Development in Practice

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/cdip20

Conducting transgender research with Rohingya hijra participants: reflections on methodological and ethical considerations

Kazi Ashraf Uddin

To cite this article: Kazi Ashraf Uddin (12 Mar 2025): Conducting transgender research with Rohingya hijra participants: reflections on methodological and ethical considerations, Development in Practice, DOI: 10.1080/09614524.2025.2474045

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2025.2474045

DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE
https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2025.2474045

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

FORTHCOMING IN THE SPECIAL ISSUE: RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH

Conducting transgender research with Rohingya hijra participants: reflections on methodological and ethical considerations

Kazi Ashraf Uddin

School of Law, Society and Criminology, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

ABSTRACT

In Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees who defy traditional gender norms face harsh conditions due to transphobia within the socio-religious intersections of the refugee camps. To understand their vulnerabilities, researchers must use culturally sensitive and secure methodologies. An intersectional approach may offer insights but understanding the host country's context and reflecting on the research purpose and consequences are essential. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork with transgender Rohingya refugees conducted between 2022 and 2023, this paper discusses ethical and methodological concerns for researchers in transgender studies within Bangladesh. It provides guidelines for addressing contextual, methodological, and ethical issues, aiding responsible research conduct in the Southern context. This paper emphasises that the Southern conception of transgender is influenced by sociocultural factors, shaping both its epistemological and ontological dimensions. Therefore, researchers should employ a situational ethical protocol when designing the research.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 3 November 2023
Accepted 18 January 2025

KEYWORDS
Transgender Rohingya research; ethics of transgender research; Bangladesh; trauma-informed approach; hijra

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
SDG 3: good health and well-being; SDG 5: gender equality; SDG 10: reduced inequalities

Introduction

Given the growing geo-political unrest across the world, the number of asylum seekers, displaced populations and refugees is on the rise. According to UNHCR's 2018 estimate, around 85 per cent of the world's refugee population resides in developing countries of the Global South (UNHCR 2018). One of the few complexities that refugee research consideration often involves deals with the outsider positionality of the researcher, that is, someone without enough exposure to and/or understanding of the lived experiences of the refugees, among other ethical and methodological consideration considerations. However, a refugee is any homogenous linear one-size-fits-all category that informs the research design across disciplines (Sherif, Awaisu, and Kheir 2022). Refugee scholars have argued in favour of intersectionality as a practical framework to have a nuanced understanding of refugee lived experience in the context of forced displacement (Aberman 2014; Ayoub 2017; Chulach and Gagnon 2013; Clark-Kazak 2013). Lenette argues that gender perspectives generate a more contextual understanding of forced migration (2019). Furthermore, the gendered identity of the refugees in the context of South Asia has to be perceived within the complex cultural reception

CONTACT Kazi Ashraf Uddin k.uddin@unsw.edu.au; https://www.unsw.edu.au/law-justice/about-us/our-people/higher-degree-research-students/kazi-ashraf-uddin; https://www.juniv.edu/teachers/ashraf

and exchange between the country of origin and the receiving country (Chakraborty and Bhaba 2021).

Transgender research often leaves out the consideration of citizenship status and migration stories, assuming a pervasive homogeneity in the lived realities of gender-diverse people. Though there has been growing interest in refugee studies, transgender refugees' lived experiences have been less focused on in empirical studies (Rosati et al. 2021). Refugee status and carceral lived experiences of the transgender refugees in the camps within a transphobic and conservative socio-religious context require the researchers to be sensitive towards the transgender community's intersectional vulnerabilities and the multifarious risks that the research might entail. To comprehend the multifaceted determinants shaping Rohingya transgender identity and contributing to their marginalisation, I have employed an intersectional approach, conceptualised by Crenshaw (1991), in my research design. Crenshaw contends that a "single-axis framework" applied to an individual's identity and lived experiences overlooks interconnected facets are contributing to their marginalisation (1991). This framework scrutinises the mutually constitutive nature of gender, sexuality, disability, age, and other categories of differences or specificities that impact individual lives and societal practices (Hankivsky, Cormier, and De Merich 2009). The individual identity and social division vectors are intricately interwoven, forming what Collins terms a "matrix of domination" (2002). While an intersectional approach can provide rich insight into transgender refugees' lived experience, an understanding of the indigenous context (socio-cultural and politico-economic) of where refugees live (i.e. Bangladesh) can equally enrich (Müller-Funk 2021) transgender research in the Rohingya refugee context. In response to the classical critique of intersectionality's shift towards neo-liberal co-optation that mainly focuses on diversity and inclusion (Salem 2018), this paper will limit itself rather focusing on the power relations (hence inequality) that those intersecting aspects produce during the research design and how that question of power and hierarchy as a mode of colonising research (participants) should be resisted by the researcher.

Based on my ethnographic fieldwork (2022–2023) with transgender Rohingya refugees, this paper discusses some ethical and methodological approaches transgender studies researchers may consider while conducting qualitative research with transgender Rohingya refugees in Bangladeshi geo-local context. I focused on four distinct areas of ethical considerations pertinent to research design, which can be summarised as (a) the geographical and localised framework underlying transgender research within the context of South Asia, (b) protocols of accessibility and cultural nuances, (c) the imperative of embracing a trauma-informed approach in conducting transgender research, and (d) apprehensions relating to the milieu of fieldwork, participants' susceptibility, and their exposure. Hence, the reflections here are autoethnographic in nature emerged from the critical consideration of my positionality as a Bangladeshi citizen and a researcher from the global south and the package of privileges and challenges it comes with. Rather than falling into the category of Refugee research in the transgender context, this paper can be viewed as a methodological insight into transgender research in the context of forced displacement and migration. For researchers (both in academic and activist/rights-development worker capacity) conducting qualitative research with transgender refugee participants in South Asia, this paper can be deemed as an outline (not exhaustive, though) of contextual, methodological, and ethical issues that may arise and recommended safety precautions to be adopted while working with the transgender Rohingya participants in an empirical setting. While there is a dominant critique of the term "transgender" subsuming some "South Asian discourses and gender/sexual variance" as merely local expression (Dutta 2014, 321), Adnan Hossain complicates this regionality of trans discourses by taking the intra-regional discursive tensions over the hijra[1] scholarship in the South Asian region – especially between India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh (Hossain 2018, 321–322). This research acknowledges this critique of the cross and intra-regional discursive conflations and hegemonic scholarship and, hence, prefers to place this paper within Bangladesh's cultural and political context. In addition to South Asia's regional complexity and political and cultural divides on religious grounds and Bangladesh being the primary

administrative and spatial/geographical agent in managing the Rohingya refugee (re)settlement, this paper focuses on the methodological discussion in the Bangladeshi context.

Methodology

This article, as a methodological reflection, draws on my own experience of qualitative ethnographic research with the transgender Rohingya refugees in the camp. As a part of the empirical data collection for my doctoral project, I conducted one-year long (2022–2023) ethnographic fieldwork in Bangladesh that comprised methods including semi-structured and narrative interviews, informal conversations, participant observations and ongoing engagement with the Rohingya hijras as an advocate for their equal rights and safety. These methods were adopted to investigate how different intersectional aspects shape the hijras' lived experiences and their identities. However, for this paper, my primary data derived from the interviews with Rohingya hijra refugees and the fieldwork experiences I had, starting from the ethics approval process starting from ng from the Ethics approval process through adopting diverse cultural safety and security protocols. Although I am a cisgender heterosexual male, living and growing up amidst the transphobia and repressive religious conservatism of Bangladesh helped me reflect on my cisgender privileges while simultaneously considering the importance and protocols of culturally safe and meaningful methodological interventions. My anecdotal evidence of living near the hijra community[2] and encountering them in social and cultural settings connects my understanding of their lives to the methods I adopt during my ethnography. Berry and Clair (2011) argue that autoethnography employs reflections to illustrate intersections between the self and society. Two aspects of my lived experience informed my "personal reflexivity" (Cromby and Nightingale 1999) — my social and cultural upbringing, knowing and experiencing the hijra mode of interactions, and my cultural and linguistic understanding of the Rohingya people, who historically share proximity with the culture and language of the city (Chittagong) I am from. These two ontological positionalities were instrumental in forming an epistemological framework for my methods. Additionally, my religious positionality (born as a Muslim and raised in a Muslim-majority society) provided fieldwork insights while working with the Muslim Rohingya hijras. However, the visceral narrative of sexual violence described by the Rohingya hijras during conversations and interviews unsettled me, prompting an evocative approach in my analysis, an ethnographic category that Anderson (2006) refers to as "evocative ethnography".

Trauma-informed approach in Rohingya transgender refugee research

This research assumes anti-oppressive and sensitive human service practices as a research philosophy with the Rohingya transgender refugees (Lenette 2019). This approach informs the ethical and methodological considerations in the context of forced migration. There is a dearth of current scholarship addressing the traumatic experiences of refugees and the cultural apparatus through which they can be interpreted in significant (Danso 2016; Fisher-Borne et al. 2014). The refugee community's psychological condition (such as trauma) and the structural violence and vulnerabilities make their participation challenging and sometimes risky (Mayan and Daum 2016). Moreover, the inability to openly live out their gender identity results in continuous minority stress (Rosati et al. 2021). Trans Rohingya people's experience of public harassment within the refugee camp, domestic violence, gang violence, and transphobia among the community people, including their family members, leave no place safe for them within the refugee camps (Jahan 2022). Addressing trauma, a sense of insecurity, post-migration stress and loneliness are some mental conditions that Lenette (2019) calls a "trauma-informed approach". However, Rohingya transgender refugees do not know what the English term "trauma" means. But what the words they repeatedly expressed to me while sharing their experiences were *dor/atonko* meaning "fear", it is construed by their past experience of enforced migration, arson, varying degrees of trauma, and

in the case of Rohingya transgender refugees, their ongoing vulnerability/victimization to different degrees of assault for their gender non-normativity (Knight 2015). As Rosati et al. share from their experience in field research, LGBTQI+ refugees commonly face "psychological abuse, physical and sexual assault, corrective rape, forced conversion therapy, blackmail, and public shaming (2021, 2)". Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) reported the widespread presence of rape and sexual assault survivors among the Rohingya refugees, a significant number of whom are "genderfluid or transgender" (PHR 2020). Transgender Rohingya refugees' fear is also endorsed by the absence of any community safety network for transgender Rohingya refugees and the political radicalisation of faith-based groups active inside the camp (Md Shahin and Hasan 2023; Taufiq 2021). While trying to give an idea about their fear, one of my Rohingya participants mentioned,

> We don't have any right of association, whenever we gather for gossip or afternoon recreation, the local thugs and folks try to disband us by throwing stones and abusing us verbally. If they find us going to the toilet, they try to break into it. Even sometimes when you go for a night patrol to guard our houses, they try to … [making hand gesture indicating sexual abuse] us. And we are chosen for the night patrolling because we are easy prey. (my translation, interview with Rohingya participant, Cox's Bazar, 10 June 2023)

The above statement points to how fear about the association, mobility and getting sexually assaulted and physically abused inform their visibility in public space. While the trauma-informed approach is not necessarily an intervention into the participant's past trauma, researchers working with transgender refugees. are expected to have knowledge about trauma and the source of this trauma and its psychological consequences and be empathetic in a way that is consistent with their role as researchers (Karatzias et al. 2012; McGregor et al. 2010). Trauma-informed sensitivity influenced two significant aspects of my research design – the questions I ask and how I ask without re-traumatising them (Krause 2017) and a sensitive approach to the locations – the site for interviews. Formalised support systems such as psychological counselling support (though I mentioned in my university Ethics application) located in some INGOs' field offices might be deemed as an option for reducing psychological distress, but this is not practical. Rather the presence of a community person (as in my case the Rohingya hijra assistant) helps alleviate the stress during the conversation. Depending on the researcher's personality, affective strategies such as taking pause, being silent, showing empathetic gestures, changing topics, and holding hands. Trauma is an embodied lived experience that influences other human conditions; therefore, a deeper understanding of trauma can significantly shape the researcher's perception of the community.

Understanding the Rohingya hijra refugees

It is beyond the epistemic purview of this article to give a definitive conceptual outline of the Rohingya hijras, nor is it possible in the transnational refugee context due to the significant dearth of scholarship on the Rohingya non-binary refugees. Rohingya hijras individuals are part of the non-binary and gender-diverse community who are born males but whose gender expression and preferences do not comply with their natal gender identification (not the other way around in popular conceptual framing). They are part of the Rohingya community, nearly one million strong (Khuda and Scott 2020), who suffered genocide and ethnic cleansing by the Myanmar military junta. They fled their ancestral land in Myanmar's Rakhine/Arakan state, primarily seeking refuge in Bangladesh during a mass exodus starting in 2017.

When I refer to Rohingya hijra, I imply the male-born individuals who describe their state of gender non-conformity as having a womanly or feminine psyche *(mone nari)* (Dutta and Roy 2014, 330) and female-assigned preferences for clothing, make-up and socialisation. In essence, Rohingya hijra refers to Rohingya males who identify with femininity in terms of expressions, performances, and sartorial choices. However, among these males, some "feminine" men desire men who, like in Bangladesh, are called the *kothis/kotis*. At this epistemological juncture, it is crucial to understand the Rohingya community's perception of the Rohingya hijras as "males who have sex with other males" (MSM in public health terms or *maigga-phoa* or *phonda-phoa* in local vernacular),

not necessarily as cross-dressing male-born individuals who wear feminine attires. In the Bangladeshi criminal and cultural context, same-sex sexuality is criminalised, causing severe cultural and religious denouncement, while hijras have legal recognition as "hijra gender" (Hossain 2020). In both Myanmar and Bangladesh, section 377 of the British penal code is still active in criminalising consensual same-sex sexual relations. Though Bangladesh has officially recognised the hijras as a third gender category, in Myanmar, transgenders have not yet been legally recognised as a separate gender category and continue to be socially marginalised, stigmatised and harassed. Moreover, section 35(c) of the Police Act is also very instrumental in harassing the LGBT community people in Myanmar, especially after dark, on the pretence of reducing suspicious activities (McLaughlin 2017). In addition, Burmese Muslims, especially the Rohingya Muslim non-binary individuals face further discrimination because of their religious minority status (Ikeya 2024). The repressive police and social control of Rohingya Muslim trans-identified people provide us with a context of their cultural integrational solidarity with local hijras.

While Rohingya hijras/transwomen, like Bangladeshi hijras, prefer female attire, Rohingya *kothis*, like their Bangladeshi counterparts, prefer male clothing. There are also the Rohingya *chhibri* (emasculated males), who are fewer in number than other transgender categories. In this article, when I use the term "Rohingya transgender," I am referring to all three gender categories (hijra, *kothi*, and *chibri)* unless I refer to any category for a nuanced understanding of each category. In the Bangladeshi context, the two terms "Rohingya hijras" and "transgender Rohingya" are used interchangeably to signal a coalitional solidarity between the Bangladeshi hijras and the Rohingya hijras, caused partly due to the lack of any organised subculture status of the Rohingya hijras. Transgender Rohingya people culturally adopt different local hijra rituals (*badhai*, and *cholla*) to meet their economic means and usually local hijra gurus extend their kinship reach to accommodate the Rohingya hijras within their safety net. This host–guest community alliance in the form of sisterhood (as Rohingyas call it) can help the researchers interact with the Rohingya hijras outside the campsite in a more domestic setting with the other Bangladeshi hijras.

Approximately one million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar reside in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar district, bordering the Bay of Bengal and Myanmar's Rakhine state (see Figure 1). These camps, spread across Ukhiya, Teknaf, and Bhashan Char, comprise around thirty-three locations (Figure 2). Most Rohingya live in Ukhia and Teknaf, coastal areas vulnerable to natural disasters and trafficking, while some have been relocated to the isolated Bhashan Char Island. These locations are 40–50 kilometres from Cox's Bazar town. The refugees inhabit makeshift houses of tin and bamboo, which offer minimal privacy and are under surveillance with security patrols and armed guard checkpoints. These camps' repressive geographical and congested regulatory aspects are crucial for designing an ethical mode of fieldwork, more so in dealing with transgender refugees whose visibility and "coming out" can be unsafe. This understanding is essential for researchers examining the experiences of transgender Rohingyas within the intersecting contexts of gender, religion, and refugee status. Additionally, the geo-local and cultural context of transgender Rohingya refugees necessitates cultural safety measures in data collection. The following sections outline the power dynamics within these measures, including field access protocols, the role of gatekeepers and interpreters, and ethical considerations in field data collection.

Understanding the geo-local context and accessibility protocols of the fieldwork site

Considerations for the data collection locations are crucial for any qualitative research involving ethnography, participant observations, interviews and focus groups (Müller-Funk 2021). Researchers should be fully aware of the legal and political context under which the Rohingya refugees are living in the camp. Moreover, if the research participants are from marginalised communities like refugee, transgender or persecuted populations, considerations in choosing the place of data collection require careful evaluation of the safety and security of both the research participants and the

Figure 1. Location of Rakhine state and Cox's Bazar in world map.

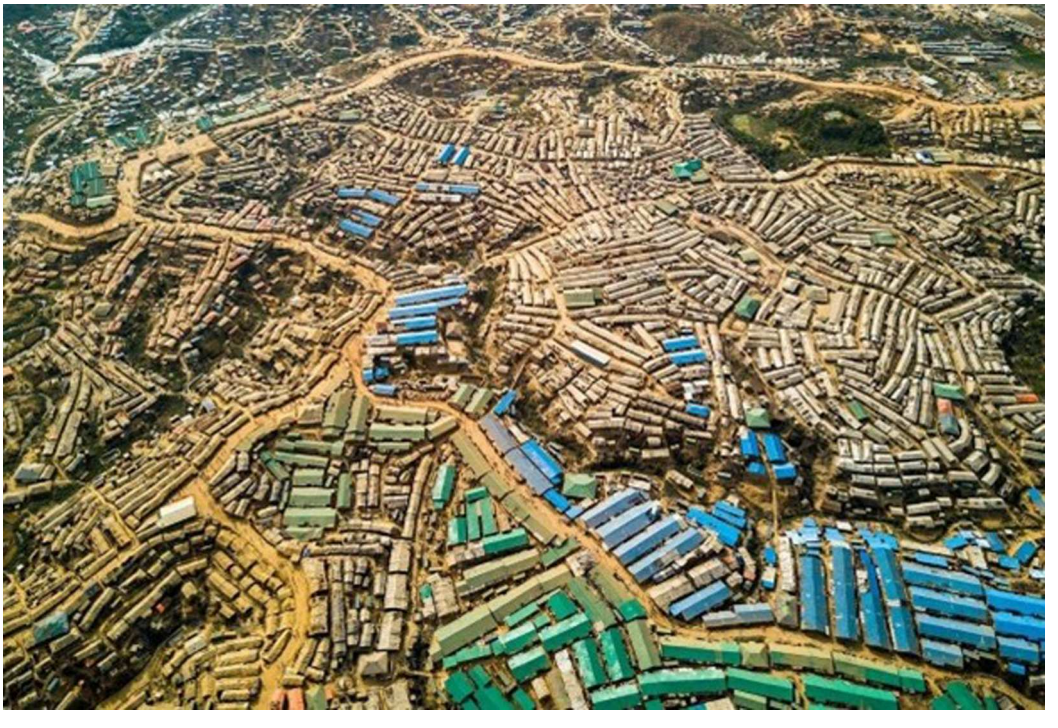

Figure 2. Aerial view of the Rohingya refugee camps (Photo credit: @antonioguterres/X).

researchers. Given that the Rohingya transgender community live inside the highly policed and internally conflicted refugee camp area of the remote Cox's Bazar district, reaching the Rohingya refugee camps is considered a challenge. Factors such as distance from the main town, transportation, frequent military/police checkpoints, administrative protocols, and expenses contribute to this challenge. Moreover, ethical issues like legal precariousness, poverty, and Rohingya militant violence are some of the concerns that the researcher should consider when selecting the fieldwork site. For my research, I chose the Balukhali camp in the Ukhiya district, about forty kilometres from the main city. The camp area is a textbook example of a hard-to-reach location due to reasons involving the remoteness of the area, restricted environment, and ethically complex setting with a vulnerable population. Therefore, reaching out to such a location requires the researchers to know about the place, its safety requirements, transportation system and culture of mobility. A local interpreter is always a good help for the researchers when communicating and negotiating with the locals. Such communication and negotiation include renting transport, purchasing products, and making local calls. As part of the administrative protocol for researchers' data collection, they are required to obtain permission from the Office of The Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), a government body involved in refugee affairs located in Cox's Bazar town that serves as the administrative gatekeeper. Usually, this protocol requires the researcher to justify the reason for visiting the refugee camps, mentioning the duration, target group, camp number/location and institutional affiliation, along with the support letter from the institutions and/or body coordinating the research.

Ethics approval (Human Research Ethics Approval no. HC220679) from my university provided substantial support to obtain clearance. If the application is submitted in person, permission can be obtained within a day, or it might take several days if the concerned officials are not available. Therefore, allocating one week for permission-taking protocol is advisable. Rohingya refugees live in clustered camps spread across a vast, uneven, and hilly terrain. Hence, the researchers must ascertain the specific camp locations of their target research participants before seeking permission to visit the refugee camps for data collection. While camp-wise/location-wise Rohingya refugee demography can be obtained from the resources on the RRRC website[3], to get data on the number of Rohingya hijras living in the camps or at a particular refugee settlement area, the researchers are required to have local contacts and coordination. They should keep in mind that due to social stigma and fear of harassment and abuse, most Rohingya transgenders are afraid of disclosing their gender identity and prefer to be less visible in public spaces. Therefore, gatekeepers and local contacts can be significant resource persons regarding the Rohingya hijra demography.

Ethical issues in working with local contact/interpreter and gatekeepers

Gatekeepers play a vital role in controlling research access (Jupp 2006). A community gatekeeper's permission is, hence, particularly important to get access to a certain research participant community, in this case, the Rohingya transgender people. While among the host communities, i.e. the Bangladeshi hijras, a hijra gatekeeper's role is crucial for the researcher to get access to the community living of the hijras due to the strong closeted/closed and hierarchically protected lifestyle of Bangladeshi hijras, however, in case of the Rohingya transgender people, a Rohingya hijra might not have similar power in controlling the research access. To understand this power/influence inequality, it is worth understanding that the Rohingya transgender people live in a carceral space within a very congested cis-heteropatriarchal space where they are constantly gender policed by the conservative Rohingya community as well as the refugee camp management. Therefore, any senior Rohingya hijra's agency as the community gatekeeper is curtailed due to their sheer vulnerability and precarious living conditions and the presence of other management authorities such as the government administration and camp management authority.

The notion of gatekeeper in this context does not necessarily imply expert knowledge in the specific domain but rather the ability to control or facilitate access or reach to the community. In the Rohingya hijra case, the local interpreter, being a hijra community member, has superior topic

knowledge to the gatekeeper(s) and can also help identify the participants. Moreover, though the *headmajhi* (the community leader in each camp) can be the gatekeeper who can facilitate the reach to the Rohingya hijra community, as the repressive transphobic agent, the *headmajhi*'s role in such facilitation can cause tension that might influence the data or the nature of participation by the hijras. To add, this *headmajhi* represents an ethnic form of paternalism claiming agency for the economic dispossession of the Rohingya family for their family member's *nautyafoa-giri* (girlish "gender-deviant" performance). Therefore, during the data analysis phase, the question of member-checking for confirmation arises; understandably, the gatekeeper and the interpreter are not the same people, mainly because of the variation in community belonging. It is, therefore, crucial to rethink the construct of gatekeeping in relation to access to information (Savolainen 2020). Edwards (2013) discusses the power relationship between interpreters-researchers and interpreters-participants. As mentioned above, since interpreters can suggest participants, it is important to consider interpreters' position within the community and ability to build rapport. Contacting the Rohingya hijras by physically relaying messages (i.e. indigenous method) (thanks to the Rohingyas' social organisation and relations (Smith 2012) inside the camp) with the help of the host hijra network is a safer approach to facilitating community access. Such research intervention does not often follow the formalised process of gatekeeping, and the risk factors can best be assessed by the transgender participants themselves. This falls within the ethical frame of indigenous research labelled as *research with, by and for* (Blair 2015; Blix 2015). Hence, the local interpreter can be instrumental in this communication and trust building.

The RRRC serves as the administrative gatekeeper for entering the Rohingya refugee camp location/site. However, to get access to the Rohingya transgender community and make contacts with them for potential research data collection, a snowball approach can be functional where the host transgender community leaders (*guruma*), i.e. Bangladeshi hijra *guruma* can refer the researchers to the Rohingya hijras or local community-based organisations (CBOs) or NGOs or international NGOs (INGOs) working on gender-based violence (GBV), capacity building and skill development training, and women's empowerment. These organisations, functional in humanitarian capacity and structure, can facilitate data collection in a politically and culturally unsettling context (Krause 2017). They have formal permission to facilitate any research survey endorsed by RRRC. However, as RRRC is the legal authority as regulator and enforcer, whereas the aid organisations function in a humanitarian capacity, the Rohingya hijras have a more secular and philanthropic image about the latter, a power dynamic that needs to be considered in arranging the communication. Though both the Bangladeshi hijra community and the Rohingya transgender community shared the common aspect of gender diversity and non-binary gender identity, the researchers need to understand that the concept of gatekeeper for these two communities may be different. A senior hijra community member can be the gatekeeper for their community as the hijras live under ritualistic kinship arrangement (in a social hierarchy of *guru-chella*/ preceptor-disciple, see Hossain 2020) away from the cis-heteronormative parental habitat; on the other hand, a transgender Rohingya refugee may not play the gatekeeper role since forming a transgender collective inside the camp has its own risk of being visible and hence, subject to punitive regulation the conservative transphobic Rohingya community members within the camp. The Rohingya participants I worked with reported repeated assaults on their families by the militant groups because of their non-binary gender expressions.

During my ethnographic data collection, a referral from two international humanitarian organisations (UN et al.) and my personal NGO network helped me build trust among a group of Rohingya transgender participants who agreed to meet me at the UN Women's field office in Kutupalong camp for an informal group conversation. Contacting previous researchers who have already conducted research on Rohingya refugees can be a rich source of referral and can provide the new researchers with practical advice on local contacts and gatekeepers. As transgender Rohingyas mostly live in the camps, to reach the community, two gatekeeper frontiers can be helpful after the researcher gets physical access to the refugee camp area – one is the camp *majhi* (community leader in each

camp), and the other is the Camp-in-Charge (CiC/administrative authority) office located inside each camp which has a camp-wise list of gender diverse people. Both bodies have the legal authority to have formal access (in the form of direct contacts) to the refugee community and to call for them, which is an alternative field communication strategy due to a lack of communication services such as internet connection and mobile network coverage in the camps. However, there is power inequality between the camp authority and the refugees and a call with authority might add inconvenience and stress to the participants, therefore communication via camp authority is not an advised mode of communication. Moreover, as of July 2023, the Rohingya refugees were disqualified from any mobile or internet coverage. Moreover, the use of mobile banking or communication through mobile phones is not the most effective research method for Rohingya research due to the lack of internet coverage. Next, I am going to focus on how language serves as an essential epistemic and methodological tool.

Language as an ethnographic tool and strategizing communication in the field

Language use is critical to working with communities (Collet 2008). Two aspects of language usage in conducting research with Rohingya transgender participants should be kept in mind — the communicative (read: epistemic/hermeneutic) aspect and the sensitivity aspect (Suwankhong, Liamputtong, and Rumbold 2011). By communicative aspect, I mean the working language between the academic/researcher and the research participants. A Banglaphone researcher's background knowledge of the Rohingya language might help understand the context.

The Rohingya language is an Eastern Indo-Aryan language belonging to the Bengali-Assam branch (Dastidar 2018). It is structurally similar to the Chittagonian language, spoken by people from the Chittagong division in southeastern Bangladesh, where Cox's Bazar (the Rohingya campsite) is located. Usually, Chittagonianophones[4] can understand the spoken form of the Rohingya dialect. Therefore, for data collection and transcription of the interviews and conversations, the researchers must have a local interpreter (preferably someone from the local hijra community) who speaks/understands the Rohingya dialect. On a linguistic level of epistemology, my shared ethnicity and language helped me capture the complex nuances (Edwards 2013) of Rohingya lived experiences in a transphobic paternalistic environment. Though claiming insider status based on fieldworker's language skills uncritically excludes the complexity and intersections of identities and lived experiences of the participants, living in the same religious, linguistic and cultural context was instrumental for me as an ethnographer. However, when one of the Rohingya hijras said, "*Onera shohure manush anrar natyafua-gor hosto ki bujhiben*?" ("You urban people, how would you understand plights of the *natyafua* or *maigga phoa* (roughly translated as effeminate/male-desiring boys)."), it struck me as a vital question about the Rohingya people's fear of what, drawing on Fricker (2007), de Sousa Santos (2016) calls "hermeneutic injustice", situations in which the situated knowers misinterpret, misunderstand or willingly ignore the context (Pohlhaus Jr., 2012). Such injustice is often associated with structural interpretive tools such as language and terminologies (Fricker 2007). My upbringing in the Chittagonian linguistic and cultural context made me familiar with the word *natyafua* and what the consequences are to be one, which international media outlets often reductively translate as "transwomen/transgender"[5], missing out on the word's stigmatic association with men performing in dance, drama and doing make-over, not necessarily changing sexual/gender identity. Rohingya participants' scepticism about the potential gap in the epistemological context could be minimised through socio-linguistic competency and cultural fluency. In my case, the shared ethnicity gave me a sensitive understanding of their cultural taboos, customs, metaphors, cues, slang and other subtleties of mannerisms (Sime 2015). For example, *mayuma* is the Rohingya term used extensively in Myanmar that refers to the effeminate or cross-dressing males and connotatively to the men who have sex with men. Understanding this term in an Islamic religious context can evoke a deeper understanding of gender and sexual non-normativity than the term "transgender" can. However, I had to verify with my interpreter (as

explained before, not the administrative gatekeepers) whenever I had difficulty understanding. This member-checking is part of the pledge to collaborative epistemology in an ethical framework. Moreover, the researcher as the only agent of data collection and interpretation can be tantamount to the lack of credibility in knowledge production (Kwame 2017). Though it is unrealistic to expect fluency in Rohingya vernacular before fieldwork, having a working knowledge of Rohingya dialect will help researchers to elicit information and explanation of contexts, "to speak and to listen and hear directly the expected and unexpected" (Watson 2004, 67).

Working with an interpreter by a native speaker of ethnographic languages (Bangla and Rohingya) and working with the same by a non-native researcher do not offer the same level of complexity (Gibb and Danero Iglesias 2017). In such a multilingual ethnographic context, three languages are used simultaneously by the Rohingya hijra participants – Rohingya, Bangla/Chittagonian, and the hijras' coded dialect called *ulti* – an aspect which may significantly challenge the investigator in their data analysis, double-checking and critical testing of information (Borchgrevink 2003, 107). As I previously argued, the interpreter should be from the local hijra community so that the cultural nuances are retained and interpreted regardless of the researchers' linguistic positionality, a non-native researcher with "less-than-fluent" or no proficiency in the local language may require a bilingual interpreter speaking the researcher's native language and the language Rohingya hijras speak. Additionally, being a less-than-fluent speaker in the local language may also give the researchers different difficulty in following the conversations between two or more participants or a one-to-one interview (Gibb and Danero Iglesias 2017). Therefore, as Borchgrevink (2003) suggested, the coordination between these interpreters is instrumental in writing the field notes. However, the possibilities and problems of translation and interpretation are still key concerns in cross-cultural research (Clifford 2016). The translation and interpretation can still be filtered if the bilingual translator (not the community interpreter) has a personal agenda regarding the research and the researcher (Twyman, Morrison, and Sporton 1999). The other aspect of language usage in research with marginal communities or when the researcher does not belong to the participant group (hence, an "outsider" researcher that I will shed light on later) is how the academics/researchers demonstrate their sensitivity to the needs and lived experience of their participants. In other words, the researcher must consider the assumed or imposed power hierarchy (hence, domination) between the researcher and the Rohingya participants. Overusing academic jargon or discipline-specific terminology might convey a sense of paternalism, whether intended or not (Collet 2008). Using culturally correct, respectful, and nuanced language only reduces the researcher-researched gap and consolidates trust. Skill and use of knowledge can be crucial in creating an impression of the researcher's positionality as someone respectful and sensitive to the lived experiences of the refugee gender non-binary community.

Researcher's positionality and insider/outsider dichotomy

Historically positionality statement is perceived as the enlightenment valorizations of the white scholars in being ethical by declaring their credibility and critical consciousness of their inability to separate the self from one's subjectivity (Eagleton-Pierce 2011, 807). Critiquing this reflexive practice in the knowledge production of the powerful west about the "native other" (Jacobs-huey 2002, 792), Gani and Khan (2024) argue that an imagined hierarchy between the researcher and the participants is reproduced through its utterance and such statements may constitute hidden power moves, rather than reducing the unequal power dynamics. My positionality in this research, however, serves as a critical inquiry about my privileges, and challenges and engages me in a praxis of reducing this hierarchical inequality in power dynamics. Conducting research on/with a diaspora community (in this case, Rohingya refugees) who are victims of forced migration, genocidal oppression, and gender violence (transphobia and trans-bashing in particular) among other systemic violence, requires careful consideration concerning the researcher's subjective identity (including gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic status, and employment). Though in research involving

the refugees and diaspora communities, the consideration of personal migration history plays a vital role in understanding the lived experiences of the refugees, in the case of Rohingya refugees, the reason for migration to the host country is almost homogenous, ethnic cleansing by the Myanmar military junta.

In Social science research, positionality implies the researcher's worldview and the positions they adopt while undertaking the research task and its socio-political context (Foote and Bartell 2011; Savin-Baden and Major 2013; Rowe 2014). Researcher's positionality is reflected in their philosophical and epistemological assumptions about human nature (Holmes 2020). Moreover, these assumptions are also shaped by different vectors of a researcher's identity, such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, religion, caste, employment status, (dis) abilities and education, among others (Wellington et al. 2005; Marsh et al. 2018). Conventionally insider-outsider positionality in social science research is understood via the group/community-membership. For example, a cisgender-identified researcher can be deemed to be an "outsider" for their transgender research participants. Similarly, a researcher with no personal experience of forced migration can also be deemed an outsider to the refugee research participants, or an academic can very well be put into the category of outsider to the non-academic participant community. As this kind of research presupposes a gendered and citizenship/human-rights-based understanding of the lived experience and identity formation of the transgender refugees, the researcher's gender subjectivity (trans-identified or cis-identified or other gender preferences), racial and/or ethnic identity, migration status (refugee or not) and personal ideological viewpoint regarding human rights, justice, gender diversity etc are crucial in setting the ethical parameters and methodological strategies for the research. Although the researcher's cisgender status might label them as an "outsider", this status can motivate the researcher to seek a more nuanced and detailed account of the lived experience of the Rohingya transgender people. When I went into the field, my gender and racial/ethnic positioning was not central to the power dynamics with the research participants, rather drawing on my reflexivity on the purpose of the research and the empathetic connection with the lived experiences of the displaced gender non-normative Rohingyas, I reflected on my engagement with them, which, later helped me to build trust. As a cis-heterosexual researcher, my sexual and gender subjectivity do not necessarily align with the Rohingya transgender participants; my upbringing in a Muslim majoritarian conservative society helps me to grasp the contexts of transphobic stigma and its socio-cultural and economic backlash.

The insider status of the researcher might have a negative impact on the research if the participants assume that the researcher already knows about their experiences and hence leave out key details (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). Even if a researcher's gender position and sexual orientation do not put them in the insider category, they should not exploit the host privilege or non-refugee privilege, let alone cisgender privilege, an aspect of cultural safety that envisages redressing power imbalances due to differences in positionality. My assumed sexual preferences as heterosexual put the participants initially at a culturally constructed shyness while talking about their intimacies and love relations. However, when I disclosed my familiarity with hijra sexuality by mentioning sexual terms in hijra vernacular, they became more interested in sharing their amorous accounts. This "everyone knows about it, not a big deal"-approach (Kabranian-Melkonian 2015, 718) helped negotiate my sexual positioning and create a safe space for conversations on culturally sensitive issues (trans-love). Moreover, engaging a Rohingya hijra as my assistant in most of my interactions was necessary to ensure my interview questions' cultural sensitivity and transferability (Bloch 2007), a way to engage the indigenous voice in the research.

In transgender research, cis-normative assumptions about well-being, kinship patterns, cultural behaviour, intimacy, and sexual health can mislead the formulation of research and interview questions. Additionally, cisgender researchers from non-Bangladeshi or Western backgrounds must understand the socio-cultural and political nuances of gender expressions in Bangladesh to avoid imposing Western epistemological frameworks. Awareness of the legal status of gender diversity further illuminates transgender lived experiences. Locally, while Rohingya transgenders are often

identified as Rohingya "hijras," it is crucial to distinguish the cultural and ritualistic aspects of Bangladeshi hijras from those of Rohingya transgenders. Trust-building and acceptance issues in transgender research with Rohingya refugees may sometimes be impacted by the racial identity of the researcher. Rohingya indigenous researchers may sometimes be frowned upon by the Rohingya refugees, as Smith (2012) suggested in *Decolonial Methodologies* regarding the indigenous research participants' perspective about their peer group/insider researchers. This goes back to the history of unethical research investigations involving the indigenous communities carried out by researchers from the West (Smith 2012). But in the Rohingya refugee context, such racial/ethnic historicity of distrust has not yet formed. Hence, the Rohingya hijras perceived my positioning of an indigenous-looking researcher coming from a "foreign" university as someone whose engagement might bring some good to them, a perception coming out of what Smith (2012) calls a "survival" strategy. This perception was instrumental for me in building their trust as I had previously explained the purpose of my research to them and was transparent about its potential outcome. In my case, similar to that of Dosu (2021) in the Ghanaian context, my positionality as an educated urban middle-class researcher made me an outsider, my physical appearance and demeanour (including attire, and dialect to match the status quo) helped reduce the distance with my participants caused by a perceived class gap. The Rohingya refugees often have a philanthropic or "saviour" image of the foreign humanitarian and development workers. This refugee mindset influenced by colonial history can facilitate Western researchers' access to and acceptability of the community. Moreover, as Howard (1997) argues, participants' perception is sometimes based on receiving aid following a study. However, Western researchers should avoid the "White saviour complex," which can introduce a hegemonic bias leading to unethical practices and unauthentic data. Additionally, a researcher's perceived religious identity can impact trust among participants, with assumptions that Christianity is more liberal towards gender diversity than Islam.

Though it is important to understand the insider/outsider role in qualitative research in terms of shared aspects of identity, almost everyone doing research with the Rohingya transgender participants is an outsider, implying that the researcher does not belong to the refugee camp community and comes from outside the camp. Next, given the psychological vulnerability of the refugees as victims of different forms of oppression, it is crucial to have an affective understanding of the Rohingya refugee context, which aids in adopting an ethically and culturally safe approach in interactions.

Ethics of visibility, spatial safety, and compensation

There is a significant risk in imposing Western definitions and "colonialist-infused research methodologies" in refugee research (Lenette 2019). Western ethical considerations are not always feasible in the context of the global South. Therefore, methods and strategies should respond to the indigenous context, i.e. values, geography, local notions about risk and culture, etc. Such a "situated ethics" (Kaur et al. 2023; Simons and Usher 2000) approach is expected from the global South researchers. Knowledge of various aspects of situated ethics in the Bangladeshi context will help the researchers prepare for fieldwork and strategize the implementation of different methods. These indigenous ethical aspects include contexts such as power outages, internet speed, currency exchange rates, political unrest, natural disasters, climate, inflation, local crime rates, and religious and cultural contexts.

The first and foremost ethical consideration of any research involving human participants is reducing the harm of any sort and mitigating any risk to both the participants and the researchers. As standard protocol, some ethical issues that a researcher should keep in mind in transgender Rohingya context include harm reduction, privacy and confidentiality, informed consent, right to withdraw from participation, reciprocity, justice and power relations (Lunn 2014). However, obtaining written consent is not always the best option with the transgender Rohingya refugees as they fear documentation and, hence, identification. Moreover, social stigma and embarrassment of illiteracy can also influence their stance regarding disclosure (Knapp and Kirk 2003). Therefore, verbal consent or group verbal consent with the help of the interpreter and/or gatekeeper could be a trustworthy

strategy to avoid the fear of formalities of written consent among the participants. Simplification of consent documents/jargon and extended informed consent discussions are two strategies that proved effective in health research in the global South (Kadam 2017); however, a similar pattern, such as scoping conversation with the participants, can also be an occasion for the researcher to explain the purpose of the study in non-expert terms for easy comprehension.

Regarding anonymity and privacy, while some of my transgender participants considered increased trans-visibility helpful to resist silencing politics of the cisheteronormative system, most transgender Rohingyas I worked with feel that being visible renders them more vulnerable to sexual assault and physical harassment, some even contemplating death at the hand of the Rohingya separatist groups. O'Donnell (2022) contends that the carceral environment impacts the lives of marginalised people, including refugees, leading to instances of death and detention. Therefore, in research design, location and data collection places (i.e. interviews, focus groups, conversations, etc) are immensely important to ensure maximum safety and privacy. "If they (local "thugs") know that we are transgender, they will find an excuse to rape us", said Islam (pseudonym). Usually, method/ethics statements like "interviews will take place at places of your choosing" are a nice way to be respectful to participants' preference and minimise coercion; however, sometimes the transgender Rohingyas might be overwhelmed to assess which place is indeed safe for them, the reason being the ongoing gender policing and pervasive trans-bashing within the congested camps. Therefore, redefining the notion of "safety" in the Rohingya context is important for a situated understanding. One way of looking at it is that in investigations conducted in unstable settings, intersections of participants' identities may generate unpredicted dimensions of safety/danger (Brigden and Hallett 2021). While a café or participant's home might be considered safe in the Western context, safety needs to be continuously negotiated for the transgender Rohingya refugees.

Spatiality intersects with the transgender Rohingya participants' sense of safety. The territorial governmentality they encounter within the refugee camps within the structures of cis-heteronormative paternalism and transphobic administrative camp administration (both community-based and formal) creates what Moran, Turner, and Schliehe (2018) terms as "carceral geography" implying the multi-scalar structural, political and economic impediments (punitive in nature). It is important to understand the politics of mobility — how the space shapes and impacts the experience of the Rohingya hijras inside the refugee camps and how gender identity creates hierarchised space for the Rohingya hijras. For example, as Islam retorted, "When we stand in the queue for collecting the monthly food supply on behalf of our parents, we are either not allowed to be in the same line with other cisgender people, or we are pushed back at the end of the line". In addition, the aspect of what Tim Cresswell terms as "friction" (2010) of mobility occurs to Rohingya hijras whenever they go outside their home in the camps. Their mobility is continuously monitored, obstacles, and challenged by the territorial heteronormative paternalism leading to harassment, bullying and other forms of structural violence. The mobility impediment (and sometimes impairments) in the Rohingya refugee camps experienced by the trans people must also be understood culturally, if not only within the structural framework of refugee camps. One of the participants reported, "Whenever we go out to the public space within the camps, we move with fear as we are always bullied by others; they throw stones at us." The bodily injury, social exclusion, and debilitating effects that the transgender Rohingyas are subject to are structural hindrances to their rights of association, movement and other social inclusions. Though I chose development NGO premises inside camps as the safe interview location, researchers should assess whether such an organised interview location compromises the spontaneity among the research participants. Furthermore, involving the participants in deciding the interview location/ doing a risk assessment will evoke insights and knowledge on the contextual safety issue of the location and ensure the involvement of indigenous knowledge in risk management (Bjørvik et al. 2023). I conducted three interviews outside the camp, primarily following the advice of my Rohingya participants and in a couple of occasions, their hesitation about a proposed interview location (Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre) made me rethink how a space is construed in the intersections of gender, religion and class.

The issue of the absence of any commuting transportation system within the camps is also something that should be kept in mind while considering the participant remuneration. Participants' compensation or remuneration is one of the issues raised by the university Ethics committees/ Institutional Review Boards (IRB). Some guiding values surrounding the question of participant remuneration are fairness, care, honesty, and respect (Saleh et al. 2020). Transgender Rohingyas in the camp are hard off any income-generating sources for their gender identity; however, spending time with researchers and participating in the interviews might cause harm to their minimal livelihood since they are devoid of the economic luxury of spare time (Bhattacharyya et al. 2018). Therefore, compensating them for their time is an ethical decision. As mentioned before, Rohingyas are not allowed to legally use Bangladeshi mobile SIMs, and remuneration through mobile banking is not a feasible way. Rather, cash-economy/paying cash is the more effective way to remunerate them. Thus, while Western methods and approaches are not applicable in non-western contexts, the researchers need to be innovative in ensuring the participants' cultural safety.

Conclusion

In this article, I tried to give a guideline of some ethical and methodological considerations that researchers working on transgender lived experience in the Rohingya refugee context can consider ensuring the participants' maximum cultural safety and methodological efficacy. Without pretending that this guideline is exhaustive, I contend that intersectional contexts such as religion, culture, politics, language, research positionality, existing economic practices, and administrative and security protocols can provide rich methodological insights into transgender refugee research. However, as Kai Thaler argues, in the post-conflict zone, reflexivity, temporality, and geography often complicate the methodological replicability and ethical implications (Thaler 2019); researchers often need to be open and flexible in such academic undertakings with vulnerable communities. Considering the sheer vulnerability of being transgender and being a refugee in the South Asian context, a "trauma-informed" approach can help in designing the research interaction. However, the precariousness of being a refugee and a transgender never remains static, nor monolithic, rather evolves along the line of geopolitical changes. Future investigators therefore need to contextualise the contemporary political tension in their research design. Adding further perils to the transgender refugees' already existing deplorable lived conditions through thoughtless and insensitive research design would be not only an act of ethical breach but also unwanted pedagogical precedence.

Notes

1. Adnan Hossain defines "hijra" as a publicly institutionalized subculture of people typically assigned male at birth who may later remove their penis and scrotum and identify as either "not male" or as a woman. This definition highlights the unique gender identity and cultural role of hijras in South Asia. See (Hossain 2017).
2. Due to community-based living *(dera*, i.e. a form of ghettoised living*)* and ritualistic practices, hijras tend to consider them as a separate "publicly institutionalised" subcultural community. Hence, I sometimes refer to the hijras as "hijra community". In addition, hijras often participate in the institutionalised and development initiatives as a community. Hijra community-based organisations (CBO) can be mentioned as example.
3. Link to resources on RRRC's activities in the refugee camps including camp-locations in the map https://rrrc.gov.bd/site/download/a2b22998-870a-4df6-8333-a4563a3bcdad/- (Accessed 8 July 2023).
4. People who understand and/or speak Chittagonian language (Chittagonian language - Wikipedia).
5. Example of Western media representing Rohingya hijras as "transgender – https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220601-trans-rohingya-refugee-fights-prejudice-with-beauty.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the support of the transgender Rohingya refugee participants during the fieldwork, many of whom bravely came forward to help with their suggestions, defying the socio-cultural taboo and stigma.

Disclosure statement

The author alone is responsible for the statements expressed in this article, which do not necessarily represent the views, decisions, or policies of any institutions mentioned in this article, or with which the author is affiliated.

ORCID

Kazi Ashraf Uddin http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5097-6314

References

Aberman, Tanya. 2014. "Gendered Perspectives on Refugee Determination in Canada." *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 30 (2): 57–66.

Anderson, L. 2006. "Analytic Autoethnography." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 35 (4): 373–395.

Ayoub, Maysa. 2017. "Gender, Social Class and Exile. A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis." In *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (1st ed.), edited by Jane Freedman, Zeynep Kivilcim, and Nurcan Ö. Baklacıoğ. 45-67. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/978131552965377.

Berry, K., and R. P. Clair. 2011. "Special Issue: The Call of Ethnographic Reflexivity: Narrating the Self 's Presence in Ethnography." *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies* 11 (2): 95–209.

Bhattacharyya, Rituparna, Tulsi K. Das, Md. F. Alam, and Amina Pervin. 2018. "Researching Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: Critical Reflections." *Ethics and Social Welfare* 12 (4): 314–329. https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2018.1458889.

Bjørvik, E., L. Thoresen, A. Salamonsen, L. Fauske, and K. N. Solbrække. 2023. "Exploring the Impact of Interview Location on Knowledge Development." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 22:160940692311684-. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231168483.

Blair, N. 2015. "Indigenous Peoples Talkin' Up our Experiences of Research." *International Review of Qualitative Research* 8:463–478.

Blix, B. H. 2015. ""Something Decent to Wear": Performances of Being an Insider and an Outsider in Indigenous Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 21:175–183.

Bloch, A. 2007. "Methodological Challenges for National and Multi-Sited Comparative Survey Research." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20 (2): 230–247.

Borchgrevink, A. 2003. "Silencing Language: Of Anthropologists and Interpreters." *Ethnography* 4 (1): 95–121.

Brigden, N., and M. Hallett. 2021. "Fieldwork as Social Transformation: Place, Time, and Power in a Violent Moment." *Geopolitics* 26 (1): 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2020.1717068.

Chakraborty, R., and J. Bhaba. 2021. "Fault Lines of Refugee Exclusion: Statelessness, Gender, and COVID-19 in South Asia." *Health and Human Rights* 23 (1): 237–250.

Chulach, Teresa, and Marilou Gagnon. 2013. "Rethinking the Experience of HIV-Positive Refugee Women in the Context of Pregnancy: Using an Intersectional Approach in Nursing." *Research and Theory for Nursing Practice* 27 (4): 240–256.

Clark-Kazak, Christina. 2013. "Research as 'Social Work' in Kampala? Managing Expectations, Compensation and Relationships in Research with Unassisted, Urban Refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo." In *Emotional and Ethical Challenges for Field Research in Africa: The Story Behind the Findings*, edited by A. Ansom, S. Thomson, and J. Murison, 22–45. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Clifford, N. J., ed. 2016. *Key Methods in Geography*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE Publications.

Collet, Bruce A. 2008. "Confronting the Insider-Outsider Polemic in Conducting Research with Diasporic Communities: Towards a Community-Based Approach." *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees* 25 (1): 77–83. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48648608.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2002. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241–1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039..

Cresswell, T. 2010. "Towards a Politics of Mobility." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28 (1): 17–31. https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407.

Cromby, J., and D. J. Nightingale. 1999. "What's Wrong with Social Constructionism?" In *Social Constructionist Psychology: A Critical Analysis of Theory and Practice*, edited by D. J. Nightingale, and J. Cromby, 1–19. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Danso, Ransford. 2016. "The Trauma of Displacement: Understanding the Experiences of Refugees." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 29 (4): 489–507. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/few030..

Dastidar, K. G. 2018. "Echo-word Formation in Bangla." *Nepalese Linguistics 33*: 22–27. https://doi.org/10.3126/nl.v33i1.41075.

de Sousa Santos, B. 2016. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. New York: Routledge. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315634876.

Dosu, B. 2021. "Doing Fieldwork the Ghanaian way: The Dilemma of Conducting Research in Rural Ghana." *The Canadian Geographer* 65 (4): 487–498. https://doi.org/10.1111/cag.12688.

Dutta, Aniruddha. 2014. "Decolonizing Transgender in India: Some Reflections." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1 (3): 320–337.

Dutta, A., and R. Roy. 2014. "Decolonizing Transgender in India." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1 (3): 320–337. https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-2685615.

Dwyer, Sonya Corbin, and Jennifer L. Buckle. 2009. "The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 8 (1): 54–63. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105.

Eagleton-Pierce, Matthew. 2011. "Advancing a Reflexive International Relations." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 39 (3): 805–823.

Edwards, R. 2013. "Power and Trust: An Academic Researcher's Perspective on Working with Interpreters as Gatekeepers." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 16 (6): 411–425.

Fisher-Borne, Mariah, Jessie M. Cain, and Suzanne L. Martin. 2014. "From Mastery to Accountability: Cultural Humility as an Alternative to Cultural Competence." *Social Work Education* 34 (2): 165–181. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2014.977244.

Foote, Mary Q., and Tonya Gau Bartell. 2011. "Pathways to Equity in Mathematics Education: How Life Experiences Impact Researcher Positionality." *Educational Studies in Mathematics* 78 (1): 45–68. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10649-011-9309-2.

Fricker, M. 2007. *Epistemic Justice: Power and the Politics of Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gani, J. K., and R. M. Khan. 2024. "Positionality Statements as a Function of Coloniality: Interrogating Reflexive Methodologies." *International Studies Quarterly* 68 (2): 123–145. https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqae038.

Gibb, R., and J. Danero Iglesias. 2017. "Breaking the Silence (Again): On Language Learning and Levels of Fluency in Ethnographic Research." *The Sociological Review* 65 (1): 134–149. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12389.

Hankivsky, Olena, Renee Cormier, and Diego De Merich. 2009. *Intersectionality: Moving Women's Health Research and Policy Forward*. Vancouver: Women's Health Research Network.

Holmes, Andrew G. D. 2020. "Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide." *Shanlax International Journal of Education* 8 (4): 1–10. https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3232.

Hossain, Adnan. 2017. "Beyond Emasculation: Being Muslim and Becoming Hijra in South Asia." *Asian Studies Review* 41 (4): 495–513. https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2017.1371643.

Hossain, Adnan. 2018. "De-Indianizing Hijra: Intraregional Effacements and Inequalities in South Asian Queer Space." *Transgender Studies Quarterly* 5 (3): 321–331. https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-6900710.

Hossain, A. 2020. "Hijras in South Asia: Rethinking the Dominant Representations." In *The SAGE Handbook of Global Sexualities* (Vol. 2), edited by Zowie Davy, Ana Cristina Santos, Chiara Bertone, Ryan Thoreson, and Saskia E. Wieringa, 404–421. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529714364.

Howard, S. 1997. "Methodological Issues in Overseas Fieldwork: Experiences from Nicaragua." In *Postgraduate Fieldwork in Developing Areas: A Rough Guide*, edited by E. Robson, and K. Willis, 9–37. Birmingham: Developing Areas Research Group (DARG)/ Royal Geographic Society (with the Institute of British Geographers).

Ikeya, Chie. 2024. "CHAPTER 3 The Body of the Burmese Muslim." In *Bodies Beyond Binaries: In Colonial and Postcolonial Asia*, edited by K. Imy, T. Segura-Garcia, E. Valdameri, and E. Wald, 79–102. Leiden, NL: Leiden University Press. https://doi-org.wwwproxy1.library.unsw.edu.au/10.244159789400604933-004.

Jacobs-huey, Lanita. 2002. "The Natives Are Gazing and Talking Back: Reviewing the Problematics of Positionality, Voice, and Accountability among 'Native' Anthropologists." *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 791804.

Jahan, Dil. Afrose. March 8, 2022. Twice victimised: Rohingya transgender women seek recognition as third gender. *The Daily Star*. https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/rights/news/twice-victimised-rohingya-transgender-women-seek-recognition-third-gender-2979061.

Jupp, Victor, ed. 2006. *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857020116.

Kabranian-Melkonian, S. 2015. "Ethical Concerns with Refugee Research." *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 25 (7): 714–722. https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2015.1032634.

Kadam, Rashmi A. 2017. "Informed Consent Process: A Step Further Towards Making it Meaningful!." *Perspect Clin Res. Jul-Sep* 8 (3): 107–112. PMID: 28828304; PMCID: PMC5543760. https://doi.org/10.4103/picr.PICR_147_16.

Karatzias, Thanos, Georgia Scott-Brien, Anne Macdonald, Juliet MacArthur, and Norman Frazer. 2012. "Adult Survivors' of Childhood Sexual Abuse Perspectives of Services: A Systematic Review." *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* 12:146–161.

Kaur, Kirandeep, Ben Grama, Nairita R. Chaudhuri, and Maria J. Recalde-Vela. 2023. "Ethics and Epistemic Injustice in the Global South: A Response to Hopman's Human Rights Exceptionalism as Justification for Covert Research." *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 15 (2): 347–373. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huad008.

Khuda, Kudrat-E, and Michael William Scott (Reviewing editor). 2020. "The Impacts and Challenges to Host Country Bangladesh due to Sheltering the Rohingya Refugees." *Cogent Social Sciences* 6:1. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2020.1770943.

Knapp, H., and S. A. Kirk. 2003. "Using Pencil and Paper, Internet and Touch-Tone Phones for Self-Administered Surveys: Does Methodology Matter?" *Computers in Human Behavior* 19 (1): 117–134. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0747-5632(02)00008-0.

Knight, Carolyn. 2015. "Trauma-Informed Social Work Practice: Practice Considerations and Challenges." *Clinical Social Work Journal* 43:25–37.

Krause, Ulrike. 2017. "Researching forced migration: critical reflections on research ethics during fieldwork". *Working Paper Series No. 123*. Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford. https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/researching-forced-migration-critical-reflections-on-research-ethics-during-fieldwork.

Kwame, Abukari. 2017. "Reflexivity and the Insider/Outsider Discourse in Indigenous Research: My Personal Experiences." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 13 (4): 218–225. https://doi.org/10.1177/1177180117729851.

Lenette, Caroline. 2019. *Arts-based Methods in Refugee Research: Creating Sanctuary*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore Pte. Limited.

Lunn, J., ed. 2014. *Fieldwork in the Global South: Ethical Challenges and Dilemmas*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.

Marsh, Herbert W., Reinhard Pekrun, Philip D. Parker, Jiesi Guo, Theresa Dicke, and A. Katrin Arens. 2018. "The Murky Distinction Between Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy: Beware of Lurking Jingle-Jangle Fallacies." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 111 (2): 331–353. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000281.

Mayan, Maria J., and Charles W. Daum. 2016. "Understanding Trauma in the Refugee Context." *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools* 28 (2): 248–259. https://doi.org/10.1017/jgc.2018.12.

McGregor, Kim, Marewa Glover, Jeny Gautum, and Shirley Jülich. . 2010. "Working Sensitively with Child Sexual Abuse Survivors: What Female Child Sexual Abuse Survivors Want from Health Professionals." *Women and Health* 50:737–755. https://doi.org/10.1080/03630242.2010.530931.

McLaughlin, T. May 17, 2017. "Prejudice and Progress: A Snapshot of LGBT Rights in Myanmar." *The Myanmar Times*. https://web.archive.org/web/20180827142436/https://www.mmtimes.com/lifestyle/26228-prejudice-and-progress-a-snapshot-of-lgbt-rights-in-myanmar.html.

Md Shahin, K., and M. Hasan. 2023. "The Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Political and Humanitarian Perspectives." *Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 23 (3): 151–161. https://doi.org/10.1108/SEAMJ-05-2023-0041.

Moran, D., J. Turner, and A. K. Schliehe. 2018. "Conceptualizing the Carceral in Carceral Geography." *Progress in Human Geography* 42 (5): 666–686. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132517710352.

Müller-Funk, Lea. 2021. "Research with Refugees in Fragile Political Contexts: How Ethical Reflections Impact Methodological Choices." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 34 (2): 2308–2332.

O'Donnell, Samantha. 2022. "Living Death at the Intersection of Necropower and Disciplinary Power: A Qualitative Exploration of Racialised and Detained Groups in Australia." *Critical Criminology* 30 (2): 285–304. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-022-09623-2.

PHR (Physicians for Human Rights). 2020. "Sexual Violence, Trauma, and Neglect: Observations of Health Care Providers Treating Rohingya Survivors in Refugee Camps in Bangladesh". *PHR_Rohingya_Sexual-Violence-Trauma-and-Neglect_Oct-2020_Report.pdf.

Pohlhaus, Gaile. 2012. "Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice: Toward a Theory of Willful Hermeneutical Ignorance." *Hypatia* 27 (4): 715–735. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2011.01222.x.

Rosati, Fau, Valentina Coletta, Jessica Pistella, Cristiano Scandurra, Fiorenzo Laghi, and Roberto Baiocco. 2021. "Experiences of Life and Intersectionality of Transgender Refugees Living in Italy: A Qualitative Approach." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18 (23): 12385. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182312385.

Rowe, Wayne E. 2005. "Positionality." In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research*, edited by David Coghlan and Mary Brydon-Miller, 628–630. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Saleh, Sepeedeh, Henry Sambakunsi, Deborah Nyirenda, Moses Kumwenda, Kevin Mortimer, and Martha Chinouya. 2020. "Participant Compensation in Global Health Research: A Case Study." *International Health* 12 (6): 524–532. https://doi.org/10.1093/inthealth/ihaa064.

Salem, S. 2018. "Intersectionality and its Discontents: Intersectionality as Traveling Theory." *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 25 (4): 403–418. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506816643999.

Savin-Baden, Maggi, and Claire Howell Major. 2013. *Qualitative Research: The Essential Guide to Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Savolainen, R. 2020. "Manifestations of Expert Power in Gatekeeping: A Conceptual Study." *Journal of Documentation* 76 (6): 1215–1232. https://doi.org/10.1108/jd-01-2020-0010.

Sherif, B., A. Awaisu, and N. Kheir. 2022. "Refugee Healthcare Needs and Barriers to Accessing Healthcare Services in New Zealand: A Qualitative Phenomenological Approach." *BMC Health Services Research* 22 (1): 1–1310. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-022-08560-8.

Sime, D. 2015. "Challenging Barriers to Participation: Doing Research with Migrant Children and Young People." *Methodological Approaches*: 2: 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-4585-89-7_4-1.

Simons, Helen, and Robin Usher, eds. 2000. *Situated Ethics in Educational Research*. 1st ed. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203354896.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 2012. *Decolonizing Methodologies*. 2nd ed. London, England: Zed Books.

Suwankhong, D., P. Liamputtong, and B. Rumbold. 2011. "Existing Roles of Traditional Healers (mor baan) in Southern Thailand." *Journal of Community Health* 36 (3): 438–445. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-011-9360-z.

Taufiq, H. A. 2021. "Rohingya Refugee Crisis and the State of Insecurity in Bangladesh." *ArXiv*. /abs/2107.12080.

Thaler, K. M. 2019. "Reflexivity and Temporality in Researching Violent Settings: Problems with the Replicability and Transparency Regime." *Geopolitics* 26 (1): 18–44. https://doi-org.wwwproxy1.library.edu.au/10.108014650045.2019.1643721.

Twyman, C., J. Morrison, and D. Sporton. 1999. "The Final Fifth: Autobiography, Reflexivity and Interpretation in Cross-Cultural Research." *Area (London 1969)* 31 (4): 313–325. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.1999.tb00098.x.

UNHCR. 2018. *UNHCR Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*. Geneva: UNHCR.

Watson, E. E. 2004. ""What a Dolt One Is": Language Learning and Fieldwork in Geography." *Area (London 1969)* 36 (1): 59–68. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0004-0894.2004.00324.x.

Wellington, Jerry, Ann-Marie Bathmaker, Cheryl Hunt, Gillian Mcculloch, and Patricia Sikes. 2005. *Succeeding with Your Doctorate*. London: SAGE Publications.