www.katwacollegejournal.com
e-ISSN 2455-5916 | Vol. X | Issue 2 | Dec 2025
Katwa College
Peer Reviewed
International Journal of Research on
Social and Natural Sciences

The Impact of Partition on Muslim Women of Bengal: A Comparative Study of Muslim Women's Experiences in West Bengal and East Pakistan

Faruk Sk[1]

[1]Research Scholar, Department of History, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore, West Bengal, India.

Email: fsk811019@gmail.com

Article Received: **Sept 25, 2025** | Revised Ariticle Received: **Dec 6, 2025** | Final Acceptance: **Dec 7, 2025**

Abstract

The Partition of India in 1947 was one of the largest mass migrations in human history, and it also led to one of the bloodiest religious conflicts in recent history. The Partition divided the British Indian Empire into two independent dominions. The Dominion of India, a Hindu- majority state, and the Dominion of Pakistan, a Muslim-majority state. The Partition of Bengal was a part of the Partition of India. The Bengal Province was divided along religious lines, with the western, Hindu- majority portion becoming part of India and the eastern, Muslim-majority portion becoming part of Pakistan. These divisions left millions of people on the wrong side of the border, and it led to widespread violence and displacement. The consequences of India's Partition were devastating. An estimated 12-15 million people were displaced during the partition, and between 1 and 2 million people were killed. The Partition also had a profound impact on the social and political landscape of the Indian Sub-continent. The Partition of Bengal was a particularly tragic event. It led to divided families and communities that had lived together for centuries. In This paper, I will primarily discuss the story of the Bengali Muslim Women who stayed back in West Bengal after the Partition. It deals with their struggle, their segregation, and their search for an identity. The majority community of Muslims of United Bengal became a minority in West Bengal following the partition, and were reduced to ordinary Muslim men and Women had to bear the brunt of the Muslim League's Direct- Action Call, its proposal for partition. Bengali Muslims now came to be perceived as Pakistanis. To most of the Bengali Hindus, who migrated from East Pakistan to West Bengal as homeless refugee, the Muslims of West Bengal became a visible target for their anger.

Keywords

Partition, Violence, Calcutta, Muslim Women, Migration.

1. Introduction

Partition did not create hostile stereotypes in a vacuum. There were long, historical roots of a social divide. Muslims of Bengal have never been a homogeneous ethnic entity, as deep divisions prevailed between Bengali- Speaking Muslims and Urdu-Speaking Muslims.[1] The Ashrafs looked down upon Bengali Muslims, as most of them were converts from lower- caste Hindus. There was a distinction between the aristocracy and the subaltern. However, Hindu middle-class perception of Muslims, regardless of whether they were Ashrafs and Atraf, has long been a stereotyped one, an image of a lungi- clad, paan-chewing, Topi-clad person who is ill-educated, coarse- mannered, and intolerant.[2] Moreover, distinction is still made between a Muslim and a Bengali, thereby totally overlooking a Muslims Bengali Identity and always equating a Bengali with a Hindu. In many parts of Bengal, rural and urban, a Hindu to some is a 'Bengali', and a Muslim simply a 'Musalman.'[3] The predominantly Hindu quarter was often a Bengali para (Bengali quarter), and the predominantly Muslim quarter was simply a Mu-Salman para. The slogan for Pakistan has to be viewed as an attempt to seek respite from such humiliation. Pakistan, from the mid-forties, became a symbol of emancipation for these Muslims, a dreamland. However, the dream was rudely shattered for East Pakistani's very soon after 1947.[4] 'Educated Bengali Muslims felt demoralised as those among them in government service were victims of the arrogant behaviour of their non- Bengali bosses. East Bengal Muslims were treated with disdain, almost like untouchables, since they did not descend from the Urdu-Phil aristocracy, but were supposedly converts to Islam from the lower caste Hindus. This discrimination was manifest in appointments, and it grant of licences and permits for the trade and industry.[5]

2. Review of the Literature

The historiography of Partition has traditionally centred on high politics, elite leaders, and communal conflict. Early works, such as those by H.V. Hadson, Larry Colins, Dominique Lapierre, and V.P. Menon, focused primarily on political negotiations and administrative collapse. However, from the 1980s onward, scholars such as Gyanendra Pandey, Ayesha Jalal, and Joya Chatterjee shifted attention toward the social dimensions of Partition, displacement, and identity formation.[6] Recent writings on the Partition of India have explored several new dimensions. The focus has shifted from analysing the event as a culmination of a process in which an already present vertical communal divide led to a sad but inevitable partition of the Nation into two in the hands of the British colonial masters. Looking at the Partition as something that has happened in the past has the problem of seeing it as a solution that had settled the life of the Nation. It is into such territories of the unsettled nation that the tracing of the memory has begun. The works of Urvashi Butaliya, Veena Das, as well as those of Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, among others, have traced his other side of the story. The need to see the faces of the Partition, especially those of women, has been felt. Besides, the need to read between the lines, of making the silence as much as the uttered words in memoirs and interviews, has also been felt. In these writings, the narrative of displacement has become gendered so that the story of women has begun to be retrieved.[7] It is here- in the realm of memories, recollections, and the narrative of the experience of women- that this work wishes to enter. From the all-India perspective, there has been a shift in Partition historiography to a regional perspective, which would gradually entail a shift of focus from high politics to a social history of the partition.[8] While there has been a host of writings on the Punjab story, Joya Chatterji in *Bengal Divided* (1995**)** has seen how the upper, middle-class Hindu minority in a Muslim -majority province – Bengal- had looked at the Partition as the only way to regain a political foothold.[9] In doing so, she had loosened the link of separatism has been taken into account. Suranjan Das's book *Communal Riots in Bengal, 1905-1947,* analyses the context of massive violence

in Bengal that prepared the ground for the final divisions of territories.[10] Paulomi Chakrabarti's book – *The Refugee Women: Partition of Bengal, Gender, and the Political* analyses that Hindu refugee women and their struggle, and their migration history. Gargi Chakrabarti's book- *Coming out of Partition: Refugee Women in Bengal* has provided that the experience of women around the time of the Partition cannot simply be narrated as a tale of victimhood and trauma.[11] A sense of triumph in women who 'come out' and become bread earners and gain certain economic decision-making powers can also be discerned. Tista Das's book – *Unattached Women, Able-Bodied Men: Partition, Migration and Resettlement in Bengal* focuses on a few gendered histories of the Partition experience in Bengal.[12] Tracing the afterlife of the Partition of Bengal through the gendered experience of displacement and resettlement, it analyses mainly the Bengali refugee women. Jasodhara Bagchi and Subha-Ranjan Dasgupta's book- *The Trauma and the Triumph: Gender and Partition and Eastern India* book analyses how refugees resettled themselves in a hostile environment.[13] All the books mainly focus on the Bengali refugees and their resettlement policy in Bengal. Only Gargi Chakrabarti focuses few Bengali Muslim women and their struggle. I seek to highlight the Bengal Muslim women and their experiences during the partition, and their migration story after the partition.[14]

3. Objective of the Paper

The main purpose of this article is analyses how gender, religion, class, and locality interested to shape Muslim Women's experiences of violence, insecurity, migration journeys, displacement, economic survival, and family reorganization. To investigate how memory, silence, trauma, and oral narratives influence how Muslim Women remember and narrative Partition. To critically evaluate mainstream Partition historiography and reveal the limitations, silences, and biases that marginalize Muslim Women's experience.

4. Sample Source and Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive feminist research design. It integrates- Oral history, Archival Research, Feminist historiography, Narrative and thematic analysis. The present study based on extensive study of primary and secondary data collected from various books, article, News- papers, and various archives.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Education of Bengali Muslim Women in the Pre-Partition Era

In Undivided Bengal in the early 1920s, the activities of social reformers like Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain gave impetus to Muslim female education.[15] Earlier, education for Muslim Women was mainly religious and domestic, focusing on how they read the Koran or how to keep accounts to run the households. Rokeya's initiative was a breakthrough; her vision was far ahead of her time. She could say, 'Let fathers spend money on their daughters' school rather than on their ornaments.[16] Ornaments were no substitute for learning. They decorated the body, not the mind. It was high time to change priorities and educate the daughter. Muslim female education began with the establishment of a girls' school in Comilla (East Bengal) in 1873, by Nawab Faizunnesa Choudhury. She was helped by Kalicharan Day, a noted Brahmo of the time. Later, the School became English medium.[17] In 1897, Begum Firdous Mahal, Queen of Murshidabad, constructed a school for Muslim girls in Calcutta, and

in 1909, the Suhrawardy Girls' School was established. In Calcutta in 1913, Suhrawardiya Begum opened the Purdanashin Madrasah, a high school for girls; the name denotes girls in seclusion.[18] Interestingly, Bengali Muslims, when they wrote in journals like Banga Nur and Muslim Bharat, welcomed Bengali as their mother tongue.[19] Muslim Women, too, cherished the language as an outlet for their expression. Since their spoken tongue was Bengali, not many Women had access to either Urdu or English.[20]

Faziltunnesa, came from East Bengal in 1923 to study in Calcutta's Bethune College. She was the first Muslim student of that college, and also the lone Muslim College hostel.[21] Later, she did her M.A. from Dacca University. After the partition, she joined Dacca's Eden Girls' College as its officiating principal. When she came out of purdah, the Anti-Purdah League, founded by the Muslim Sahitya Samaj in the twenties, gave her a rousing reception at a special meeting in Dacca.[22] The progress of Muslim female secular education received a setback around the end of the 1930s and the 1940s as a result of the changing national political scenario.[23] A case in point is related to Bethune College, a college reputed for its heterogeneity, where different communities, districts, ideologies, and religions were represented. In the thirties, a large number of Muslim women, including those from East Bengal, took admission in the college. Muslim resident students lived alongside their Hindu sisters in the same quarters.[24] The college magazine, in 1934, commented on the spread of Muslim female education, saying that 'the demand for modern education is spreading rapidly among our Muhammad sisters'. The debating society of the college was dominated by the many Muslim students; the magazine names Sara Ali, Ayesha Begum Chowdhury, and Sayeda Ahmed Nazimunnessa.[25] The society debated subjects that continue to be relevant even today: 'Professional life unfits a woman for the home', 'Residence in a college hostel is superior to residence with parents.' Further, the entire college basketball team was made up of Muslim girls.[26]

5.2. The Great Calcutta Killing of 1946

The All-India Muslim League, in its Council meeting at Bombay on 29 July 1946, resolved to undertake a programme of direct action to achieve Pakistan and designated 16 August as Direct Action Day.[27] The situation resembled a lull before the storm; a dreadful silence engulfed the city of Calcutta. Alienation had set in among a section of Muslims even before the Muslim League's call for Direct-Action Day.[28] The Muslim students of Lady Brabourne College were roused by the speeches of Jinnah. They made maps of Pakistan on pieces of green muslin cloth in their college hostel premises. The slogan, such as '*Larke Lenge Pakistan* (We will fight to get Pakistan)' resounded everywhere around Park Circus, a Muslim dominated area in South Calcutta.[29] The Muslim Students of Victoria Institute, a girls' college, turned political and began attending the 'political namaz'. For Muslim girl students, the slogan of Pakistan became a symbol of freedom, offering them a space where they would get more opportunities and privileges.[30] Thirty-five Muslim students of Mirzapur Muslim Girls' school came out in processions with flags of the Muslim League, marching towards the crossing of Harrison Road and Amherst Street, on the morning of 16 August.[31] Muslim National Guard started a women's section, with a female *Salar* (leader). Their community leaders allowed them an unprecedented public mobility and visibility, but only within a programme of violence and communalisation.[32]

In a letter of Field Marshall Viscount Wavell, dated 22 August 1946. F.J. Burrows states that over 2000 persons of the 'goonda' type who had been confined under the Defence of India Rules during the war were released between July and December 1945.[33] This is of great significance, resulting in the virtual takeover of the city of Calcutta's underworld. Suhrawardy, in his dual capacity as Chief Minister holding the Home-portfolio, and also as the most influential member of the Muslim League, was a constant embarrassment. On 16 August, Muslims in an aggressive mood brought out processions, well-

armed and lathis, iron rods, and missiles.[34] The scale of rioting was unprecedented. It was a programme between two rival armies of the Calcutta underworld. Four thousand died, and ten thousand were injured in Calcutta in those four days of communal killings (16-19 August 1946). Bastis and Mohallas had Hindus killing Muslims killing Hindus.[35] The city appeared to have turned insane, succumbed to mob rule. There were numerous reports of arson, firing, stabbing, and rape of the pages of newspapers. 'City still strewn with dead bodies' was the headline in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of 20 August 1946. Photographs on the back page of newspapers carried the caption. 'Region of terror in Calcutta, murder, loot, and arson'.[36]

Muslim mobs had been portrayed in the Hindu press as beastly and barbaric; however, the Hindus were equally inhuman and intolerant. Abdul Mohaimen, a student of Islamia College, has narrated his experiences in his memoir '*Dui Dashaker Smriti'* (in Bengali). As a volunteer, while working at the Park Circus Maidan relief camp, he came across a Muslim victim who had been mercilessly tortured by the Hindu goondas. Once a such an incident took place in Baghmari with a tailor's family.[37] His wife and attacked and subsequently died, and his child was brutally killed; the mob threw him against the wall in the presence of the mother. Around noon on 16 August 1946, a Hindu student attacked the Muslim girl's hostel, situated at 86 Vivekananda Road.[38] The mob of a thousand Hindu goondas gathered in front of the women's student hostel facing the Maniktala market. The police brought the situation under control, and the help of Hindu neighbours, the girls were escorted to the Park Circus area. An Anglo- Indian lady was a witness to the import of goondas, unknown faces, into her building in Dharmatala Street.[39] An editorial comment in the same newspaper spoke of the non-participation of the Bengali Muslims in loot and destruction. 'We have noted with particular pride and delight that while Hindus saved many Muslims in Hindu quarters, and Muslims went to the rescue of many Hindus in a Muslim quarter.[40]

5.3. The Story of Migration

Partition studies tend to focus on migration between the two new states, thereby neglecting the fact of internal migration. Considerable internal migration took place within the city. Mixed and shared spaces enjoyed by the two communities disappeared soon after the violence broke out.[41] Refugee centres were opened in Ashutosh College, adjoining Hazra Park, for Hindus and in Lady Brabourne College in Park Circus for Muslims. People began moving towards the safer zones. A former lecturer of Loreto House, Bilquis Moosa (Rao) recalls, 'We used to live in the Chowrangee area. Initially, out of curiosity and for fun, we would watch the processions of Direct Action Day from our verandah.[42] This curiosity into apprehensions for our safety. We took shelter at night at Dr J.K. Dutta's residence, and the next day, our full family moved out to the Park Circus area. An endless line of people carrying a few belongings was seen marching towards the Howrah station- that was the beginning of an exodus. The desire to protect female chastity was common among both Muslim and Hindu Women; rape was a terrible experience for any woman, but in the context of communal congealment, the trauma was compounded by the social stigma that followed.[43] The fact that the victim had been raped by a person of another religion made it socially harder to tolerate. The Calcutta killings started the process of migration, which took the form of an exodus towards East Bengal, after the massacre of thirty thousand Muslims who were killed in Bihar in October-November of 1946. After the partition, many Muslim families left the country and moved towards the newly formed Pakistan. About 131,000 Muslims had left Calcutta on the eve of the 1951 census. According to the Government Reports of 1950-51, 7 lakhs Muslims had left West Bengal, of which 5 lakhs have returned.[44]

Both Hindu and Muslim women migrants went through the same experiences of sorrow and bewilderment. Family stories of partition make it amply clear that tense of atmosphere. The stories of

Anisa Hossain, now a professor in Bangladesh, mirror the agony of Muslim Women migrants from West Bengal.[45] Many Muslim women left not out of choice but because of a growing sense of insecurity. 'All our belongings were left behind. My mother kept her jewellery with our neighbours, Ghosh auntie. She would say, "Now I am going to an unknown land". We have been in Bangladesh since 1947.[46] None of our relatives has tried to find out about our well, being they assume that we had been butchered or killed". For some, migration meant a full stop; for others, it seemed to be a new beginning, a resurrection. Educated Muslim Women migrants got good opportunities and lucrative jobs in East Pakistan. Which would not have been so easily available had they stayed back. For example, Rahela of Lady Brabourne College became a school teacher, and Nurjahan Ahmed an M.P.[47] After going across. Jabeda Khatun, born in Calcutta, arrived in Pakistan after the Partition, and she was offered a teaching job at the reputable Eden Girls' School in Dhaka, alongside working on the radio. She also joined the All-Pakistan Women's Association, through which she became involved with rehabilitation work with refugees.[48] Muslim woman like Sultan Jahan Saleque, who stayed in Park Circus area, she argues that the atrocities committed by both communities, many Hindus were killed, and many Muslims were killed.[49] And Nafisa, Nahida, and Saleha, Mumtaz Waheed, and Jahan Ara they were migrated to East Pakistan, and returned to West Bengal.[50] I will analyse the experiences of the following ten Muslim women.

Jahanara Karim was a college principal, from Bogra in northern Bengal, first degree from the University of Calcutta and a second from the U.S.A. She came to Dhaka in 1948. It was 16 August 1946, Direct Action Day… we did not go to school, there was no bus or tram…. I used to live in a hostel in the university girls' hostel. It was 56 Harrison Road…. Then on that day, it was violence calm at about 9, I just came out my room, on the balcony… then I saw there was a procession they had stick, there was no slogan, no noise, nothing, suddenly I found that nobody is there, I did know how they vanish… everybody's vanished from the street, I saw a group of people was hitting someone on the head with green coconut, he was encircled by a group of men, maybe 15/20 men, and they were all hitting him on the forehead, and gradually he went down. I saw only blood, I could not see the face or head, just blood, then they dragged him away into a by lane, and I was so much shocked, and I went into my room and did not come outside. Our hostel, then I saw shouting and fighting, and noises and burning of houses, Muslim houses were being burnt by the side. There were a few Muslim students at that time in the hostel. Even when the riots started, our girls did not behave badly toward me. I was frightened, but nobody said anything to me. I was frightened by one of my colleagues, she used to stay in my room, it was almost like a dormitory, five bedrooms, I did not know why, she behaved like a mad person. I was very much afraid of her; she used to sleep in the same room as me… she might kill me. The story of how, in the Park Circus area, a bus broke down and took shelter in Maharaja's House is a very bad experience. It is not a good experience. The worst experience of my life was being there and seeing the riot, being a witness to it, the people of that locality, since it's a girls' hostel. They used to boast in front of the girls that I have killed so many Muslims, and I have heard all these things. From the balcony, one or two days after the riots started, I saw several trucks loaded with dead bodies, all dead bodies… open and they were talking about the dead bodies, towards Sealdah Station … I have seen that.[51]

Lyla Zakaria Murshed, was born on 7 November 1925, in Calcutta; from a nationalist Muslim family, her father, Zakaria, was a mayor of Calcutta, a very staunch Indian nationalist, and a friend of Bose; her uncle was Fazlul Haq; her husband came over to East Pakistan in 1951; her son, visiting, teaches European economies at Bradford University. Nationalist Muslims, in a way, were betrayed…. Everything was done and decided in a got hurry; the Muslims deserved much more regarding land… they were cheated by both the Congress and the Muslim League, and the person who could have

changed this was the British. (Identity as a child) 'Indian first', then a Muslim… I was a Bengali, I still feel I am an Indian, I am belonged to the subcontinent of India, and of course, I am Bengali; I was born in Bengal, my mother tongue was Bengali. (In Dhaka) In the beginning, I felt a little homesick; I never felt I was living in exile… and social life was good here. I missed the lifestyle of Calcutta, but gradually I got used to it. Partition of Bengal absurd, terribly, absurd, when we go to Calcutta usually we fly, but there have been times when we have crossed the border, and when we see the artificial border, no man's land, the people on one side and the people on the other side, they look alike, they speak to same language, the dress alike, the eat the same food. We are the same, we are not different, religion is something private, like loving your son or loving your husband, you worship your God in your own way, why make a display, why make it an issue, religion.[52]

Afifa Haq (also known as **Afifa Khatun**), now 75 years old, was born in Calcutta. The husband was the nephew of Fazlul Haq; the family was very active in Muslim League politics. At 46 was married with two children; particularly in purdah, then husband asked her to do social work for victims of the riots, so she came out of purdah. First time I went out to work, some other ladies also went, and my husband was directing the relief works, and in politics, he said I must…. And I found it very interesting. Based at Lady Brabourne College, some were in very bad condition, some were weeping and crying, and had injuries all over their bodies; some had head injuries…. The families are all scattered here and there. Somebody's asking for their family and children, a pathetic thing; we gave clothes, medicine, food, and children's milk. They were revengeful same time… a few people were very revengeful. That was the first time that I went out to do social work with other ladies, my husband asked me to do…. I liked the work.[53]

Hamida Khanna, or **Khatun,** now 73 years old, wife of Salahuddin Ahmed, in Calcutta during the Direct Action Day, at the time had just started as a lecturer at Lady Brabourne College. I have seen a little bit of 16 August. I used to stay in Park Circus, which was a totally Muslim area. At that time, 16 August was a holiday; the Muslim League declared 16 August a public holiday. I was at home on the fifth floor. In the afternoon, I was standing on the veranda at almost 5.30. I saw a huge crowd coming towards our area. I saw that people were carrying a new fan, brass, utensils, then I saw the furniture, then I realised this was not a simple gathering, there must be some sort of looting. I was very much scared. Just within a second, I saw that the people looted a shop on the other side of the road that belonged to a Hindu family. Then I realised that all the Hindus of that area, and Hindus who stayed in the Park Circus area, had already left. I must say, the whole night we could not sleep, we were hearing the sound *'Vande Mataram'*, and shouting '*Allah- uh Akbar'*, the whole night we were sitting, and did not do… shivering like anything. Finally, we opted for Pakistan, largely because we felt safer there.[54]

Khadija Rashid, I was young and newly married when the Partition happened. No one asked me questions about it, no one wanted to know. I am happy that I can now share my story. I was born in Pabna (now in Bangladesh) in 193. My father was the Assistant Headmaster of Bogra Zilla School. I had a big family with eight brothers and sisters, and I attended school in Bogra until the 10th grade. I left school in 1947 to get married at sixteen. My husband, Mohammad Haranur Rashid, was a professor at Presidency College in Kolkata. I moved to Kolkata with him, and we lived in the Park Circus area. I was happy in Kolkata until with began hearing of riots breaking out in different parts of town. As it was no longer safe to stay there, we moved back to Bogra after just a few months. The train ride from Kolkata to East Bengal was terrifying. Mobs would often attack trains, killing people indiscriminately. After the Partition, my husband was transferred to Rajshahi College in East Pakistan as a professor of Chemistry. My new life as a wife and mother began there. In those days, Rajshahi was a small town. Many of my neighbours started migrating to India, and by the 1950s, several big mansions were left empty. I remember how all the women wore a sari with their heads covered. The only difference was

that Hindu Women would also have sindur on their foreheads. Hindu men usually wore a Dhoti, and Muslim men wore a Payjama- kurta or Lungi. Although it was not very common to eat at each other's houses, we had good relations with one another. I lost my husband in 1982. We had five children, who are all grown up. I lived in Dhaka with my sons, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren.[55]

Sultan Jahan Saleque, who was born in 1928 and is now 88 years of age. Strikingly, she is quite well versed in English and was a student of Loreto School in Calcutta and Lady Brabourne College. Her father was the President of the Calcutta District of the Muslim League. In the years before Partition. She spoke lovingly about her childhood in Calcutta. For her, 'those were the days. She also narrated the history of Muslim settlement in Calcutta. 'I heard that the first Muslim family settled in Nimtallah ghat area of Calcutta. Actually, Nimtallah was the home of Nehmatullah, who was a tailor in the service of Shah Suja, subedar of Bengal. Then, when the East India Company established their headquarters here in Calcutta, Hindu cooks were not available. They hired Muslim cooks because they used to eat beef. Thus, there was the emergence of Khansamas, and even now, many streets of Calcutta are named after those Khansamas. Then, with the need to make uniforms for the Army, British residents of Lucknow brought some tailors from Lucknow and settled them over in Metiaburj. For this reason, you will find many streets in Calcutta are named after Ostagars. These Ostagars were tailors. Last of all came the Munshis. This is the history of Muslims in Calcutta. Even Mirza Ghalib came to Calcutta to work under the East India Company because he was not getting enough from the Delhi court. Ghalib described the nightlife of Calcutta, especially the courtesans, in a book called Araish-i-Mahfil. Ghalib described Calcutta as Jannat-ul-bilat, which means the place of heavenly palaces. [In our childhood] East India Company officials used to live in the Laldighi area, from where the British memsahibs used to go to the maidan every morning, and we used to call it 'vilaiti chakkar'. Top officials used to live in Metiaburj, which was known as 'Garden City'. As children, we used to play in the Maidan. The two main [football] teams were Mohan Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting. Not East Bengal at that time.[56]

Every year in the winter, the Viceroy came down, and my father would be invited to the Viceregal Lodge in Belvedere Road to attend the party. My mother used to visit public places wearing a burkha…Once, I went with her, and I felt so embarrassed that she was wearing a burkha when no one else was. We enjoyed both the best of Muslim society and the best of British society. But during that time, we were colonial slaves. I remember in our school at Loreto, everybody called us 'native girls'. I studied in Loreto till Class V. After that, I went to Sakhawat Memorial School from where I passed Matriculation in 1943; then I went to Brabourne College because it was founded by Fazlul Haque, and at that time, Fazlul Haque, Suhrawardy, and Nazimuddin all of them became premiers of Bengal. Suhrawardy Sahab was related to my family, as was Fazlul Haque Sahib. Naturally, I had to go to their college. I studied there till 1947. I took English honours. This was my life; then Partition happened. Most of my family members went away. My father had died by that time. Some of my brothers also left. I tried to get a government job, but I couldn't. I joined a Muslim NGO named Anjuman Mufidul Islam, and I just stuck there for 46 years…. This vivid and detailed account captures the pathos of young lives, ambushed by partition. It tells us more than dry facts can about the trauma caused to substantial, settled lives by political upheavals. Sultana Saleque also had a vivid memory of the Great Calcutta Killing of 1946: 'I remember that during the great Calcutta killing, Suhrawardy was the chief minister. In my area, I saw that Hindu houses were looted. I also saw the dead bodies in the vans. The Muslim League office was in Ripon Street, where we used to live. But we didn't leave our house, we stayed in our house; My father was ready with his guns. But, since that was the Saheb para (the Civil Lines), we were safe. The city was divided. No one was leaving their neighbourhood. We didn't have any food for four days, but since rice and pulses used to arrive from our village lands, my mother cooked us rice and dal. We used to eat that with mango pickle. After four days, when our servant went to New Market, he

only managed to get a pumpkin, and for the first time after four days, we ate rice with pumpkin. My dhobi vanished; he never returned, maybe he was killed. Our jamadar vanished; he never returned. We saved another servant of ours. When the police came, we handed him over. This is what I have seen. Partition is a living reality for Sultana Saleque and a real tragedy. She lamented, 'All that is past history. My family is now vanished from this part of the world. I'm its debris left over here. After Partition, little by little, my family disintegrated… They thought they would have a better future if they moved to Pakistan. Our ancestral home was in Islampur in Maldah. But after Partition, we just gave up…we just gave up. We never went to our village after Partition. We had land in Dumka in Santhal Parganas. We never claimed 150 bighas of land there because we knew if we went there, we would be massacred. One of my uncles was killed over there; he was actually hacked to pieces. You know, I never meet any of my friends any- more.[57]

Miratun Nahar, who was a Professor in Victoria College, Calcutta, and lives in retirement in present-day West Bengal, shared with me her experiences of Partition. For her, the Partition upset her entire family, and she spoke to me about the determination of her mother and her maternal grandmother to resist this destabilising tragedy. Bengali Muslim women- the determination of her maternal grandmother and her mother. I will quote her exactly because, as pointed out by oral historians, the "organization of the narrative. reveals a great deal of the speakers' relationships to their history, and their narratives also signal something about their perception. 'Partition did affect our family. My father was a well-educated person. My parents got married in a village named Gorugachi in 24 Parganas. The two of them lived in Calcutta after their marriage. Two years after their marriage, riots started in Calcutta. My mother was a very determined person. After the riots, she decided to leave Calcutta.' *('Deshbhager probhab amader poribare poreche… Amar baba sikhshito manush chilen… Babar biye hoy 24 Parganar Gorugachi namok grame… Biyer por baba ma kolkatay thakte suru koren… Biyer thik du bochor por danga suru hoy… Amader poribarer jeta holo… Amar ma khub drihro chitter mohila chilen… sei danga dyakhar por ar kichutei kolkatay thakte raji holen na*). Her mother, Nurun Nahar, refused to fall in with her father's wishes. Nurun Nahar went back to her village home. 'In this way, a pre-partition riot flung a family from a city to a village. My mother's stubbornness forced us to stay in a village. Village life was very different in those days…We faced lots of difficulties…While our family was educated, the entire population of this village was illiterate… Our school was situated very far away. We repeatedly wondered why Mother had chosen to settle there. Had my family been illiterate, perhaps I would have grown up illiterate too. I faced lots of difficulties…perhaps they would have seemed trivial to others…Partition alone was responsible for all those adversities.' ('*Deshbhager purber danga ekti poribar ke shohor jibon theke gram jibone fele dilo. Amader grame thakar kotha noy. kintu mayer jeder karone Tokhonkar gramjibon ekhonkar moton chilo na, amader onek badha perote hoyeche… Amader poribar sikhshito hole ki hobe, baki ar sobai osikhshito…onek durer school e porte jete hocche. Barbar mone hoyeche ma kano chole elen. Jodi sikhshito poribarer meye na hotam, grame porashona puro bondhoi hoye jeto Amake onek protikulota dekhte hoyeche… eta hoyeto oneker jonyei kichu na, kintu amar khetre sudhu deshbhager jonyei ghoteche!)* 'Had I stayed in Calcutta in those days, I could have experienced much else… I wanted to learn singing. (*Ami Jodi Kolkata shohore boro hotam. onekgulo dik dekhte petam…gan sekhar khubicche chilo*).[58]

She told a story that bore witness to the determination of her mother and her grandmother, both ordinary Bengali Muslim women, to have their own way: 'Both my father and maternal grandfather were in government jobs. During Partition, they were given the option to go to East Pakistan if they wanted to. My father was ready to go. Everyone was migrating, leaving this country during that time. Those who were educated and belonged well-to-do families left; everyone left. But my mother said, impossible, I can't move to another country!' (*Amar baba ebong dadu dujonei sarkari chakri*

korten..Partition er somoye tader option dewa hoyechilo, tara Jodi chay, Purba Pakistan e jete pare. Baba jete cheyechilo…tokhon sobai chole jacche e desh chere, jara ektu sikhshito, ektu sombhranto poribar… keu ar baki chilo na… kintu Ma bollen, osombhob, ami bhinno deshe jete parbo na!) Because of my mother, my father decided not to leave, and he rejected the option' (*Ma er jonne baba jete parlen na… Baba reject korlen*). Miratun Nahar also narrated her grandmother's determination not to leave her natal home: 'My maternal grandfather was well versed in Islamic philosophy. He thought, since an entire state has been formed on the basis of Islam, I have to move there.' (*Amar nana bhison bhalo Islam janten. Islam Dorshon. supondit chilen…tini bhebechilen puro Islam ke bhitti kore akta rashtro toiri hocche, amake oi rashtre jete hobe*). And Miratun's grandfather did leave for East Pakistan. However, her grandmother, Noor Jahan, refused to leave. Thus, a Bengali-Muslim woman, in the fullness of her years, refused to conform to her husband's will, in this, most wrenching of all decisions. The decision, brave as it was, cost them dearly in terms of family. The Partition divided their family; almost every relative migrated to East Pakistan. They remained alone on this side of the border.[59]

Rizia Rahaman also wrote poignantly about her attachment to the city of Calcutta. She and her family left Calcutta on the early morning of 1949. She also blamed the 'emotionless politics', which was ultimately responsible for the creation of East Pakistan. But for her, Calcutta remained her 'Desh'. As she puts it, '*sei shobdomoy shohor, bhabanipurer purono para, sei baritai hoye roilo amar sishumoner onubhober chena Desh*' (that chattering city, that old neighbourhood of Bhabanipur, that house remained within my heart as my Desh)'. Her narrative is shot through with an intense desire to return to her childhood world in Calcutta. Her family fled the city when the first riots broke out. They left Bhabanipur for a safe place in Manicktala and from there, they left forever.'.[60]

Mariam Ali was born in 1936; her father was a barrister, and her paternal grandfather was a zamindar (landowner) in Arambagh in the district of Hooghly. She spent her childhood in Bhowanipore, Bengal. She attended St. John's Diocesan Girls' Higher Secondary School, one of the oldest educational institutions in Calcutta. Graduated from Lady Brabourne College, the first Muslim women's College in the city, and post-graduation from the University of Calcutta. She served as a teacher of geography in different schools in the city for several years. Before 1947, all communities lived and worked together cooperatively in the city. On the day of Eid al Fitr once the Namaz had been held, my mother and aunts would distribute several trays of sweets among their Hindu neighbours in Bhowanipore. In 1947, a few days after independence, my siblings and I were playing on the terrace of our paternal grandfather's house on Harish Mukerjee Road, when our watchman came running in and announced that a riot had started in a nearby locality called Kazipara. From the terrace, we could see smoke rising in the distance. Soon afterwards, we saw the maulvi of the local mosque running down the street in bloodstained clothes. His cries of "*Maar Dala, Mar Dala*." It still rings in my ears. Our family spent the entire day locked inside the house. The next morning, the watchman told my family that Hindu shops had been vandalised as well. The next day, our family travelled to Park Circus, a Muslim majority neighbourhood of the city, believing that we would be safer there. Although many people migrated, my father refused to leave. He was the registrar of the Calcutta High Court and did not want to start his career all over again in a new country. He said that he wanted to die on the same soil on which he was born. My family and I continued to live in Calcutta.[61]

Sharmili Ahmed, whose family left for East Pakistan after Partition. She writes: '*Amar janmasthan Murshidabad… Baharampur Saharer kachei Domkol er kache se gramer nam Bhelurchak… Gramer president Amar Nana… Chollish bochor dhore tini sei pode chilen*' (Murshidabad was my birthplace… The name of my village was Bhelurchak, which was near Baharampur town, near Domkol… My maternal Grandfather was the President of the village… and he remained in that post for 40 years. Sharmili's narratives move on… '*1947 sale desh bhag hoye gyalo.*

Rajnaitik karonei babake nijer sei desh chere purbo pakistaner rajshahite chole jete holo, chirotore…baba akai border periye chole esechilen purbo pakistan e. Ebong 2-4 jon bondhu bandhober sohayotay sorkari chakrio peye gechilen… Koyek masher modhyei chotto akta bari bhara kore ma ke niye eshe songsar paten sei notun desher notun thikanay (Partition happened in 1947. My father migrated to Rajshahi of East Pakistan, forced out of his own country for purely political reasons. Father crossed the border alone. And with the help of a few friends, he got a government job there… He took my mother with him to a new home in that new country within a few months. The whole family was displaced: '*Amra chole ashar por dada dadi osthir hoye othen. Orao ar o deshe thakte chaichilen na.Aste aste jomijoma exchange kore fellen. Kintu bari tinti ar bikri korte parenni.* (When we left, my paternal grandparents became helpless. They also left their country. They exchanged all their belongings…But they didn't manage to sell the three houses they owned. In this way, this Muslim family was uprooted and unhoused by this cataclysm.[62]

5.4. A Comparative Study of West Bengal Muslim Women and East Pakistan

Muslim women in erstwhile East Pakistan were transformed into an activist group, trying to identify their identity while fighting for their own rights. This compels one to ponder over the reasons for the sustained stagnation and isolation their respective social and cultural, and perhaps political milieu may provide an answer to this question. Women's activism in both sides of Bengal emanated from an awareness against state repression and not from a specific gender issue. Strong connections to the women's movement helped to create an awareness of gendered identity, covering a spectrum of issues, including female education, employment, and the battle for legal rights. In West Bengal, the women's movement had been radicalised by the political activism of Hindu refugee women. They were initially more concerned with questions such as livelihood, relief, shelter, and rehabilitation, and later rallied around the organisations that fought for women's rights and legal reforms. But in West Bengal, there were no opportunities for Muslim girls. Muslim society was slow to establish schools or colleges, hostels for the girls. They built 2.68%of the city's total schools. The situation in rural Bengal was worse. Language posed a major problem in the educational sector; even madrasah learning could not overcome this obstacle. This was primarily due to the fact that, in the madrasah system, the medium of instruction in Arabic, which is not the mother tongue of the Bengali Muslims. After the Partition, the Ashraf families started learning Bengali and Hindi instead of Urdu, and began writing Urdu in the Devnagari script. Interestingly, Bengali-speaking Muslims of West Bengal are eager to learn Urdu, which that considered a symbol of status. It is paradoxical that East Pakistan's Bengali Muslim women fought against state repression and demanded legal reforms; their women's movement, led by educated middle-class women, accelerated the pace of reform. However, political constraints prevented women activists in this country from agitating for changes in Muslim personal law. Muslim women in West Bengal deeply felt the absence among them of Rokey's ideas, and also felt the loss of their East Pakistan counterparts, such as leading activists Begum Sufia Kamal, Mahmuda Khatun Siddiqa, Shamsunnahar Mahmud, Khadija Khatun, Nilima Ibrahim, Jahanara Arjoo, Jabeda Khanam, Daulatunnesa, Laila Samad, and others, who carried on the cultural crusade against seclusion by taking part, as an act of emancipation, in music, dance, literary discourse, and stage performance in their country. An ethnic, linguistic, and cultural nationalism was centred on Bengali identity. Enable East Pakistan Muslim women to locate their own gender identity within a larger Bengali one. This was not the case with Muslim women in Bengal.[63]

6. Conclusion

The experience of women during the Partition of the Indian Sub-continent indicated the specific challenges they faced during and after the riots. As refugees, women's experiences often differ from those of men of the same religious community. In fact, the similarity in the experiences of Indian and Pakistani women reveals the importance of undertaking a study on the gendered impacts of Partition-related violence.[64] Moreover, the persistent disempowerment of women as refugees shows the inadequacy of government efforts. In this study, I seek to highlight the condition of marginalised Muslim women in Bengal in the aftermath of Partition, as well as their lived experiences during the period of Partition. While Muslims Women in Bengal were largely confined within the system of 'purdah', in the subsequent years, they gradually transcended these boundaries and increasingly engaged in diverse forms of social participation and public activities.[65] Nevertheless, during this period, the escalation of communal violence reached such proportions that Muslim women could no longer perceive themselves as secure within the nation. A sense of vulnerability that deeply shaped their migration, choices and everyday lived experiences in the aftermath of Partition. Consequently, many Muslim women were compelled to migrate, not merely out of fear and insecurity, but also in the hope of securing employment and access to socio-economic resources. This pursuit of livelihood opportunities highlights the gendered dimensions of Partition migration, where women's displacement was shaped as much by structural economic deprivation as by the communal violence that rendered them vulnerable in their homeland.[66] As a consequence, Hindu women sought refuge by migrating from East Pakistan to West Bengal, while Muslim women from West Bengal relocated to East Pakistan in an attempt to safeguard themselves. This cross-border migration underscores how women, across religious communities, negotiated migration as a strategy for survival and security in the turbulence of the aftermath of Partition. By using these oral histories, I have tried to show that there are narratives of ordinary Bengali Muslim Women that tell of their suffering, their daring and their solidarity that have been obscured by a historiography with the high politics of Partition. Though there exists a feminist historiography of Partition, the traumas and mentalities of Hindu and Sikh women are the prime concerns of this scholarship. Muslim women have been silenced by these narratives. Historical silence has been accompanied by familial silence: these tales of family disintegration that so shaped the destinies of Bengali Muslim women during Partition hardly find a place in collective memory and remain at the margins of our historiography. If we intend to write a gendered history of the Partition of Bengal, we have to hear the voice of Bengali Muslim women; otherwise, Partition studies are destined to remain incomplete. In a modest way, I have attempted in this article to remedy their neglect in existing historiography. There remains plenty of scope to retrace the history of pattern, development and course of Bengali Muslim womanhood. If we broaden our understanding of the experiences of Bengali Muslim women during Partition, it will add another dimension to our historical comprehension of this momentous time.[67]

End Notes

1. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. (various issues, 1946).
2. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. (various issues, 1 September 1946).
3. *Census of India*. (various issues,1951).
4. *Jugantar*. (various issues, 20 August 1946).
5. Chakrabarti, G. (2005). *Coming Out of Partition: Refugee Women of Bengal*. Bluejay Books, New Delhi.
6. Ray, A. (1990). The High Politics of Partition: The Revisionist Perspective. *Modern Asian Studies*, 24(2), 385-408.
7. Menon, R., Bhasin, K. (1998). *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. Delhi, Kali for Women.
8. Ibid.
9. Chatterji, J. (1995). *Bengal Divided, Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932- 1947*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
10. Das, S. (1991). *Communal Riots in Bengal 1905-1947*. New Delhi, Oxford University Press.
11. Chakrabarti, G. (2005). *Coming Out of Partition: Refugee Women of Bengal*. Bluejay Books, New Delhi.
12. Chakrabarti, P. (2018). *The Refugee Women: Partition of Bengal, Gender, and the Political*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
13. Bagchi, J, Dasgupta. S. (2003). *The Trauma and the Triumph: Gender and Partition and Eastern India*. Stree.
14. Islam, S. (2018). Partition, Migration, and Muslim Women in Bengal: Memory, Identity, and Marginalisation. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 53(32), 45-53.
15. Ray, B. (2002), *Early Feminists of Colonial India: Sarala Davi Chaudhurani, Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi. P. 51.
16. Seabrook, Jeromi, S. (2011). *People Without History: India's Muslim Ghettos.* Pluto Press, New York:
17. Amin, S. N. (1992). 'Women and Society', in Sirajul Islam (eds), *History of Bangladesh 1704-1971*, Vol. 3 *(Social and Cultural History),* Dhaka, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, p.741.
18. Hasan, Z, Menon. R. (2004). *Unequal Citizens: A Study of Muslim Women in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
19. Aktar, S, Bhomik, M. (Eds). (1998). *Janana Mahfil: Bengali Musalman Lekhikar Nirbachit Rachana 1904-1938*, [in Bengali], Calcutta, Stree.
20. Das, S. (2000). The 1992 Calcutta Riot in historical continuum: A relapse into 'communal fury'? *Modern Asian Studies*, 34(2), 281-306.
21. Sinha, S. (1995). *The Quest for Modernity and the Bengali Muslims 1921- 47*. Calcutta, Minerva Association Publication.
22. Roohi, S. (2011). *Unbecoming Citizens: Muslim Women in Calcutta*. Retrieved 2011, from https://www.academia.edu.
23. Chakrabarti, U. (2001). Muslims at the Crossroad: Quest for Identity 1400-1947. *Education and Empowerment: Women in South Asia*, Calcutta, Bethun School Pratisthan Samiti.
24. Chatterji, J. (2007). *The Spoils of Partition, Bengal and India, 1947-1967.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
25. Das, V. (1990). *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots, and Survivors in South Asia*. Delhi, Oxford University Press.
26. Das, S. (2000). Bengali Muslims and the 1947 Partition: Migration and Gendered experiences. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35(36), 3119-3125.
27. Majumdar, S. (2023). Calcutta Riots of August 1946: Muslim Experiences from the Troubled Times. *Refugee Watch: A South Asia Journal on Forced Migration*.
28. Mitra, A. (1990). The Great Calcutta Killings of 1946: What Went before and after. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 25 (5), 273-277+279-281+283-285. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4395903.

29. Samaddar, R. (2017). 'Policing a riot-torn city: Kolkata, 16-18 August 1946. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 19(1), 39-60. https://doi.org/10.80/14623528.2016.1224526.

30. Sinha, D, Dasgupta, A, Choudhury, & A. (2011). *1946: The Great Calcutta Killings and Noakhali Genocide*. Tuhina Prakashani, Kolkata.

31. Department -Political [C.R]. (16-20th August, 1946). Disturbances and Action, taken. West Bengal State Archive, Calcutta.

32. Das, S. (1990). Communal Violence in Twentieth Century Colonial Bengal: An Analytical Framework. *Social Scientist*, 18(7), 21-37. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3517477.

33. Dutta, P.K. (1999). *Communal Ideology in Early Twentieth-Century Bengal.* New Delhi, Oxford University Press.

34. Batabyal, R. (2005). *Communalism in Bengal: From Famine to Noakhali. New Delhi*, Sage Publication.

35. Roy, A. (2018). *Making Peace, Making Riots: Communalism and Communal Violence in Bengal 1940-1947*. Cambridge University Press.

36. Roy, A. (2005). Silenced Voices: Muslim Women's Narratives of the Partition of Bengal. *Journal of South Asian Studies,* 28(2), 251-270.

37. Khan, Y. (2015). Muslim Refugee Women in West Bengal after 1947: Violence, Trauma, and Rehabilitation. *Journal of Bengal Studies*, 10(2), 77-95.

38. *The Civil & Military Gazette*. (various issues, 24 August 1946).

39. Siddiqui, M.K.A. (1974). *Muslims of Calcutta: A Study of Aspects of their Social Organisation*. Calcutta, Anthropological Survey of India, Government of India Publication.

40. Bandyopadhyay, S. (2000). *Itihasher Dike Phire Chhechallisher Danga*. Calcutta, Utso Manush.

41. Chakrabarti, I. (1998). '*Deshbhag- Deshantar: Koyekti Meyeli Brittanta' Khoj Akhon* (Journal in Bengali), p.81.

42. Chakrabarti, S. M. (2014). *The Marginal Voice: Muslim Women and the Partition of the Bengal*. Niyogi Books.

43. Sarkar, M. (2002). Muslim women and the politics of invisibility in late colonial Bengal. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 14(2), 226-250.

44. Sarkar, M. (2001). *Visible Histories, Disappearing Women: Producing Muslim Womenhood in Late Colonial Bengal*. Duke University Press.

45. Jahan, R. (2014). Gendered Experiences of Displacement: Muslim Women and Post-Partition Bengal. *South Asia Research*, 34 (3), 245-260.

46. Zamindar, V.F.Y. (1999). 'Muslim Women and the Partition of India: Between Migration and Survival, *Modern Asian Studies*, 33(2), 342-369.

47. Ali, U.R. (2009). 'Muslim Women and the Partition of India: A Historical Silence'. *Ialamic Studies*, 48(3), 425-436. https://www.jstor.org/stable/20839174.

48. Lambert- H, S.T. (2017). Narrating Trauma, Constructing Binaries: Partition in Muslim Women's Autobiographical Writings, in: Mahn, C. & Murphy, A. *Partition and the Practice of Memory*, ECSAS Volume: London, 115-130.

49. Roy, A. (2017). Women and Partition of Bengal: A Case Study of Muslim Women Refugees in West Bengal. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences,* 22 (3), 55-64.

50. Ray Chaudhuri, A. (2012). 'Remembering the Communal Violence of 1950 in Hooghly'. *Journal of Borderland Studies*, 27(1), 45-59. https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2012.687206.

51. Karim, J. (2018). Interviewed by A. Whitehead. Transcript and Recordings, Special Collection, SOAS. https://www.soas.ac.uk.

52. Murshed, L. (2018). Interviewed by A. Whitehead. Transcript and Recordings, Special Collection, SOAS. https://www.soas.ac.uk.

53. Haque, A. (2018). Interviewed by A. Whitehead. Transcript and Recordings, Special Collection, SOAS. https://www.soas.ac.uk.

54. Khanna, H. (2018). Interviewed by A. Whitehead. Transcript and Recordings, Special Collection, SOAS. https://www.soas.ac.uk.

55. Rashid, K. (2017). Interviewed by F. Afroz. The 1947 Partition Archives. https://www.1947partitionarchive.org/.

56. Saleque, J. (2016, 1st June). Interviewed by P. Banerjee, at her residence at 32, Bright Street, Park Circus, Kolkata.

57. Ibid.

58. Nahar, M. (2016, 2nd June). Interviewed by P. Banerjee, at her residence at 64 G Linton Street, Park Circus, Kolkata

59. Ibid

60. Rahaman, R. (2015). Amader Parar nam Bhabanipur [in Bengali]. In R. Ray (Ed), *Paschim theke Purbobange: Deshbodaler Smriti* [West to East Bengal: Remembrance of change of country] Kolkata: Gangchil.

61. Ali, M. (2017). Interviewed by S. Sircar. The 1947 Partition Archives. https://www.1947partitionarchive.org/.

62. Ahmed, S. (2015). Amar Balyabelar Desh [in Bengali] R. Ray (Ed), *Paschim theke Purbobange: Deshbodaler Smriti* [West to East Bengal: Remembrance of change of country] Kolkata: Gangchil.

63. Basu. J. (2013). *Reconstructing Bengal Partition: The Psyche under a different violence*. Kolkata: Samya Publication.

64. Dutta, N. (2009). *Violence, Martyrdom and Partition: A Daughter's Testimony*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

65. Sharma, R, Velath, P.M. (2021). 'Encountering 'identity': Refugee Women and the Partition of the Subcontinent'. *Journal of Migration Affairs*, 4(1), 95-109. https://doi.org/10.36931/jma.2021.4.1.95-109.

66. Gossman, A.P. (1999). *Riots and Victims: Violence and the Construction of Communal Identity Among Bengali Muslims, 1905-1947*. United Kingdom: Westview Press, A member of the Perseus Books Group.

67. Banerjee. P. (2012). *In Search of an Identity: Experience of Bengali Muslim Women 1920-1950*. Unpublished MPhil Dissertation, Department of History, Jamia Milia Islamia, 2016, New Delhi.