhasur, baro-bhai, miya-bhai</i>	husband's elder brother (HuEBr)	<i>baro-bhai</i>
<i>Deor, debar, bhaidi, choto-</i>	husband's younger	<i>choto-miya</i>

<u>Term of Reference</u>	<u>Type of Relatives</u>	<u>Preferred Terms</u>
<i>miya</i>	brother (HuYBr)	
<i>Nandai, bhai, dula-bhai</i>	husband's sister's husband (HuSiHu)	<i>bhai</i>
<i>Apa, apu, bu, bubu, buji, bubujan</i>	husband's elder sister (HuESi)	<i>apa</i>
<i>Nanad, bon, bundi, choto-apa</i>	husband's younger sister (HuYSi)	name or <i>choto-apa</i>
<i>Bauge, baba, bhagina, nanader-chele</i>	husband's sisters son (HuSiSo)	<i>baba</i> or name
<i>Bagni, nanader-meye, ma, ammu</i>	husband's sister's daughter (HuSiDa)	<i>ma</i> or name
<i>Bhasurpo, deor put, bhasurput, baba</i>	husband's elder brother's son (HuEBrSo)	<i>baba</i> or name
<i>Bhashur konya, bhashurji, deorji, ma</i>	husband's brother's daughter (HuBrDa)	<i>ma</i> or name
<i>Barojha, apa, baro-apa, baro- bu, bhabi,</i>	husband's elder brother's wife (HuEBrWi)	<i>bhabi</i>
<i>Chotoja, bhabi, bundi</i>	husband's younger brother's wife (HuYBrWi)	name
<i>Shotin, bubu, apa</i>	co-wife (Co-Wi)	child's <i>ma</i> or <i>apa</i>