



**The Role of Inter- Religious Empathy in Building Peace and
National Integrity: The Bangladesh Perspective**

M. Phil. Thesis

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of Philosophy

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Declaration

The thesis titled “The Role of Inter- Religious Empathy in Building Peace and National Integrity: The Bangladesh Perspective” has been submitted to the University of Dhaka for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy. This is my own work that has been carried out under the supervision of Mohammad Jahangir Alam, Associate Professor, Department of World Religions and Culture, University of Dhaka.

I, hereby, would like to declare that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been published previously.

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Approval of the Supervisor

This is to certify that the current research work, “The Role of Inter- Religious Empathy in Building Peace and National Integrity: The Bangladesh Perspective”, submitted by Rahima Akhter is an outcome of her independent and original work. She has carried out her research under my direct supervision.

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis or any part of it has not been submitted elsewhere for publication.

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Abstract

To begin with, the current research proposes sympathy and empathy as important as the two sides of the same coin. The subject presented in this discourse is identified to be much related and they are really two sides of the same coin. Thus understood, this should be an ability of a human being to understand and share the feelings of others that actually works as the “golden rule of religion”. As per the findings of the research, it is worthwhile to mention that in order to promote human flourishing one should have sympathy and empathy for others. This is how human beings can increase their ability of fellow feelings with a view to improving the quality of life. Practically speaking, people cannot strengthen their moral and ethical footing of being called human beings unless they are empathetic toward others. Although sympathy and empathy are concerned with welfare for others empathy, in particular, is always vital than sympathy that is explained in different parts of this thesis. In short, empathy, however, is greater than compassion. From its functional point of view, empathy brings a change with heart and lets one feel to walk in the other’s shoes to experience the distress of others. As a result, a society full of love and kindness can be assured if each one feels the pains of others as their own. If we think about the matter from the positivist point of view, this is the highest form of religion i.e. the religion of humanity that all religions propagate.

Moreover, this thesis examines the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity giving special attention to Bangladesh's perspective. It has been found that inter-religious empathy is needed in building peace for national integrity in Bangladesh. It is a very effective way of combating terrorism and religious fanaticism. Empathy is needed in every aspect of society and everyone should admire

and practice empathy with utmost importance. Although empathy is crucial for the peaceful living, research works on empathy are not sufficient. Few works have been done on ‘inter-religious dialogue’ but the basis of interfaith dialogue i.e., “empathy” still remains silent in those studies.

This research work tends to suggest that empathy is the root concept of every religion. Thus, without the knowledge of a core concept of religion one cannot be a genuine human being. The world should come to the conclusion and feel the need of an inclusive society consisting of all irrespective of race, color, and religion. Pluralism and peaceful coexistence, thus, should be emphasized as the most important global issues. And first and foremost, greater importance has to be given to inter-religious dialogue in order to ensure understanding and peace among the different faiths. Notably, it has been explored in this research that a fruitful and productive inter-religious dialogue depends on ‘empathy’. In fact, empathy initiates inter-religious dialogue, because, without a genuine mind of empathy, as this research agrees, all these efforts on inter-religious dialogue are mere a series of talk-shows and may go in vain.

Furthermore, through this research work, a humble attempt has been taken to discuss and explore the role and necessity of inter-religious empathy for an effective inter-religious dialogue and its role in building up national integrity. It has been assumed and thereby analyzed that the proper practice of empathy may translate the statement into a reality that “all human beings are equal”. Empathy influences the thinking process and nurtures one’s mind to think more deeply and positively. Empathy in inter-religious dialogue, thus, can ensure mutual understanding, accepting, and respecting the different faiths and practices so that people do not hamper one another’s faith. This world is a pluralistic world, and we have to live in this world

with harmony. Harmony, as the child of sympathy, also denotes accepting the differences, respecting, and enjoying those differences. Being empathetic makes us a perfect human being because empathy reflects humanity.

The world is trembling with the fear of the consequences of terrorism and desperately searching for solutions. Different catalysts work about terrorism and try to explain the psychology of terrorism; psychologists and social scientists have noticed that there has a violent mind behind terrorism. This study explores that lack of empathy has a large role in creating a terrorist mindset. It has been found that terrorists are most of the time brainwashed and they do not have any kind of concept of empathy in their minds. A motivation for terrorism includes a monolithic concept of the world which denotes that 'others' are 'non-human' or 'sub-human'. This concept compels them (terrorists) to think that they are only superior and right and others are inferior and wrong. This tendency leads to extremism and terrorism.

In examining the motivators behind terrorism, this study explains that a society and culture lack of empathy motivates and compels one to become a terrorist. Empathy is not an inborn quality; it is learned. Political and social factors can work as driving forces behind terrorism. A society needs a balanced political and social empathetic resource. For example; for a healthy upbringing, the basic needs of human beings must be ensured. A stable political and economic environment is a must for a healthy social atmosphere. If anyone born and lives in a society where he or she faces discrimination, inferiority complex on the basis of race, color, religion, economic background, and body structure, he or she is at great risk of involving in extremism and terrorism. Because, discrimination is the absence of empathy and this absence of empathy makes anyone more self-centric, and consequently it compels them to hate and kill the others.

This research work concludes that inter-religious empathy can mitigate this problem on a large scale. Inter-religious empathy gives one the ability to think the other's pain and this can prevent killing and hatred. Psychological and social motivators that worked for the rise of extremism can be eliminated through a sense of genuine empathy. Inter-religious empathy can be a solution for bringing back those victims who were being brainwashed and inspired to become terrorists. Through the teachings of inter-religious empathy, one can get back those lost fellow feelings and love for their brethren.

Development and national integrity depend on the stability of a sovereign state. Not only by financial indicators but also a country's development can be measured by its religious harmony and stability of peace in that particular country. By realizing inter-religious empathy in Bangladesh, the investigator seen that Bangladesh is a country of religious empathy. The people of Bangladesh have been peace-loving in nature and accepted a multi-religious and multi-cultural environment from the ancient period. The history suggests that from the beginning of the Pala Dynasty, there existed a peaceful, progressive pluralistic society consisting of different faiths, although the Sena Dynasty was aggressive and fanatic in nature. This is why people of this land rejected the Sena Dynasty.

The history of religion in Bangladesh is one of the peaceful and harmonious histories of egalitarianism. After the liberation war of Bangladesh, Bangladesh has had adopted secularism in its Constitution as one of its four pillars. The term secularism introduced by founder of Bangladesh. It was different from the western idea of secularism. Bangladeshi concept of secularism ensures that all the religions are equally respected and grants equal rights for the believers of all religions. Through political upheavals, this country has witnessed many changes in its Constitution. National and

international conspiracies are going on to turn Bangladesh into a country of extremism. But the people reject all the conspiracy.

A matter of great concern is that Bangladesh is not safe from the ongoing global terrorism. Terrorism is a global problem and for geographic and geo-political status, Bangladesh is at great risk of being a safe haven for terrorism. To explore the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity in Bangladesh, the researcher has conducted interview sessions with respondents from various disciplines. As the respondents opine, public awareness is a must for preventing religious hatred. Inter-religious dialogue and empathy should be practiced in the family also. The government should make it compulsory for the education curriculum. The education system needs to be reformed and teachings of inter-religious harmony and practical sessions for dialogue should be applied as a compulsory syllabus. Implementation of the law is a must for preventing terrorism. Political stability and democracy should be maintained. The role of religious leaders is very crucial in establishing inter-religious empathy as they can preach the message of harmony and empathy. Mass media can play a vital role in preventing hatred and can spread the notions of harmony and inter-religious empathy. Overall a systematic step is needed to develop inter-religious harmony and empathy with the support of all sections of people.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABT	Ansarullah Bangla Team
AL	Awami League
BCE	Before Common Era
BNP	Bangladesh National Party
BTV	Bangladesh Television
CE	Common Era
CIID	Centre for Inter-religious and Inter-cultural Dialogue
HUJI	Harkat-ul Jihad-al-Islami
IARF	International Association for Religious Freedom
IS	Islamic State
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
JMB	Jamaat-U-Mujahideen in Bangladesh
JMJB	Jagrata Muslim Jananta Bangladesh
KAICIID	King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz International Centre for Inter-religious and Inter-cultural Dialogue
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PBUH	Peace Be Upon Him
PKK	Partiya Karkeren Kurdistane

URI United Religions Initiative

US United States

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

This thesis attempts to explore the role and effectiveness of interfaith empathy in building peace and national integrity in the context of Bangladesh. The relation between religion and mankind is so firm that it has been said that ‘mankind is incurably religious’ (Geisler, 2003). The majority of the world population has religious beliefs and practices but to its utter dismay conflicts in the name of religion are occurring and shedding blood almost all over the world. These conflicts are occurring centering religion as the major cause. But the fact is, there is no religion in the world which does not teach and encourage peace. Religions are for peace. This thesis tends to explore why people, having irreligious beliefs, do not practice their religions accordingly. They are devoid of a major component of religion and that is ‘empathy’. Empathy is that human quality that distinguishes one from a beast. This research work focuses on the latent value of empathy which is much needed in today’s world because empathy initiates social concern, fellow feeling, love, sense of harmony, and psychological tranquility. In the next chapter, the doctrine of empathy has been described. The prime issue from this research work is establishment of empathy; the reason is that without creating a feeling of empathy in the core of mind, proper peaceful coexistence of different religions is quite impossible.

1.2. Research Questions

Research work is properly conducted based on one or two central research questions. Besides, central questions may also propose a few sub-central research questions to further clarify the whole research work. In this research work, however, the researcher has attempted to analyze the background of the problem and its current situations. In this work, overall terrorism and its nature, background, and origin have been discussed to explore the origin of terrorism in Bangladesh. In this regard, the role of inter-religious empathy in eradicating terrorism has got importance. The impacts of inter-religious empathy in achieving national integrity and development from Bangladesh perspective have been explored. At this point, the research has put forwards to central questions along with sub-central questions.

1.2.1. Central Questions

1. To what extent inter-religious empathy can build peace and national integrity in Bangladesh?
2. What are the major hindrances toward building inter-religious empathy in the mind of the common people in Bangladesh?
3. How can the youths of Bangladesh play a positive role in building peace and national integrity through the practices of inter-religious empathy?

1.2.2. Associated Sub-questions

1. How does the psychology of terrorism work?
2. What do cause exclusivist and monolithic concepts of religion in the mind?

3. How much inter-religious dialogue could be fruitful if it is initiated from inter-religious empathy?

1.3. The necessity of the Research Problem

From the early stages of religions, violence occurred in the name of religions, and still, in today's world, heinous crimes in the name of religions are being committed. Religions have been misused by powerful rulers in the past; unfortunately, the situation remains the same only the tactics have been changed. Religions are now an important element in power politics, geopolitics, and overall world politics. Religious harmony has been destroyed intentionally to gain personal benefits. All the religions of the world follow more or less the same religious outline and all the religions put utmost importance in peace. Despite the majority of the world population is religious, 'peace' remains unachievable and still, we are struggling for peace. The main problem is, we do not look at the problem that is hampering peace. Peace is only possible when everyone will respect the existence of others and will have mutual acceptance and will love humankind eradicating selfish desires. The Bengali meaning of religion is more comprehensive than the English term 'religion'. In Bengali religion is 'Dharma' which means 'to hold'. In explaining the dharma, it can be said that dharma is the nature of the objects. Such as the 'dharma' of water is to provide 'coolness', 'dharma' of fire is to 'burn', accordingly the 'dharma' of the human being is 'humanity', thus without the 'dharma' of humanity a human being cannot be called human being at all (Islam, 2002). To make it clear, it can be said that religion is the sense and power of human beings which provides motivations to distinguish between right or wrong. In the ancient *Manu Samhita*, there are ten symptoms of religion which narrate the nature of religion, they are; tolerance, forgiveness,

control over mind and desire, non-stealing exhibited by the attributes like honesty and integrity, purity, control over sensory organs, wisdom, knowledge, truthfulness, and absence of anger (Islam, 2002).

All these attributes are primary factors of religion and without any one of these symptoms, religion could not survive. All these above-mentioned attributes and definitions of religion can be translated into one that is 'empathy'. It is impossible to think of religion without empathy. Empathy makes a person's religion stronger. Inter-religious empathy is the precondition of inter-religious dialogue. Because dialogue has become a fashion but it is also an intellectual and political necessity. Inter-religious dialogue is about understanding the believers of other religions and this understanding is to accept the difference of opinion and perspectives of different religious philosophies with an open heart. Acceptance is not a conversion or believing oneself to others' faith. It is the acceptance of heterogeneity and diversity of religious beliefs. It is impossible to convert all into one faith. Even in the sacred texts of different religions have stated that mankind should live peacefully because it is the will of God that He has created mankind into many sects. Thus, despite turning all into one faith, it is easier to accept the ultimate truth i.e. 'religions are many but mankind is one'. Based on this truth inter-religious empathy has been evolved because without accepting this truth from the core of the heart, inter-religious dialogue is undoubtedly meaningless and consequently world peace is impossible.

Inter-religious dialogue and racial harmony in South Asia has been a characteristic scenario for a long time since the arrival of Christianity and Islam in this area. For centuries thereafter the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Christians lived side by side in peace and harmony. Though there have always been some local conflicts

between the people of different religions, there were amicable solutions with the interferences of the people of goodwill belonging to respective religions, but in the recent years, the rise of religious fundamentalism and fanaticism changed the peaceful situation and goodwill of establishing peace. Even in the context of Bangladesh, the situation is changing negatively. Bangladesh has been regarded as the country of inter-religious harmony but recently the alarming rise of fanaticism and extremism proved to be the hindrances in the way of inter-religious harmony. This extremism resulted in heinous incidents like the Holey Artisan massacre that occurred at a restaurant in July 2016 in Dhaka. This incident shook the world and the people of Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi people have become speechless by this incident because they are not familiar with these types of massacres in the name of religion. The consequences of this terrorist attack were not in favor of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has faced difficulties in every sphere including economic, political, foreign policy, and sports. Bangladesh has always been a fertile land for communication. As a result, terrorists have cunning eyes on Bangladesh for spreading their network by making Bangladesh a hub of terrorists. The people of Bangladesh rejected these types of terrorist attacks all the time and the Government of Bangladesh showed 'zero tolerance' on terrorism and tackled the situation strongly. It is stated by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, that, "it would not be easy to tackle terrorism in our country if the common people did not support us".

Strict laws, law enforcement agencies can minimize religious terrorism to a certain level but for the long term and most enduring solution, a concept of mutual harmony should be in practice among the citizens. What is absolutely necessary is 'inter-religious empathy'. Lack of inter-religious empathy begets monolithic ideas

and inclusiveness. Inter-religious apathy narrows down the thinking process and minimizes the outlook. As a result, one tends to see all the things including human beings should be according to his or her will. He or she is unable to understand the truth that exists beyond their selfish world. There exists another world where everybody has the right to believe and practice their religions. Lack of inter-religious empathy drives one to impose force on other and if they do not do so, they may go to the extreme level which initiates terrorism and extremism.

Terrorism in the name of religions is more dangerous than any other terrorist attack because most of the people of this country are religious. At the same time, Bangladesh is the country where Hindu, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and indigenous people are living in a harmonious order throughout the centuries. When any group commits terrorist activities in the name of religion it creates serious disbelief and lack of trust among the people of other religions. This disbelief and mistrust can lead to communal conflicts and more severe to civil war, which means inter-religious conflicts can be a serious threat to stability, national integrity, and sovereignty. The role of inter-religious empathy among the common people of Bangladesh in establishing peace and harmony is the main focus of the current study.

1.4. Literature Review

Sociologists, religious scholars, philosophers, and theologians have already produced voluminous works on inter-religious harmony around the world. There are numerous books, journals, and thesis on inter-religious dialogue, harmony, and religious pluralism. However, the researcher has faced some problems to get sufficient literature on inter-religious empathy. This is why available literature on

religious pluralism, inter-religious dialogue and religious texts has been reviewed to get the concept of inter-religious empathy. To define terrorism, extremism, and socio-religious, political, and psychological motivators of terrorism, a good number of pieces of literature on political science, terrorism studies have been studied by the researcher. Out of these huge numbers of literature only a few of them, which are more important, have been discussed in this section.

Leonard Swidler (2016), in his work *The Age of Global Dialogue*, analyzes the concepts of 'inner' and 'inter' faith dialogue and elaborately explains the terms religion and dialogue. His practical and theoretical versions of inter-religious dialogue have been revealed in his work. In his work, he highlights the importance of the discourse of dialogue among the communities of different faiths and cultures to stand against the communal approach. He also puts forward ten pre-conditions of dialogue which is considered as a role model of dialogue. Swidler opines that new methods should be opened for a better religious perspective by using inter-religious dialogue, re-thinking, mental power, and helping hand among all religions. Regulating 'Deep-Dialogue' among individuals or groups pertaining to different faith and beliefs, it is possible to reshape their thought process in multiple ways.

By considering religion not exclusively as a closed phenomenon, Raimond Panikkar (1978), focuses on the growth of religions through dialogue in his work, *The Inter-religious Dialogue*. As religions, according to his study, cannot be explained entirely by theology or divinity, they are constantly changing countenances. Accordingly, interaction among various religions and interfaith dialogue can assist them to grow. In his study, Raimond emphasizes the methodological outline of interfaith dialogue. From his analysis, he draws the

conclusion that a religious phenomenology is required to make an interfaith dialogue successful. When more than one person or group maintains the same level of thought process the inter-religious dialogue among them turns to intra-religious dialogue as the inner selves of various religions and faiths encounter. Interfaith dialogue is consequently pretty helpful for the development of different religions.

Leonard Swidler and Raimond Panikkar have put almost the same views regarding the importance of dialogue. Panikkar focuses mainly on the thought process of the followers of different religions where the same level of understanding is required to have an inter-religious dialogue. This same level thought process can be connected with empathy. Among the Bengali religious scholars, Kazi Nurul Islam and Azizunnahar Islam (2002) in their book *Tulanamulak Dharmatatva: Naitikata O Manav Kallyan* have explored the nature, scope, and necessity of interfaith dialogue with the most illustrated definition of religion. The book mainly contains the essence of interfaith harmony among Sikhism, Shinto, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The philosophical aspects of Shankara and Gautama Buddha have also been narrated in this text. Islam (2011) in his article “Inter-religious Dialogue: Some Rules and Assumptions”, defined inter-religious dialogue and the preconditions of interfaith dialogue with the most relevant context. This article focuses on the harmony of religions and world peace motivating a pluralistic world eradicating the monolithic concept of we and others, superior and inferior, major and minor, etc.

By explaining the relation between religiosity and empathy toward Victims has explored the role of empathy in victim blame and shows a proper way of how religion and empathy can be used in the crime and victim blame. It defines the cognitive and emotional aspects of empathy and relates the psychology of religion

with empathy and crime. There are three types of empathy: the perfect, the truncated, and the contaminated have defined the types of empathy from various perspectives. It is easy to understand the nature and practical definition of empathy through deep feelings. It shows how empathy evolves, how to be a person with empathy, and what do we empathize with. As it explains, empathy requires individuality i.e., empathy is not sacrificing own rights; rather by knowing we can be more empathetic. It is realized that empathy is something not about sacrificing; it is rather about joining together.

There are many intensive studies on the sociology and the psychology of terrorism. These studies actually focus on every sector directly and indirectly that are connected with terrorism, including age, marital status, motivators, women in terrorism, economic funding, etc. They have analyzed some case studies like Al Qaeda and other religious terrorist groups. It is proved that non-religious factors may work for the root causes of terrorism. In explaining the psychological factors behind terrorism, it is found to be determined not to blame religion as the cause of terrorism. There are some works that are considered as outstanding political historiography of the political uprising of Bangladesh, nationalism and religious fundamentalism, political use of religion, etc. In these intensive studies, they have explored the nature of Bengali nationalism and political background. Radicalism and fundamentalism were patronized by the Bengali politicians and even the war criminals were on the throne even after the liberation war of Bangladesh.

Abul Barakat, (2018) in his, *Fundamentalism in Bangladesh: External and Internal Dimensions of Political Economy of Militancy*, identifies the nature of religious fanaticism, communalism, and nature of terrorism. Religious politics of fundamentalism is the main focus of his study. He explored the structure and

funding process of fundamentalism in Bangladesh. The political use of religion and the economy of terrorism were discussed in his study. Ali Riaz (2017), in his *Lived Islam and Islamism in Bangladesh*, has critically analyzed the role of religion in the public sphere and its contributions to political activism and election mannerism in the context of Bangladesh society. As a political scientist, Riaz has portrayed the rise of Islamic militancy in Bangladesh and ‘Madrasa’ education system where an attempt was taken to give an overview of the contemporary situation of Bangladesh and its political sphere where religion plays a vital role.

Without these writings, there are many significant works in this field. All of them agree that peace building is possible through empathy.

1.5. Research Objectives

The main purposes of this work, therefore, discussed below:

- I) To overview the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace, national integrity and development in Bangladesh by analyzing the present situation and future possibilities,
- II) To examine the barriers in the way of establishing interfaith empathy in Bangladesh, where education, political and religious sectors have been taken into consideration with huge importance to examine the problems; and
- III) To explore the possible way of establishing inter-religious empathy in Bangladesh along with an empathetic attitude and acceptance towards different faiths.

Most importantly, creating an open mind with the sense and willingness of harmony and peace among the youths is the main objective. In order to prevent extremism and terrorism youths and their opinions have been given utmost

importance because they become the prey of terrorism and at the same time, they can resist terrorism if they cultivate the sense of inter-religious empathy and apply it in practical life.

1.6. Research Importance

The conventional definitions of religions are not sufficient to define the nature, scope, and characteristics of religion in its complete form. Religion is not only mere submission to supernatural power. Religion has become a social and cultural issue. In this age of globalization, religion is influenced by modernity at the same time every modern element of modern society is influenced by religion. However the matter of ethics, morals, and standards comes from religious beliefs. Pragmatic philosophers discover that religion offers peace and tranquility to mankind, and unites them with the supernatural power. Religion may be true or false but it is useful to man. This is the pragmatic view on religion. Being an important social and psychological phenomenon inter-religious harmony is obligatory. In any pluralistic society, a harmonious situation among religions is required to the greater benefit and development because; history has witnessed how inter-religious conflicts have destroyed social and cultural developments.

During the centuries, there were personalities of enlightenment; urging for tolerance and mutual understanding among the religions. Poet Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in his Parable of Drama 'Nathan the Wise' postulates the mutual understanding of the three monotheistic religions-Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as a necessary ideal. Mahatma Gandhi taught his disciple to treat the followers of other faiths with respect and 'ahimsa' (love) and he himself practiced it throughout

his life (Chakma, 2004). To love and respect, we need to at first know the followers of others' faiths eradicating our stereotypes and prejudices.

Understanding is possible through genuine inter-religious dialogue. But dialogue would be fruitful if the dialogue starts with empathy. Thus, this thesis focuses on the importance of inter-religious empathy to understand the followers of other religions. In this context, the relevance of this thesis lies with the fact that, without 'walking in the shoe of others' which is empathy towards other faiths a person never can be a true admirer of inter-religious harmony.

This thesis proposes some proposals to practice inter-religious empathy in Bangladesh. Inter-religious empathy should be a movement against terrorism and extremism. This thesis shows the relevance of interfaith empathy over viewing the past, present incidents with the future possibilities of inter-religious dialogue in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is developing in an astounding manner in every sector, her national integrity and development, pluralistic peaceful coexistence of different religions cannot be ignored at all. It is because development denotes healthy growth. A healthy growth is only possible when a healthy society and cultural traits exist without any compulsion and conflict. A country's development depends on some criteria. They are justice, equality, civil liberty, freedom of religion, free thinking, etc. Development in its perfect form is not possible keeping the most important factor religious harmony untouched. This thesis put importance on religious harmony for the development of Bangladesh highlighting the relevance and importance of inter-religious empathy among the people of Bangladesh. A good number of researches and studies have been done on inter-religious dialogue and harmony. But at the same time, inter-religious empathy did not get that much importance. This thesis aims to fulfill the existing gap by highlighting the

importance and immense significance of inter-religious empathy for the national integrity and overall peace of the world.

1.7. Research Methodology

Research is an original and systematic investigation undertaken to increase knowledge and understanding and to establish facts and principles. A methodology indicates a way to examine the different steps that are taken by a researcher in conducting research matters systematically with logic, hypothesis, and principle behind them (Islam, 2015).

This research has been carried out following a qualitative approach. Primary and secondary sources have been used to collect relevant data and information. The following methods are adopted to serve the objectives and aims of this research. In this research study, the researcher has used secondary sources as a method of data collection. Therefore, it is important to mention that this research work mostly depends on secondary sources that will be thoroughly followed by analysis, assessment, and evaluation.

Ten respondents, on the other hand, were selected for a semi-structured interview. All respondents of this qualitative research work are university professors and students. As the subject is religiously sensitive and politically touchy, anonymity has been maintained and pseudo names have been used in case of identification of the respondents.

1.8. Research Limitations

The researcher has faced some limitations and challenges in conducting the current research. First, to understand empathy, an analysis of the psychological state of mind is necessary. In this research, terrorist psychology has been discussed based

on secondary sources. To understand empathy and what makes the terrorist apathetic and so hateful towards others, a close connection with the terrorist mind is needed under the supervision of psychiatrist and counseling psychologist. So, it was quite impossible for the researcher to get a face to face interview of the extremists and terrorists who are at present under the custody of law enforcement agencies for security and secrecy. Second, the scarcity of enough literature is one of the main obstacles to this research study. At the same time, some works has been done on the field like 'Interfaith Empathy'. Third, the researcher intended to take interviews of government high officials, textbook authorities, and policymakers to understand the policy regarding interfaith harmony and their planning to connect it with national integrity and development. But due to shortage of time, and extremely strict schedules of the government high authorities, interviews were not taken by the researcher. Fourth, this research demands fieldwork and for conducting fieldwork time and money is obligatory. Financial and time constraints have also been regarded as the limitations of this research.

1.9. Organization

This thesis consists of six chapters that are partly interconnected and partly independent. Chapter one traces the introduction of the research with a statement of the research problem, relevance, and importance of the research, literature review, aim and objectives of the research methodology, and research limitations. Chapter two discusses the definition of empathy, social aspects of empathy, a comparative study on empathy, compassion and kindness, the correlation between religion and empathy. In this chapter, the definition, nature, and scope of interfaith dialogue have been discussed with the antecedents of interfaith dialogue. A correlation between inter-religious dialogue and inter-religious empathy has been

explained. It has been explored that inter-religious empathy initiates inter-religious dialogue. Chapter three discusses the history of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Bahai Faith in Bangladesh. It also discusses the role of empathy and harmony towards building a 'Golden Bengal'. Chapter four discusses the definition of terrorism. In this chapter, the motivators of terrorism have been explained. One of the important segments of this chapter is the analysis of the rise of terrorism in Bangladesh along with the threat levels of terrorism in this country. This chapter deals with the response of the respondents while the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity, according to the respondents, has been described. Chapter five discusses the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity. Last chapter six concludes the thesis.

Chapter Two

Empathy Leading to Dialogue in Understanding Peace

2.1. Defining Empathy

The term empathy is well known to all as it encompasses greater aspects of psychology, religion, medical science, and ethics including practical ethics. The English term 'Empathy' is originated from the ancient Greek word *empathia* means biological attraction of patience. Empathy is the composition of two words i.e. 'en' meaning in and 'pathos' meaning patience of suffering. This matter was introduced by German philosopher and logician Rudolf Hermann Lotze and Robert Vischer to make the German word 'Einfühlung' means feeling into, which was translated by British psychologist Edward B. Titchener for the English word empathy. 'Empathy' denotes the feelings for others with sincere affection and love without the involvement of any kind of selfish intention and hypocrisy. It is the ability to understand and share the feeling and position of another's situation as it is his/her own situation. Empathy denotes accurately and sincerely reflects others' emotions and most importantly it emphasizes valuing others' emotions.

One can get confused with the confusing relation between 'sympathy' and 'empathy'. Though sympathy and empathy are closely related words, they are not synonymous. Empathy is called the cousin of sympathy and sympathy is much older than empathy, having existed in our language for several hundred years before its cousin 'empathy' was introduced. Sympathy and empathy are not the same, they have many differences. Sympathy is the ability to share the feeling of another without adapting the same feeling imagining oneself in the place of others,

where empathy tends to be used to imagining or having the capacity to imagine and feel the same as the other person is feeling without having the practical experience. Empathy is the power to feel another's emotions and feelings. Sympathy is a driving force to put up with another's thinking.

This can be clarified through examples given by Professor Islam; an officer may be upset with his employee and fired him from his job uttering 'get lost'. When the employee was leaving the room of the officer, he got hurt by the door. The officer came quickly and asked him, 'are you ok? Do you need an ointment?' In this case, the care and concern shown by the officer were out of his humanity and the sake of his duty. The officer has no love for the employee but he is helping him and showing care. One can say that the officer has a genuine concern for the employee and this is 'sympathy' because he is sympathetic to him. On the other hand, empathy is much deeper than this. One can title it as the love between mother and his children, soul mates, etc. They make them one body. If one gets hurt, equal pain is felt by the other; again, if one experiences any success and joy, equal joy is felt by the other. In bold words, in the case of empathy, there lies an emotional attachment, and sympathy can be the outcome of humanity, morality, and duty without having emotional attachments.

2.1.1. Methods of Being Empathetic and Types of Empathy

What is the necessity of being empathetic? Empathy is that specific quality that lays the foundation of becoming more human. Empathy builds the foundation of compassion and caring among people and reflects a co-operative relationship in every area of life. Empathy makes group of same people and decrease discrimination.

A prerequisite of being empathetic is to know, understand, and name your own emotion; it all start from one's self awareness which is part of one's emotional attachment. From the above discussion there are three issues involving;

1. Listening to another's emotional state and showing deep respect to other's state.
2. Realizing the others' mental matters of all time with great respect and emotion.
3. Orally showing, contacting, and recognizing our perception of the 'internal frame of reference of another' and our 'sense of similarity of feelings' ("Lead Inspire", 2015).

To be empathetic one needs to hear and communicate and to express his or her emotional feelings. Without doing that, we may agree with their feelings but they do not know that we feel them. It is important to express that we feel, realize, and share the feelings of others through verbal or body language, tone, and action. When people feel they have been listened to and understood, they feel affirmed and validated.

Types of empathy can be classified into three patterns;

Affective empathy: It denotes the involvement of the capacity to realize another person's feelings and respond timely. It is a metaphysical state to understand other that may drive to a way of well-being of other.

Somatic empathy: It means a biological involvement in response to another person's practical experience. People sometimes contain about other's feelings. At the time of other's uncomfortable situation, the nearest person feels uncomfortable too.

Cognitive empathy: It involves being capable to realize other's mental conditions and what they think about the contemporary situation. It happens at conscious mind. It is very important and effective to establish a peaceful society.

2.2. Social Aspects of Empathy

Society is the association of people who have formed a system of living together with a purpose. Society consists of social interactions; in a society, one shares a large territory, environment, and elements such as air, water, soil, tree, and even microorganisms. Everyone is connected in a society directly and indirectly. *Cambridge Dictionary* describes society as a large number of people who stay together within some rules and regulations. They work together for society. They share joys and sorrows with one another. It can be small or large. They can sacrifice many things for each other.

Social empathy is built on the basis of interpersonal empathy. Empathy among the members of society widens the scope of understanding among the people. It enables understanding of another's situation and initiates the ability to engage in macro perspective thinking rather than narcissist microscopic thinking. Lack of interpersonal empathy causes racism, for example, apartheid. In recent times' New Zealand Mosque attack' has brought us problems and tensions again. In March 2019, a violent terror attack was carried out by a terrorist who had some serious kinds of racist ideologies. He was unable to accept the fact that people from different races and cultures are now living in European society. He believes that Europe is a home only for the Europeans and others are nothing but trace passers. He could not tolerate this and he didn't think for a once that even the Europeans are a minority in terms of number in many countries just as the Muslims are in

New Zealand. If he had a minimal sense of empathy, he would not take the lives of innocent Muslims who were total strangers to him. Christchurch Mosque attack is just one of the latest cases of racial hatred. It is also true that, in some Muslim countries, religious minorities sometimes are at risk and face persecution. If anyone loves and has empathy for people of his or her own religion, he or she cannot hurt anyone of another religion at any cost. Lack of interpersonal empathy also results in bullying, violent crime, abusive parenting, and spousal battering. These can lead towards a larger context of social degradation and society can face the extreme consequences like racism, prejudice, and the culture of 'us vs. them', distrust and rise of extremism and terrorism to destroy the other's culture and systems of beliefs exist in societies (Social Empathy Center).

2.3. Empathy is more than Compassion and Kindness

Empathy stands for something above kindness and compassion. Kindness and compassion are good human qualities, but individually, they are not great because, without empathy, compassion, and kindness cannot blossom fully. Because it is easy to be compassionate and kind except knowing and experiencing others, we cannot realize the pain and happiness in real sense. As E.M. Foster said, empathy is 'living not in separation'. It is empathy that helps to together the mind of each other. Without empathy we are not human, we are animal like, ants, fish, or lizards. Without empathy in minds we are separate person in body but we have no existence basically.

Hanson states that it is called empathy that personalizes compassion and kindness and brings them in right track. Empathy ignites courage in one's mind and that courage leads one ahead from one's familiar mooring of self-possessiveness to

enter the deep emotions of other's. Empathy is for entire effort from the inner side, entire effort in one's own mind.

2.4. Correlations between Religion and Empathy

Empathy is both a cognitive and emotional decision to feel distressed when observing another's suffering. Some factors affect one's empathy towards others and one such factor is involved in religious practices. Religions teach kindness, love, and compassion towards others. The religious teachings of love and kindness can motivate one's actions and behaviors. Religiosity has been positively correlated with moral emotion.

As it is stated earlier that empathy also involves cognitive properties as a result, one with empathy can cognitively take on another's point of view and can understand that what the person is thinking and to a great extent respond with similar emotions by feeling real concern.

Cognitive empathy goes with the phrase "try to walk a mile in the other person's shoes." Discussions regarding empathy may sound new but this is not true. This cognitive empathy has been mentioned in the religious texts and propagated by the religious personalities thousands of years ago. The founder of Buddhism, Lord Gautama the Buddha says: "Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful" (Udana-Varga: 5.18). In Hinduism it is mentioned in the Mahabharata that: This is the sum of duty: "do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you" (5.1517). In Islam Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) strictly uttered: "not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself" (*Sahih Muslim*, 45). In Christianity, it is very categorically mentioned: "in everything, do to others as you would have them do to you: for this is the law and the prophets"

(Jesus, Matthew 7.12). Jainism is famous for its empathy for every living being and advocates: 'one should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated' (Sutrakritanga: 1.11.33). As Judaism says, 'what is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it' (Hillel, Talmud: Shabbath). Sikhism is the vibrant image of interfaith harmony and the *Guru Grantha Sahib* is the role model of interfaith harmony. In Sikhism, it is beautifully addressed that, 'I am a stranger to no one, and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all' (Guru Grantha Sahib).

Great philosopher Confucius of Confucianism states: one word which concises the all good conducts, like loving, kindness, and so on. Zoroastrianism, which wants harmony and empathy between mankind and the environment, says: 'do not do to others whatever is injurious to yourself' (Shayast na Shayast: 13.29).

It means matter of great regret that despite the strong position of empathy in all the religions of the world, hatred, communalism, religious extremism, and terrorism in the name of religions are going on. This is happening because the followers of religions are not aware of their religions that say about the values of peace and tolerance. They are mere members of a religious group but not the follower. They do not follow the basic tenet of religion that is 'empathy'. This is why, in this trembling world of apathy, religious empathy has become one of the significant issues of discussion. This world is torn into various conflicts. Among them, inter and intra-religious conflicts are the major problems in today's world. Inter-religious tolerance is a much-talked issue from a very early period. Philosopher, physician and famous empiricist John Locke, 1632-1704, argued in his 'A Letter Concerning Toleration' (1689) about the separation of the civil and religious life of a state. From time to time it has been proved that only tolerance is not sufficient for

maintaining peace and harmony among the religions. Because one can tolerate another despite having hate and out of pressure. This does not fulfill the conditions of the peaceful coexistence of different faiths and belief systems. Then the idea of interfaith sympathy emerged thinking that it could be fruitful in the maintenance of peace and harmony.

Sympathy, as has been explained earlier, has some limitations. One can be sympathetic towards others without any kind of feelings of love and admiration. Even we can be sympathetic toward our enemies in some cases. So, it is necessary to think twice about what can be the best choice to prevent conflicts among religions. In this case, empathy has proved to be the best possible way of interfaith harmony. Interfaith harmony is the feelings for the followers of different religions considering that they may belong to different religions but we are brethren which uphold the motto that religions are many but mankind is one. This is why we are all connected. For example, there are many social and theological differences between the Hindu and the Muslim communities. Empathy will emerge if any Muslim faces any problem of any kind, that time if a Hindu feels the pain of the Muslim friend even without knowing him or her personally that is called interfaith empathy. Empathy is a set of feelings which concerns genuine love and respect for others. If interfaith empathy can be practiced in its truest sense, the interfaith dialogue could be fruitful, and thereby a peaceful pluralistic society could come in its reality.

2.5. Definition, Nature, and Scope of Interfaith Dialogue

The world always needed dialogue. Many incidents of the world have proved the need for active dialogue. Inter-religious dialogue is the main dialogue due religious

complexity of all human good qualities. Famous personalities such as Ashoka the great, 304-232 BCE, the Buddhist Emperor of India, St. Francis of Assisi, 1181-1226 CE, and Akbar the Great, Muslim Emperor of India, 1542-1605 CE, are well-known for maintaining a peaceful coexistence of different religions during their ruling periods. Their harmony had some kind of limitation due to geographical constraints and in other ways; encounters during the subsequent age of European exploration and colonization were decided initially by proselytization. From that it started to change with the arising of Modernity and the Enlightenment, which was characterized by freedom, logic, history, and later dialogue (Swidler, 2011).

With magical touch of enlightenment, rationality, and freedom of thinking got a breakthrough. In 1893, in the parliament of the world religions, 'dialogue' had become a public voice upholding the slogan 'all men are created equal'. Although the parliament of world religions was the main center of dialogue, the Christian Ecumenical Movement in 1910 in Edinburgh delivered a significant underpinning for the widely preached dialogue after the parliament. The trigger of the positive explosion of dialogue at the parliament was delivered by the Indian Hindu Swami Vivekananda. He started his speech: 'sisters and brothers of America!' By using these words, he got a standing ovation from a crowd of seven thousands, which lasted for two minutes. The reason was though Swami Vivekananda was a devotee of Hinduism he was not in a mission to convert the Americans. His motive was completely dialogic in nature and he preached the message of inter-religious harmony and that message won the hearts of the participants of the parliament (Bhuyan, 2005).

To prevent intra and conflicts and misunderstandings, interfaith dialogue has been given utmost importance throughout the ages. Interfaith dialogue is the meeting of

two or more people of different faiths and different religious ideas to share and to know each other with a broadened outlook. The motive of interfaith dialogue tends to foster peace and mutual understanding in spite of the religious and differences of faith (Islam, 2011). This world is now a globalized world and no one is separate from others. Any group of people or any individual cannot live isolated. The problem arises when the notion of exclusivism prevails in one's mind. It is an exclusivist view that one's religion and faith is the only true and perfect. This type of exclusivism creates fanaticism in societies. Interfaith dialogue does not intend to convert anyone into another religion rather it encourages tolerance and mutual harmony toward building a peaceful world. The term interfaith dialogue denotes respect and mutual understanding. It is a very effective form of establishing peace and eradicating hatred and conflict (Islam and Islam, 2002).

Theologians, religious leaders can write books, publish books, articles, and a journal encouraging interfaith harmony, but the interfaith dialogue has a pragmatic and practical significance. Interfaith dialogue is positive and cooperative in a manner that helps create interactions among the people of different faiths. It is not mandatory to organize interfaith dialogue in a formal way. Interfaith dialogue is a part of daily life. It can happen between different levels such as among the neighbors, in schools, colleges, and universities. In Bangladesh members of all religions live jointly in the same region. They usually meet each other every day in common places such as markets, roads, shopping centers, etc. When any of the religious groups observe any religious festival, the peoples from different religious groups visit and come to know religious observances. This is one kind of interfaith dialogue, where one can know others and can cultivate a sense of mutual respect and understanding.

The emergence of inter-religious dialogue is mainly related to the concept of pluralism and it raises awareness of a pluralistic society where many religions can coexist peacefully. Interfaith dialogue emphasizes the acceptance of the diversity of religion. Inter-religious dialogue neither means analysis of analysis nor does it mean synthesis of analysis, through dialogue we can achieve unity without anonymity, diversity without division, and obversion without conversion. There are some other important assumptions and pre-conditions for inter-religious dialogues that are, we should not make hasty value judgments on our own religions as well as on other religions. We should not make any hasty distinction nor indulge in any kind of oversimplification and fake generalization. Rather, we should recognize both differences and similarities. No general conceptualizations alone can bring about a genuine dialogue as far as religions are concerned”.

Interfaith dialogue ensures pluralism, which is the opposite of inclusivism. Inclusivism denotes turning all the faith into one faith where pluralism believes invalidity of many beliefs and religions (faiths) that leads to the ultimate reality or God resulting in a harmonious society. As Panikkar declares, consistent with notions of radical relativity and pluralism, he has not taken the view of a linear development of human thought, as if he could now encompass in one single system the human wisdom throughout the ages. According to him, pluralism does not mean a plurality of religions or a reduction of them to unity. With giving preferences to plurality and pluralistic attitude, he declares that, ‘the pluralistic attitude accepts the stance that reality may be of such a nature that nobody; no single human group become sure, can coherently claim to exhaust the universal range of human experience’ (Panikkar, 1978).

Bangladesh is a vivid example of religious pluralism. Bangladesh never assimilated with the extremist Pakistan rather it provided a constitution claiming secularism and equal treatment of all religions. However, the main intention of dialogue is to create harmony and peace in the society. To some extent, interfaith dialogue and sense of pluralism go hand in hand. When two parties engage in an interfaith dialogue, they have to accept with an open mind the reality of the plurality of religions.

2.6. Antecedents of Interfaith Dialogue

Interfaith dialogue is not a new issue, but it is gaining more importance in the present day. The history of interfaith dialogue dates back to ancient ages. Many scholars mark 1893 when an ardent devotee of interfaith harmony Swami Vivekananda represented India and Hinduism in the Parliament of the World Religions. This was the first World's parliament of religions, the parliament was held in Chicago, where delegates from all religions met and discussed their religious views.

If we go back to the middle ages, there were many written dialogue among the Jews, the Christians, and Muslims. Judah Halevi's *Kuzari* gives a Jewish example and Ibn Taymiyya's 'the correct answer to those who changed the religion of Christ' (1317) is a Muslim one. In 1263 'Disputation of Barcelona' took place on the basis of a debate on whether or not Jesus was the Messiah.

In the 16th century emperor Akbar, the 'great' encouraged interfaith dialogue. He was a great patron of interfaith dialogue and he used to invite the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Christians in his palace for creating and sharing religious harmony. In Muslim Spain dialogue occurred between the Muslims and the Jews.

The International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) was established in 1901, which is still very prominent in the world and it has chapters in different countries including Bangladesh. On October 27, 1986 pope John Paul II had a day of prayer at Assisi and called about 50 Christians and 50 leaders of other religions. It was a great event in the history where the importance of inter-religious dialogue was upheld from a higher position.

In 21st century, initiatives like, United Religions Initiative (URI) were founded in 2000, which now has more than 1100 member groups and organizations, named co-operation circle. It focuses on religious peace, issues relating to environmental sustainability, youth and women programs, human rights, etc. King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz International Centre for Inter-religious and Inter-cultural Dialogue, universally known by its abbreviation, (KAICIID), is an inter-governmental organization that promotes dialogue. Basically it was opened to stop and minimize conflict in 2012 by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Spain besides, many more centers, and organizations are working based on the regional organizations to spread harmony and to mitigate religious conflict all over the world. It is worth mentioning that, in Bangladesh, at the University of Dhaka, there is a department named Department of World Religions and Culture, which was founded by an ardent devotee of interfaith dialogue and harmony Dr. Kazi Nurul Islam in 1999 along with a center; 'Centre for Inter-religious and Inter-cultural Dialogue'. CIID in 2008. In this department, all the religions of the world are taught with genuine respect. Both the department and center are working relentlessly to create more activists of interfaith dialogue and harmony to mitigate religious extremism and fanaticism.

2.7. The Relation between Inter-religious Dialogue and Inter-religious Empathy

Since the middle of the twentieth century, the idea of dialogue has become increasingly a common and most appropriate way of knowing and maintaining proper relationships with other religions. Religions have adopted a more reconciliatory and organized attitude towards one another, co-operating in social projects and sharing views on common religious questions rather than competing among themselves over territories, converts, or claims. It cannot be denied that fanaticism is one of the greatest threats of today's world which is creating many problems. It is well known that, behind fanaticism and terrorism, there are some persons who are driven by ill motives. Sometimes it is absolutely connected with politics, sometimes it is connected with global trade e.g., trade of weapons, sometimes it is on religious grounds.

To prevent religious fanaticism, there is no other fruitful way other than interfaith dialogue. Common religious people are peace-loving in nature. They are not connected with any kind of international power politics. But it is true that they can be used as a weapon to achieve one's personal selfish desire, i.e., by spreading rumor, misinterpreted texts from the sacred texts, and views of other religions. Consequently, communal riot, fanaticism, and terrorism occur in the society. These heinous motives have shaken the whole world and people of every country have faced to and still facing the horror of terrorism in the name of religion. It is very easy to instigate terrorism by those people who have lack of knowledge about different and their own religions. They do not have the sense of empathy towards the people of other religions. To know people, one should talk; interact with one another from different religions and belief systems. It is possible through inter-

religious dialogue. It is not always mandatory to arrange dialogue in a formal way. 'Dialogue' covers a wide range of engagements among religious traditions. Dialogue is something that can be done in everyday life. It can be daily interaction between believers and nonbelievers also. The goals of inter-religious dialogue may differ, but the ultimate result of inter-religious dialogue should be peace only.

2.8. Inter-religious Dialogue: The Process of Initiating Inter-religious Empathy

A dialogue cannot be started without anything, with a hazy idea of who we are. For an authentic dialogue, we must be aware of what we want. If we want to initiate dialogue for enhancing harmony and peace, we must broaden our minds for others with genuine empathy and sincerity. Without an empathetic mind, any kind of dialogue is bound to be meaningless. Pope Francis emphasizes on empathy for dialogue. He asserts, 'the ability of empathy grants a true human dialogue in which words, ideas, and questions arise from an experience of fraternity and shared humanity'. He also added that, 'right dialogue also needs an ability of empathy. For dialogue to take place there has to be this empathy'. (Center for Building a Culture of Empathy).

Terrorism in the name of religion, spread of hatred with the same name, superiority complex of having a religious majority in number, persecution of the minority religious groups can only be eroded if religious empathy works in the minds of the people. Only empathy can make one realize that, what you are doing with others, you may face the same situation in the near future. Those who have this feeling of empathy, he or she can never think of doing any harm to the people of other religions. Empathy gives the feeling of brethren that is we are one. Without the

feeling of empathy, one cannot be said that he or she has love for other people belonging to different belief systems.

‘Empathy’ is not born. It is acquired and learned. It follows a long way to create the feeling of empathy in one’s mind. It is the positive change of inner mind. Sometimes, empathy is learned from the family atmosphere where the family members, especially the parents contribute a great role in instigating empathy in the mind of the children. Besides family, peer groups consisting of followers of different religious groups can create empathy in one’s mind. In educational institutes and especially the society where he or she lives is the main place of cultivating the notion of empathy.

To acquire inter-religious empathy, at first one should engage in inter-religious dialogue. Through dialogue, one can share and know each other’s religious views. As it is said, dialogue is interconnection and the main aims of dialogue are to learn, grow, and change in a positive manner. Dialogue creates a common ground of peace and understanding in which every religion has to come. Dialogue is not conversion of religion; it is the conversion of one’s mind from fanaticism and radicalism. People from different religions can come to point of their common problem e.g., terrorism in the name of religion. Participants of the dialogue should keep in mind that no one is free from terrorism in this world and the recent incidents have proved that, even the first world countries are in the serious threat of terrorism in spite of having latest security system and forces.

Terrorism in the name of religion is such a thing, which cannot be reduced only through law, security forces, etc. It can be suppressed for a short time but it can rise again with more destructive power. Here what we need is ‘empathy’. We should keep in mind that terrorists have no religion, and when any group of people

is being attacked by terrorists, no one can escape from the grasp of it. We have major differences on the grounds of belief systems, but on the matter of peace and harmony, we should be empathetic towards others. Having a sense of empathy is a long process to be acquired but it is not impossible. If we engage ourselves in inter-religious dialogue with a liberal mind and if we really care for the harmony and the peaceful coexistence, we can achieve the best fruit of empathy in a short time. Inter-religious dialogue will create the path to know other religious views. Through this, we can have a change in our minds. It would compel us to think that mankind is one and it is one God who had created us all. We are different in nature but above all, we are the same human beings with the same feelings of pains and joys, with the same color of blood. We have originated from the same God and we are returning to the same God. Empathy is much needed in today's world. It would bring a revolution without a single drop of blood. Because the only weapon that empathy has is the love for others.

Chapter Three

History of Harmony: Bangladesh Perspective

Bangladesh has been a nation of communal harmony of 170 million people belonging to different religions. All people are free to perform their practices and rituals without facing any barriers. Moreover, free religious practices are a general right and it is guaranteed by the constitution of Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a peaceful country of the world in where different religious follower live and they help each other in different purposes. Even the government of Bangladesh gives importance in harmony among different religions. All of the religious beliefs are respected here by the help of government. The main religious occasions of different religions are celebrated here as governmental holidays. The government himself plays a vital role to organize these kinds of religious occasions. The world becomes a global village due to global migration of many people. As a result the concept of multi-religion and multi-culture is established among all over the world. The global movement of the world helps to establish multi-religious and multi-cultural society with religious empathy.

Major religious traditions in Bangladesh are;

1. Islam
2. Hinduism
3. Buddhism
4. Christianity
5. Baha'i faith

The followers of all religions are free to perform their own religious faiths. The people of Bangladesh believe in religious co-existence and religious empathy. From that point of view Bangladesh is an excellent secular country with religious co-existence. This chapter will be discussed focusing the mutual harmony among these faiths in Bangladesh. A brief overview of each tradition's attitude towards interreligious harmony has been highlighted.

3.1. Islam and Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country of multi-cultures and multi-religions. Islam is the major religion of Bangladesh. It is the main official religion of the country. It is declared by the constitution of Bangladesh.

Religion is considered as very important factor in Bangladesh. It is the main driving force of Bangladesh. It is used by different political party in different times. In spite of this matter Bangladesh is not Islamic country by constitution. Bangladesh is a secular country among Muslim majority countries of the world.

Islam is introduced in this area, today's Bangladesh, in 7th to 8th century by Arabs and Persian missionaries. The merchants of Arabs and Persia have played an important role to preach Islam in this area.

The name Shah Nasir Uddin was common in initial time of Islam in this area. He was a citizen of Iraq. He came in this area to preach Islam.

The Muslim traders and the Muslim missionaries came in this area to trade and preach religion. With the passage of time they preach Islam in whole Indus Delta. At a time Islam became the main religion in this area. Sufism has a great effect in today's Bangladeshi Islam. Shah Jalal is important name in initial Islamic time of this area. Chittagong was the entry gate of Islam in Bangladesh.

The Pala Empire ruled Bangladesh in 8th to 12th century. They were mainly Buddhist. In this time the majority of people are forced to be Buddhist.

Advent of Sufism date backs to mid of 11th century when the Muslim rulers came, that time many Sufi preachers arrived in Bengal. For the last six years many learned Sufi saints came from Arabia, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Khurasan, Central Asia, and Northern India. Sufis were peaceful in nature and they drew the attention of the masses through their soft, tolerant, harmonious nature had a significant role in promoting religious harmony in the country. Sufis were also involved in many humanitarian works. They advocated interreligious harmony and were against social injustice based on caste and religions. As a result, they received the deep attention of the Buddhists and the lower caste Hindus of Bengal. Sufis were a great facilitator of education. They established many mosques, khanqahs, and schools for education purposes. They preached Islam at the same time many khanqahs were the learning centers for both Muslims non-Muslims. Sufism worked as the bridge between the Hindus and Muslims. People irrespective of religions were greatly influenced by the Sufis. The Ursh of the Sufis became the platform of emotional unity for both Hindus and Muslims. Sufi music and songs attracted the common people of every religion. It is noteworthy that from the beginning to still today Hindu communities have great respect for the Sufis. They used to offer coconuts, flowers and incense to the Sufi Shrines and mosques in respect for the Sufi saints. Sufism spread a sense of spirituality and bonding among the people of this country and highlighted the significance of humanity. In spite of their missionary zeal, they provided much importance on peaceful and tolerant coexistence of different religions.

Basically the main conversion to Islam began in 13th century and it was going for many years. The conversion was happened in group not in personal. Hazrat Shah Jalal was the man who conducted the conversion process. He came in Sylhet in 1303 with many followers. He was a magical person. The local people started to believe his easily and strongly.

Shah Jalal came to Sylhet from Delhi. 360 follower of him also came with him in Sylhet. At first they defeated Raja Gour Gobinda. From that time Sylhet was the center of many Muslim saints.

The whole life of Shah Jalal preached Islam to the people of today's Bangladesh. With his charismatic hand many Hindus and Buddhists accepted Islam as their religion. Shah Jalal was so familiar that once Ibn Buttuta came in Chittagong and changed his plan and went to Sylhet to visit him.

However, the people of Bangladesh always live in peace with all religion coexistence. Islam is the leading power of Bangladesh. But the people do not reject the other religions. All of the people of Bangladesh believe in harmony of all religions. In this sector Islam plays the vital role to establish peaceful co-existence.

Some of the biased scholars classified Islam as violent, oppressive and biased religion. But it is not correct. Islam is a liberal and violence free religion. The inner meaning of Islam is total submission with respect to all religions to Allah, the creator.

The well-known Islamic literatures always support spiritual harmony. All the religions of the universe establish with same inner meaning. All of them believe in harmony, co-existence, empathy, etc. Some of the biased people try to relate terrorism and Islam, extremism and Islam. But it is not fair in legal sense. Islam

does not teach terrorism, extremism. The criminal people conduct terrorist activities and blamed Islam as their weapon. Basically they use the name Islam for their personal purpose. The terrorist people are not the practitioner of religion. They do not follow any religion in mind. They only believe in violence.

Islam gives respect to all religion in teaching. It also prohibits any kinds of wrong to the followers of non Islamic belief. Islam always believes in welfare of human.

No doubt that there exists diversities in terms of one's taste, view and opinions regarding different life oriented issues. This is also very true about one's faith. Environment, time, space, diet, education and so many other actors play significant roles in developing people's faith. These differences are inevitable. Thus, the healthy way to cope with different faiths and opinions is to accept the differences.

Power practice cannot establish peace and co-existence in a country. It increases the animosity. For that reason, the holy Quran prohibits to force to other beliefs. The holy Quran gives emphasis to educating people the right path. People are free and they can choose their own faith.

The Mogul Empire rule Indian Sub-continent for a long time. They ruled Bangladesh also. If they force to preach Islam, all the people of this area would be Muslim. But they did not force.

Bangladesh was ruled by different ruler in different times. But the main nature of religious scenery of this area would remain same for all time. Religious co-existence and peace was the pre-condition to be ruler of this area.

British ruled Bangladesh for long time as Indian sub-continent. They do not force to accept Christianity or other faiths. Then Pakistan ruled Bangladesh as part of

Pakistan. At that time the administration tried to force Hindus to accept Islam. But the general people of Bangladesh made obstacles to them. They supported Hindus.

After getting independent, Bangladesh becomes a fertile land of religious empathy and religious co-existence.

3.2. Hinduism and Bangladesh

Before the partition of India-Pakistan Hinduism was strong religion of this area, today's Bangladesh. After that partition, with the passage of time the number Hindus were decreased rapidly.

Actually the Hindus decreased due to their own choice. They fell safe in India not in Bangladesh. Some of them are converted to Islam, Christianity, Bahai Faiths. It is not because of lack of religious harmony. Some biased scholars try to say that the Hindus are persecuted here. But it is not correct. Bangladesh is a country of excellent religious harmony.

With this thesis I want to clear that Hindus are not persecuted like biased people saying. At present Hindus are the second largest religions of Bangladesh after Islam.

There are many established figure in business, politics, media, culture in Bangladesh who are the follower of Hindu religion. A big part of administration is availed to Hindu people in Bangladesh for all time.

All the religious occasions of Hindus are organized by direct patronization of government. The Sharashati Puja of Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University is a great example of religious harmony. Different people of different religions take part in this occasion. Sometimes the number of Muslims is greater than Hindus.

The government sponsored BTV and Bangladesh Betar always telecast the occasions of Hindus.

But the scenery was different in Pakistan before 1971. They considered Hindu as their foe. They always try to persecute the Hindu. The scenery of that situation changed dramatically after the birth of Bangladesh. It has a strong background also. As a friend country India helped Bangladesh very much in the time of war. Especially the relation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahaman and Indira Gandhi was beyond imagination. As a result, after birth of Bangladesh the relation between Muslim and Hindus, the relation was rebuilt rapidly.

The Hindus of Bangladesh always give importance to establish peace and harmony. They are secular in mind.

The relation among the followers of all religions can be attained from good teachings of religion. Hinduism supports this idea. There are many institutions and center to preach Hindu religion in Bangladesh. They always preach harmony and peace in society.

Tolerance is very core matter of harmony. Hinduism believes in its truth with tolerance to other religious beliefs.

Hinduism is the ancient religion of this area. It was started from thousands years ago. Without tolerance it cannot be happened that Islam is major religion of Bangladesh.

Hinduism preaches five principles. They are as follows;

1. Truth: Truth means right. Always should be followed truth. It means pureness or no forgery.

2. Dharma: Dharma is not only religion but also a life way of people. In speech, work, think people should be good. It is the way of God.
3. Peace: Peace is not a mere concept. It means peace in word, work, and living. Hinduism believes in peace for people, agriculture, environment, and animals.
4. Love: Love means unconditional sympathy to all creatures. Hinduism believes in love to all livings.
5. Ahimsa: Hinduism believes in non violence. Hinduism believes in discussion to solve problem.

3.3. Christianity and Bangladesh

The Christian missionaries preach Christianity in Bangladesh. Christianity is most liberal religion among all living religions. Christianity believes in well-fare and charity. The number of Christian follower in Bangladesh is not much. But they have a good number of churches in Bangladesh. They conduct some missionaries work all over the country. It is open to all religions. Missionaries are considered as good place of inter-religious harmony.

Without inter-religious harmony, any country can be developed. Mistrust and suspicion to each other make divide.

Basically the Christians came in Bangladesh during Bengal Sultanate. At the time of Mogul and colonial period, there lived Armenians, Greeks, Catholics and Anglicans in Dhaka. Christianity is a minor religion in Bangladesh. They are only 0.5% of total population.

The Christians missionaries have served as education and health center for all religious people. There are almost 1000 schools and 100 health care centers and hospitals in Bangladesh.

In contemporary time, Bangladesh becomes a country of different cultures, races, languages and religions. For that reason harmony with different religious beliefs is only possible through dialogue. Christians of Bangladesh are harmonious in nature. As a minority, they always try to dialogue with those of other traditions of religious faith. For building mutual fellowship for instance, Catholic institutions have established schools, colleges and hospitals, serving not only for Christians or Catholics, but also for the others. The Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity and Interreligious Dialogue in particular is very active in arranging various programs with different religious communities to share mutual understanding and concept of harmony (Rozario, 2011).

The Christian literature also gives emphasis on tolerance. Some of the verses from the Bible make it clear the peaceful views of religious tolerance. Finally, all of you've got unity of mind, sympathy, solidarity, a young heart, and a humble mind (1 Peter 3:8).

We can conclude above discussion by the message of Archbishop William Goh, 14th October 2017, International Conference.

“We need to be strong and persevere in building unity in diversity. We must desire to see the truth and be sincere in searching for the fullness of truth together with other believers. There will be some who are against such dialogue and friendship overtures, but we must be persistent. We must resist attempts to destroy unity because of fanaticism, narrow-mindedness, intolerance and pride. Only when we see that there is so much goodness and truth in other religions and cultures, we can together praise God and follow Him in love and service.

3.4. Buddhism and Bangladesh

From the Pala Empire, there lives Buddhist people in this today's Bangladesh. There are some ancient monasteries. They are Mohasthanghar and Somapura Mahavihara. At that time there was a great teacher of Buddhism named Atisha was born in Bikrampur.

But in contemporary time, there are some monasteries in the Chittagong and in hill tracts part of Chittagong. They operate a distinct schooling system called Kyong where their children live and study. The place where they practice religion called Pagoda. This place is considered as open place for all people of different religious faiths.

Some of the tribal groups of Bangladesh also follow Buddhism as their religion. They live in Chittagong hill tracts.

The numbers of Buddhist follower are not much in population in Bangladesh. But they believe in religious multicity. They are liberal in nature.

The Buddhist people establish Buddhism in Chittagong Hills as mix religion formed by tribal beliefs and Buddhist doctrines. There was only 5,38,000 Buddhist follower in Bangladesh in 1981. Buddhists believe that when we introduce religion through our cultural practices, our day to day religious activities will be more attractive and we will be able to influence others to follow it as a living religion.

Buddhism likes some universal good concepts. They are;

1. Religious Empathy
2. Mutual Understanding
3. Co-operation
4. Tolerance

5. Truthfulness
6. Religious Liberation
7. Enlightenment

What is important is for the people in their own religions to talk up against wrong doing and misinterpretation especially if these interpretations condone terrorism and therefore the slaughter of innocents. Often these religious leaders ally themselves to powerful political figures that haven't any hesitation to kill and incite hatred just to urge what they need.

A real religion never supports violence in any circumstances. The good follower cannot violate the rules. Buddhism is a liberal religion. It does not believe in any discrimination. Although they divided into some sects, but their spiritual beliefs are same. It strongly believes in religious co-existence. Buddhism is the only religion that did not involve in war for preaching religion. It is religion of peace. They apply good behavior as their weapon to preach religion to common people.

Buddhism believes that each person has three natures. They are;

1. The Animal
2. The Human
3. The Divine

Many scholars like Buddhism for its peaceful nature. Buddhism always avoids fear and superstitions. If we cannot get together to work in harmony without discrimination or hostility towards one another, the peace that we talk of would only remain as a dream.

3.5. Baha'i Faith and Bangladesh

The Baha'i Faith started as religion in Bangladesh before its independence. Originally Baha'i Faith originated in 1844. The founder of this religious belief is Bahauallah. Jamal Effendi who was the follower of Bahauallah came in Dhaka for first time.

By 1950 there were enough members of the religion to elect Local Spiritual Assemblies in Chittagong and Dhaka. By 1971 there were about ten local assemblies in the province. To make the efforts more dynamic a Baha'i center was established at Shanti Nagar in Dhaka. A conservative estimate by the early 1990s says that there are around 60,000 Baha'is in Bangladesh (Alam, 2011). According to the Baha'i Headquarters in Dhaka, there are more than 1,00,000 Baha'is in Bangladesh. Dr. Islam asserts that in Bangladesh it is not difficult to identify some one's religious background from his or her name, but this is not so with the people belonging to Baha'i faiths. At the time of their conversion their names are not changed, nor do they have any special religious dress known to the people. That is why it is said, Bangladesh has more Baha'is than known. The Baha'i Faith has a good history of peaceful co-existence in Bangladesh. They maintain a good relationship with all religious people.

According to Universal House of Justice in 1996,

“The Baha'i community of Bangladesh, flourishing in the midst of a Muslim society, is a source of joy to the entire Baha'i world. In recent years and with astonishing rapidity, that community began to achieve extraordinary success in the teaching field, and throughout the Three-Year Plan has sustained consistently large-scale expansion”.

The follower of Baha'i Faith is innocent and calm in character. They are very devoted to their religious belief. They can sacrifice their life for religion. They maintain friendship with the followers of other religions.

Bahauallah motivated people to establish unity and to maintain a good and effective dialogue with each other. He declared himself as messenger of unity of humankind.

In another tablet, he calls the conflicting peoples of the world to “gather ye together” so that differences may be explored and resolved: O contending peoples and kindred of the earth!. Furthermore, Bahauallah commands the “men of wisdom among nations”; to “fix your gaze upon unity”; (Tablets). Thus, Baha'i sacred scripture presents us with a series of statements that appeal to leaders of both secular and religious thought to consult on the challenges of and prospects for promoting unity.

3.6. Role of Interreligious Empathy and Harmony towards Building a 'Golden Bengal'

We sleep in a world that our grandparents couldn't have dreamed of a far more shared and integrated world as a results of modern technological advances that bring much promise and wonderful possibilities. Yet also a world faced with contradictions that are diluting and destroying these exact same promises and hopes. Opposing forces pull us in the direction of harmony while simultaneously and maliciously driving us apart along violent and intolerant paths. The spiritual teaching of all religions is same. The followers of all religions hold the same purpose. All of them want searching good destiny. It is ultimate truth that if one

religion is true then rest of the religion also true. All of them have a goal to attain creator. They want peace in eternal life.

However, the true meaning of inter-religious empathy is grant everyone equal freedom. To build a development country it is necessary to establish inter-religious harmony. Without inter-religious harmony a country cannot go ahead. Harmony is pre-condition of development.

The scenery of Europe and western country explains that there has a great inter-religious harmony. So they are developed as culture, also as nation.

The number of followers of minor religions is small in Bangladesh but they are not persecuted.

The father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahamn, introduced the term ‘Golden Bengal’ for first time in Bangladesh. He also believes in co-existence of multi-religions. We follow our own religion but respect to all religions.

Therefore, it turns into an ideal situation where there is no place of conflict in human society. Bangladesh got its name after a bloody war of long nine months in 1971. But this country has its long rich religious history, and culture. This country has witnessed three phases of history and it is possibly the only country which has had its name changed three times in less than twenty-five years (Islam, 2011). The people of Bangladesh are peace loving in nature. They have welcomed and embraced new traditions from the ancient period. After the liberation war of Bangladesh, it adopted a Constitution where secularism made one of its corner stones. This should be taken into consideration that the Bangladeshi notion of secularism cannot be translated as the Western notion of secularism. By secularism, Bangladesh establishes equal status, respect, and opportunity for the all

faiths of the country (Islam, 2011). The Constitution also prohibits any kind of politics in the name of religion. The world is going through some crisis and one of them most virulent is terrorism and extremism. Bangladesh is no exception. Some heinous terrorist attacks have shaken the country and its people. It cannot be denied that internal and external conspiracies are in vogue to tarnish the vivid example of religious harmony of Bangladesh. But it is a matter of great pride that the people of Bangladesh have always prevented these conspiracies with a strong hand. In fact, the people of Bangladesh are true to their motherland and they have established unprecedented examples of love towards motherland. Bangladesh is the only country in the world where the people, especially the youths sacrificed their lives for the honor of their mother tongue. In 1971, people belonging to all classes and religions stood against fanaticism and religious discrimination of the West Pakistan. It has been proved that the future of Bangladesh lies on the harmonious coexistence of different faiths centering empathy as the core. The people of Bangladesh, especially the youths have preserved interreligious empathy in Bangladesh with an honest zeal so one can be convinced that the youths will lead Bangladesh to become a 'country of gold' upholding the notion of harmony and will prevent any kind of fanaticism.

Chapter Four

Terrorism

4.1. Defining Terrorism

From the beginning of the human civilization we find instances of terrorist incidents and the current world is still facing the threats and intensifying impact of terrorism. No one in this world is safe from the negative impact of terrorism. Series of factors are related to the occurrence of terrorist activities. Thus, it is difficult to define terrorism properly and completely that can cover all the factors. But it is inevitable to define terrorism due to develop a comprehensive realizing of this matter and for dealing properly. It is difficult to define terrorism because there are many kinds of interest groups focusing terrorism and individually they have own vies and opinions. There is a surprising matter that there are all over 100 different definitions of terrorism in existence. Defining terrorism, we need to begin with a brief historical insight. As stated above, terrorism existed even during the rise of human civilization. Committing violence in the society and creating fear in the mind of the opposition was a common phenomenon. Sometimes it was to protect individuals and their own tribe or to win over another to occupy place, food and weapons of the opposition. Thus, it can be said that terrorism is as old as mankind.

The term terrorism comes from Latin word ‘terrere’ means to frighten.

In Maximilien Robespierre’s words: terror is nothing aside from justice, prompt, sever, inflexible; it is an emanation of virtue; it is not like a lot a special issue as it is a consequence of the general issue of democracy applied to our country’s most urgent needs’ (Walter Laqueur, 2003). There are various goals and motives work

behind terrorism and it becomes difficult to give a definition generalizing the common denominators of the nature of terrorism. The academic consensus definition of terrorism is a case in point:

Terrorism is a process of doing violent work, selected by semi-clandestine individual, group for criminal or political causes. These kinds of violence activities happened through inter-connection within terrorist, victims, and the targets; eventually it turns into a target of terror, a target of demands.

United State's Department of Defense has defined the conscious use of unlawful violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. At that time European Union considered terrorism as a kinds of work that purposes; intimidating a population seriously; makes an obstacle for government and or world organization to perform any act; and makes a hazardous situation in the elemental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization.

4.1.1. The Psychology of Terrorism

Psychologists have been trying to find out the reasons and motivations which instigate one to become a terrorist. The Psychology of terrorism and terrorists investigates who and why they choose to become terrorists, what kind of individuals join terrorism. Many studies have already been done on that particular issue and according to Psychologist Maxwell Talyon, who has tried to realize the causes of motivation of terrorism and the character of terrorists, the key question why an individual becomes a terrorist should be explored. The term 'Terrorist mindset' has appeared to be an important topic of discussion.

The main causes behind the terrorism are unemployment, social deprivation, oppression, and so on. The lack of proper education of someone forces to terrorism. Basically they join in terrorist activities from a desire to practice power, thrill and adventure. Those who join terrorist groups often nurture an ideology that they are 'just' and they are the victim of injustice. Some individuals can be motivated by their attraction to use someone's special skill like bomb making. It is not correct to assume that only unemployed and uneducated youths join terrorism. The more educated and youths from rich families are becoming terrorists and they are mainly motivated by political and religious misunderstandings. The scenery of terrorism in the western countries is different from Asia and Africa. The members of the western terrorism are educated and intellectual. Among them they come from prison, revolution, student protest, family loneliness, misunderstanding, etc. They think that they are deprived from proper judgment which they deserve. There are many interest groups behind them. They always used their power to built strong terrorist group so that they can control the target issues.

Individuals who are dropped out from society can be monk or a hermit instead of terrorist. To become a religious monk or terrorist one needs motivation. The terrorist group's leader always tries to select a member for terrorist group from those who have anger against society. Here the member recruitment method is highly selective.

It is like getting a job, and an individual has to be skilled to join a terrorist group. Weapon is needed for conducting terrorist activities and at the same time good communication skill among the terrorist groups in local and international level is must for the terrorists. This is why communication skill is given priority during the member recruitment process. Different terrorist group have different purposes.

These purposes are controlled by interest groups. Psychologist Eric D. Shaw delivers a robust case for what he calls 'the personal pathway model' by which terrorists enter their new profession.

The personal pathway model suggests that the member of terrorist groups comes from a selected group of people who suffer personally in their early age.

They think that, their beliefs are right even they do not care about their family members. They also think that the society cannot take proper action with present administration. It is need to re organized. It is possible through revolution. By this point of view they involved in terrorism. Political view of family, economic tensions and political tensions are worked behind the terrorist activities.

Arie Kruglanski, a psychologist at the University of Maryland who has researched the roots of terrorism. He explained that, 'the underlying motivation is what we call a quest for private significance'. He also added that, 'they try to do something important, either because they feel insignificant on their own, they were humiliated in some way, or their group was denigrated'. (Pappas, 2013).

Some people, who feel powerless and insignificant, want to draw attention and significance by adopting violence and horror, which they think will propagate their existence. Kruglanski stated, 'violence enjoys this very clear advantage, that by striking, by shooting, by exploding a tool, a really simple action immediately causes you to bent be a big, heroic quite person'. (Pappas, 2013).

When a group of people become unsuccessful, they become frustrated. They become rude in their inner mind. They do not want to obey the rules and regulations of the local society. At any cost they want to be leading person of the

society. For getting this position they try to involve with terrorist activities. It is very influential causes behind the terrorism.

Very interestingly, the main purposes of law enforcement agent have to decrease and minimize the political violent activities. They do not have time to see the individuals which causes terrorist. Government always have busy with their politics.

Another study shows that around 40% of individuals join terrorist groups with a view to exercise 'heroism'. They believe to have some special quality of being a hero which distinguishes them from the others (Subramanyam, 2018). There is a term 'revolutionary heroism' from which concept one joins in terrorist group; they think that society is not on right way. It needs to re-organized, re-built. This mindset has paved the way for proving an individual stronger in his or her society by becoming a terrorist, which was not possible by leading a simple life. Consequently, this creates a position of leader who has power and dominance over others.

Thomas Strentz has acknowledged that these violence groups that conducts against democratic system with the hand of a field commander, opportunist, usually becomes a male, whose devastating activity predates his political involvement. Strentz has tried to attribute the psychological classification of the antisocial personality, also considered to as sociopath or psychopath, to the person of these action oriented individual. Though the opportunist is not mentally ill, Strentz has tried to explain, 'this person is oblivious to the needs of others and unencumbered by the capacity to feel guilt or empathy' (Strentz, 2005).

4.2. Terrorism and Empathy Gap

Studies have found that gap of empathy works as a motivator for terrorists to carry out violence. In a terrorist mind, there is no such word or feeling like empathy. It is also found that the terrorist groups intentionally brain washed the volunteer terrorists to be a person without any kind of empathy so that they can consider the victims a subhuman and evil and must be killed, 'part of the ideological persuasion to get them to do these things is to reduce the humanity of the victims, so the victims are perceived not as other citizenry, but rather as vermin, as subhuman creatures' Kruglanski told in an interview taken by Live Science (Pappas, 2013). We have witnessed that how terrorists attacked on schools and killed innocent children who did not have any idea of what is going around and why they were being killed. The terrorists were merciless and at the same time they were devoid of any sense. John Horgan, the director of the International Center for the Study of Terrorism at Pennsylvania State University, describes that, 'for a person who engages in this kind of activity, the immediate victims are meaningless. They are simply a means to an end' (Pappas, 2011). Neuroscience has showed that empathy gap in childhood can cause serious damage and can make a person risky for others when he or she is grown up. The process of developing morality is initially connected to the religious empathy in the initial stage of life.

Shame culture, isolation and racism can grow permanent hatred into the minds of children. If a child does not nurture in a shame free or racism free environment, he or she cannot grow a mind of love rather aggression and hatred grow into their minds. Without enough space, a child cannot grow properly in mentally and biologically. It is very precise and important for a good child. It is the main initial

weapon to prevent terrorist activities. Family violence is another tool which enhances lack of empathy among the children.

The oppression of law enforcement authority to general people is a vital cause behind the terrorist activities. FBI operates a census that over 60% terrorist faces oppression by law enforcement agent. The Center for Social Cohesion in the United Kingdom also agrees with this census.

It is clear from the above discussion that how much empathy is important and without empathy and absence of a society of empathy can bring dangerous consequences like terrorism and extremism. Empathy gap in childhood causes terrorism in future. So, it is the high time parents, teachers and everyone in the society should take empathy teaches as the fundamental need along with food and education to end terrorism. This initiative can ensure a better future for the future generation.

4.3. Non-religious Facts and Initiates of Terrorism

One of the most familiar assumptions is that terrorism comes from poverty. At the time of depriving from economic safety, equal right, equal facility people becomes angry and tried to express outrage, as a result they turn to terrorist. Intensive researches have demonstrated that it would be seriously misleading to make religion liable as the root cause of terrorism. Scholars have widely opined that there are many reasons apart from religion which should be blamed for.

As an example, Steve Mariotti says; ‘we blame religion and ignore the economic underpinnings of terrorism at our peril. We can fight back with entrepreneurship education and initiatives that will encourage a worldwide entrepreneurial ecosystem to take root, instead of poisonous ideologies’ (Post, 2016).

Ahmed Sheikh Mohammad writes that, root causes of terrorism are many. They are lack of education, ignorance, poverty, oppression, repression, exclusion, and marginalization and so on. The interest groups always try to get target. They spent money, labor and time to motivate people to terrorism. Most of the cases the terrorist groups use Islam as their banner. But actually the main reason behind the terrorism is not religion. It is easy to establish a terrorist group with the name of religion. For that reason the interest group uses religion to establish a terrorist group as signboard.

Many scholars, economists, and political analysts indicate that terrorism is not originated from religion. It is originated from lacking of economic opportunity. The interest groups target the poor people and oppressed people as member of terrorist group.

Sultan Mahmud explains that the crime rate of an area is connected with the unemployment and poverty. From unemployment and poverty the people become hopeless and rude in character; eventually they follow the terrorist activities. Individual frustration is very important cause behind the terrorist activities. It makes a man angry and rude. They try to destroy everything around them. They do not care about their family member even themselves. They think themselves as authority of the area. They do not follow the rules and regulation of local government.

Many politicians are trying to interconnect the issue, terrorism and lack of economic opportunity. They try to say that without improvement, it is not possible to decrease terrorism. With the economic improvement it is possible to stop terrorism. Poor society contains more misconceptions, bigotry and so on.

From this point of view, former US president George W. Bush says that they fight against poverty because hope is a solution to terror.

The former US president showed that poverty, lack of education and lack of hope turned into any man and woman to terrorism.

After the attack of September 11 in America, many scholars disagreed the concept of George W. Bush.

Always the hope cannot resist the terrorism. Sometimes jealousy, revenge, ignorance can overcome the idea hope. Practically the interest groups behind the terrorist groups fixed the behind scene of terrorism. It can be hope, can be poverty, etc.

International terrorism has also depth cause. Sometimes the powerful country uses the terrorist groups as their own part of war. They spent money, power, and relation to use terrorist groups in their own interest.

Poverty, lack of education, and bigotry are the primary causes but the secondary causes of terrorism are fixed by interest groups. To stop it, the political conditions of a state are very important. The powerful countries should avoid the using of terrorist groups because of their own purposes. Then it is possible to decrease the terrorism.

There are two important concepts, lack of economic opportunity leads to terrorism or unfair distribution of wealth leads to terrorism. The most of the scholars vote for second reason. Unfair distribution makes a man angry, frustrated which causes terrorist activities.

Some scholars try to say that terrorism is an extreme version of a peasants' revolt. The most of the wealth and liquid money are concentrated in the hands of few

people. They try to change the system. They are the indirect interest groups behind the terrorist activities. Sometimes government itself patronizes terrorist activities. As an example, Pakistan patronize terrorist group to control Kashmir.

War in Middle East by the western world is the main causes behind terrorism. The Iraq and America war was the root of terrorism in Middle East. The army officers of ex-president Saddam are involved with ISI terrorist group. These kinds of war increase the opportunity of terrorist activities. The lack of well established government also increases the space of terrorist activities.

Misdistribution of wealth has a long term effect in society. It helps happening class sufferings. Human beings have a nature that personal sufferings affect them less but class sufferings affect much. At that time they want to re-organize the system of the society even country. Ultimately they started to follow the terrorist activities.

From the above theory it is clear that poverty produce terrorist activities is true but it is not the only one force behind terrorism. The member of terrorist groups thinks it as war. They want to destroy the old system. Poverty is a strong cause but the social frustration is stronger. It is easy to misguide the frustrated people than general people to terrorist activities by interest groups. They always wait for this ideal situation.

There is an interesting theory that natural disasters make a room for terrorism. The people, who suffered much, turn to terrorism. They become frustrate and try to take revenge which ultimately turns them into violence activities. They lost their general sense. They are controlled by misconceptions.

Ultimately this theory is another variation of the poverty theory. Berrebi and Ostwald argued that most of the cases natural disasters make a massive destruction.

It makes critical situations and hardship in societies. As an example, the massive flood occurred in Pakistan in 2010, which disabled government and its governs. From this situation the terrorist group Taliban operates their work freely. This terrorist group flourishes their activities in Pakistan from this event.

From this example it is realized that, poverty in society is helpful for terrorist group. The government cannot fight with terrorist group lack of proper resources. In conclusion of this natural disaster theory found that the under developed and developing country and natural disaster oriented country are the fertile land for the rise of terrorism.

4.4. Socio-Political Factors

Another theory says that political factors play major role in the rise of terrorism, for example, government repression, political instability, absence of democracy, etc. unstable and undemocratic weak government cause the people to suffer. If any government fails to provide the rights to its people, human rights are wrong judged and sometimes oppression of government happened. It is very emotional and mental angriness of people against the government. (Newman, 2006).

Certain studies have showed political and social injustice have strong link with terrorism rather than poverty. At the time of futile of local government to give basic standards of citizens; citizens become displaced and that creates opportunity for the terrorist organizations to come closer to deprived people and they can easily be recruited. It is mandatory for the local administration to give many facilities to the people like, hospitals, medical care, jobs, and schooling to survive well in the area.

Political freedom of country is also a crucial matter to stop terrorist activities. It is found from an analysis that terrorist activities are common in where lack of political freedom.

Abadie argues that which countries have well-organized government and neutral authority are comparatively much free from terrorism issues. Those countries which are going through a critical time from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones experience more incidents like terrorism and extremism (Abadie, 2004).

Repression, freedom of expression can cause violent form of terrorism. A United Nations General Assembly resolution in 1985 found that one of the root causes of terrorism is racism and massive human rights violation (United Nations General Assembly, 1985).

When a state has a very low respect and status of human rights, it creates serious frustrations among the citizens. In that situation, citizens consider that the government with those in charge as the enemy of humanity and they want to take the charge to solve the wrongdoings. It is very easy to misguide and mislead those people by the terrorist groups by showing sympathy as it has been mentioned in the psychological factors that they become sympathizers to the oppressed and deprived and gain the trust. They provide training and resources necessary to fight against the political parties. This is how a citizen becomes a terrorist with the help of terrorist organizations.

Dr. Amy Zalman considers terrorism as political issue firstly but it is not only a political issue. There are two strong reasons behind it. They are,

Social and Political Injustice: People started to follow the path of terrorism when they face social and political injustice. They become frustrate and rude in mind. Then they started to do violence activities.

The Belief that Violence or its Threat will be Effective: The member of terrorist groups believes that violence can change the injustice. They also think that they have no choice without violent activities. They think it as eventual decision. (Zalman, 2016).

Charles A. Russel and Bowman H. Miller (1977) are much mentioned names in terrorism studies. Despite their limitations, they have done a noteworthy research attempting to draw a sociological portrait of the present urban 350 terrorists from Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Palestine, Spain, Turkey, and Uruguay during the 1966 to 1976 period.

Russel and Miller noticed that the average age of member of terrorist groups are between 22 to 25 years. They are very young in age.

In those countries where ethnic, political, religious violence are happened like, Algeria, Colombia, Sri Lanka, the young people involved in terrorist activities rather age people.

In general the leader of terrorist group is aged and old person. Sociologist Russel and Miller found that, most of the terrorist group's leader has come from middle class or upper class. Such as,

FARK: The main leader of this terrorist organization has come from aristocrat class. He has come from Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

PKK: The head leader of PKK has also come from aristocrat class. Basically he was a political leader. He was a leader of Kurdistan Workers' Party.

LTTE: The leader of LTTE has come from middle class family. It was happened for internal war of Sri Lanka.

The western, European, and Japanese terrorists have come from elite class family. They are higher educated also. From a long analysis it is realized that the main traits behind the terrorist activities are frustration, Revenge, injustice, persecution, etc. The members of terrorist groups think that they are victims of persecution. From that point of view they want to established justice in the society.

Most of them do not realize that they do wrong. They think that they are right and the general people are wrong. The member of terrorist groups is very loyal to their spiritual leader. They can do anything for him. Sometimes they conduct suicide bombing.

The terrorist organizations operate their activities in both urban and remote area. Basically they select their area with many co-related matters. Among them they give importance to political conditions, geographical situations, economic conditions, internal clash within different class, nearest countries location, etc.

4.5. Religion and Terrorism

All the religions of the world profess peace and harmony. Despite of this, violence and terrorism in the teachings of religious harmony, peace and empathy are facing severe threat in today's world. All of the religions of the world have terrorist groups. War in the name of religion is common for all time in the world. The religious war named Crusades (1096-1291) is led by Christians with Muslims to control the Jerusalem, the holy city. These wars were sanctioned by successive Popes. In recent times, Pope John Paul II apologized to Muslims for the cruelties perpetrated on them by Christians during the Crusades (Rashed, 2013). The rise of

Zionism led to the establishment of a state within the Palestine land. In the 20th century, with the rise of Zionism, “tolerance turned into hatred and respect into contempt” (Weyer, 2002). Catholics and Protestants fought with each other in ‘The Thirty Years War’ (1618-1648) of the early seventeenth century. The war led to terrible bloodshed in the history. Islam has also split into two sects- Shi’ia and Sunni. Like Catholics and Protestants, they have a long history of mutual persecution. Terrorist groups are misguiding people by misusing the term ‘Jihad’ and defaming Islam tagging killing innocent people in the name of religion. Hindu religion also has a problem named cast system. It is a big problem for contemporary world. Buddhism is also devoid from its peaceful teachings and precept of not to kill any living being. Why are there killings in the name of religions? Do the religions profess that? If we study religions, we do not find a single word in the religious texts which propagates and initiates hatred and killing. We have to notice that, religious leaders and religious texts whether they are revealed or not revealed were imposed on the human being to guide them, to enlighten them with the light of empathy toward mankind. Religion itself stands for unity and bonding. The etymological meaning of religion is ‘binding together a new’, where, Re + legere = Religion, Re = again, Legere = to bind together (Islam and Islam 2002). Religion always give emphasize on bonding not divide. Terrorists and fanatics use religions to achieve their unrealistic goals for example converting all into one faith which is absolutely impossible and against the will of God because if God wanted to convert all in one faith, He could do so at His fingertips. Moreover, fanatics often misuse religions to achieve their personal benefit and throughout the history religion was misused by the evil politicians to manipulate and exploit the innocents. In this case they send misinterpreted ideological or

religious messages to the general people. They know that people have a soft corner for their own religion and at the same time they are aware of the fact that most of the common people lack proper religious education about their own religion and almost zero knowledge about others religions. So, it becomes very easy for the terrorists to propagate their messages tagging religion with it. Religious fanaticism is the extreme manifestation of terrorism. At the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a study conducted by Anneli Botha explores that 87% of respondents coined religion as the reason why they joined Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen meaning "Mujahideen Youth Movement" or "Movement of Striving Youth". It was found that there is not a single word in the Qur'an that indicates or provokes terrorism but some religious priests or clergies are justifying terrorism by using fatwas (nonbinding legal pronouncement for the Muslim). Studies showed that terrorists take shelter in religions to fulfill their goals; they find physical or psychological relief against the repression; or they'll use it as an effective instrument for activism and for political action. Culture shapes one's social behavior and without the proper culture which provides such elements which supports or instigate extremism, religion cannot be termed as an only source of terrorism and extremism. Religions and culture are interconnected and one should identify the motivators of terrorism considering the facts like socio-economic, political and psychological aspects to determine the real causes of terrorism. If we can do so, surely, we could find that, religion itself is not only cause of terrorism and there should be no such word like religious terrorism. Those who engaged into terrorism, they are nothing but the enemy of religion. Terrorist have no religion and with the help of terrorism, no religion could survive. Terrorism and religion are fully contradictory to each other. It is true that some people are highly motivated by

religious fundamentalism. The term 'Fundamentalism' probably the most closely related with religious extremism, and terrorism. Broadly speaking, it denotes to a strict, dogmatic adherence to a belief system.

Alternatively, fundamentalism has been defined in terms of an extreme reaction toward changing patterns that threaten or question particular beliefs.

The concept fundamentalism is negative in character. It refers to radical and violent activities. (Wright, 2016). Altemeyer and Hunsberger, defined fundamentalism as, "The belief that there is one set of spiritual teachings that clearly contains the elemental, basic, intrinsic, essential, inerrant truth about humanity and deity; that this truth must be followed today consistent with the elemental, unchangeable practices of the past; which those that believe and follow these fundamental teachings have a special relationship with the deity" (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992).

Wright (2016) described this definition with some important points.

Firstly, all religions are not fundamentalists.

Secondly, advocating for and believing any specific belief system within the collective sphere is distinct from the present, usually violent, fundamentalist movement.

Thus, fundamentalism, as a private difference variable, are often perfectly acceptable if advocating beliefs is completed through politically acceptable means (e.g., through democratic processes), instead of violence. However, fundamentalists could also be more vulnerable to calls to violent action through traditional media, religious scholars, and a social media campaign, Wright argues. The fundamentalists are devoid of empathy, and adopt religion as a weapon by

translating the holy texts in a completely different way which causes violence. It becomes complex when the common people start to accept those misinterpreted versions of religion. What causes one to accept those heinous misinterpreted explanations of religious texts? The only possible answer is incorrect and incomplete religious education. The lack of realizing of their own faith makes one vulnerable and terrorist organizations are taking this opportunity. It is a great success that rehabilitation programs in Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, Singapore and Indonesia have successfully rehabilitated the former extremist who was misguided by al-Qaeda's religious misinterpretations. Eminent Islamic scholars have refuted directly those mal-explanations promulgated by al-Qaeda. The former extremists renounced al-Qaeda by knowing the facts that they were misguided by the misinterpretation of Islam and Islamic texts. It stands to reason that proper religious education including one's own religion and other faiths surely prevent one to be misguided by the terrorist and extremists.

4.6. Rise of Terrorism in Bangladesh

From 1999- 2005, Bangladesh, the third largest Muslim majority country of the world was swept by a wave of Islamic militancy. Rise of extremism in Bangladesh was paved by the returners of the Fagan war against the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. Those extremists bought extremist ideology and tactics in Bangladesh. It was found that Ohabi idealism from the Middle East, India-Pakistan conflict; national and international Islamic NGOs are mainly responsible for the rise of Islamic militancy and terrorism in Bangladesh (Riaz Ali, 2008).

The late Bangladeshi scholar Muhammad Ghulam Kabir opined that Maj. Gen.

Zia-ur-Rahman, “successfully changed the image of Bangladesh from a liberal Muslim country to an Islamic country” (Kabir, 1994). Secularism was introduced by Zia in constitution. Swedish journalist and Asia affairs specialist Bertil Lintner argue that, Zia used Islam as a weapon to save the BNP, his newly introduced political organization, which became the second largest party in the country after the Awami League.

The mixture of religion and politics was needed to justify military rule on the basis of ideological platform. Zia was killed in 1981. Ershad took the power.

Ershad, in 1988, made Islam as the state religion and changed the holiday from Sunday to Friday and revived the Jamat-i-Islam, this political party was against the liberation war of Bangladesh. Jamat-i-Islam had supported Pakistan and it is continuously doing so. After the liberation war of 1971, most of its leaders had fled to Pakistan. Under Zia, they came back and brought with them new fundamentalist ideas. Ershad used the term secularism as political weapon against Islam. By conducting an extensive research on the economic base of fundamentalist groups, Professor Abul Barakat revealed how Jamat-i-Islam built its strong socio-economic and cultural base within the discourse of militarism and financial patronizations of Saudi Arabia and Middle East countries (Barakat, 2018). In Bangladesh, the two major political parties, Awami League and BNP have used the Islamist parties for their political purposes. BNP has demonstrated its willingness to work with radical Islamists while AL has traditionally been opposite to radicalism. But in December 2006, AL’s signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the fundamentalist Khilafat-e- Majlis party indicated that the fundamentalist parties are gaining legitimacy by the government (Vaughn 2007, Karim and Fair 2007). Among the

major religion-based terrorist groups in Bangladesh, we can get a glare of this brief discussion:

1. Harkat -ul Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) is classified as the main militant outfit in Bangladesh which has been responsible for several terrorist attack switches was formed in 1992. Bertil Linter interviewed some prominent Bangladeshi journalists, who had requested anonymity, stated that; in the early 1990s Pakistani militants were given passports by the Bangladeshi diplomats in Saudi Arabia to escape in Bangladesh. Following the same way other terrorists from Pakistan and perhaps also from Afghanistan were in process to enter into Bangladesh during that period. These groups of men were key instrument in building up HUJI reportedly with funding from Osama bin Laden (South Asia Terrorism Portal). This radical group is alleged to have ties to both AL Qaeda and the Islamic Oikya Jote which is a coalition partner of the BNP (Vaughn, 2007). Some view that BNP's coalition with the hard-line radical groups is liable for promoting radicalism in Bangladesh. In a statement on May 21, 2002, where it was described that HUJI is militant group with ties to Islamic militants in Pakistan (Office of the Coordination for Counter terrorism, 21 May, 2002). HUJI was founded in 1984 and HUJI Bangladesh was founded on 30 April 1992, allegedly with financial support from Osama bin Laden himself. HUJI Bangladesh had shook the country with its terrible attacks, on 18 January 1999, the group attempted to kill poet Shamsur Rahman, bombing in Udichi society in Jessore, bombing in Ahmadian mosque in Khulna, on 20 July, fierce attempt was taken to assassinate Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in 2001, bombing on Bengali New Year celebrations in Romna Park and many more.

2. Jamaat-U-Mujahideen in Bangladesh (JMB) is a religious militant group founded in 1998 by Abdur Rahman in Jalampur in Dhaka division. This organization was banned by the Bangladesh government in February 2005. This organization follows the ideals of the Taliban of Afghanistan and opposes the liberal attitude of Bangladesh and its political system.
3. Jagrata Muslim Jananta Bangladesh (JMJB) means awakened Muslim masses came into limelight in 2003 after the operation in Khetlal. The government of Bangladesh has banned it marking as a terrorist organization (Salam 2010).
4. The Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), also called Ansar Bangla is an extremist Islamic group in Bangladesh which is liable for the killing of bloggers from 2013-2015 and a bank heist in April 2015 (The Daily Star). The group has linked to Islamic Chatra Shibir which is a student wing of Jamat-i-Islami of Bangladesh. They have strong propaganda through social media and they shared their views on a website called “Ansarulla Bangla Team”. This group was officially banned by the Government of Bangladesh in 25 May 2015. Other terrorist groups are Hizbut Tahrir, Abu Omar, Islami Biplobi Parisad, Jadid al Qaeda, Islamic Chatra Shibir, etc.

4.7. Threat Level of Terrorism in Bangladesh

Terrorism is a massive threat to any country's national security goals. It is so dangerous that it can shatter a country's well-established development. Terrorism destroys the peaceful co-existence and creates disbelief among the different religions of a country. Moreover, terrorism is a great threat to empathy. Lack of empathy in the mind of the people forces him or her to hurt others. Terrorism is the heinous example of apathy which destroys love and empathy. Before determining the threat level of Bangladesh, it is important to clarify the meaning of threat,

sources of threat and determinants of threat and terrorism. Although concept and gravity of threat differs from place to place and time to time, in order to sketch threat levels, analysis of the index and risk factors are necessary. Identifying the threat index is the first step of threat evaluation process. In order to determine the probability of a threat, one must take in consideration threat sources, possible vulnerabilities and existing precautionary mechanism (Islam, 2008).

US security department defines threat assessment as:

“a systematic effort to spot and evaluate existing or potential terrorist threats to a jurisdiction and its target assets. Due to the problem in accurately assessing terrorist capabilities, intentions, and tactics, threat assessments may yield only general information about potential risks.”

It has been found that both organizational and operational factors like ideological motivation, leadership skill and pattern, recruiting policies, training, command and control mechanism, fame and publicity, operational space, , technical expertise and specialist, external sources of weapon, and financial sources and support, etc. have influenced terrorist groups' purpose and competence (Islam, 2008). Threat assessment depends on the threat sources. Threat sources are motivation, resources and threat action for completing an operation. An effective terrorism threat assessment framework includes a minimum of seven determining criterion: (i) existence of terrorist group to a specific locality, (ii) the potential of a terrorist organization or group to hold out an ambush, (iii) authentication of organizational activities, (iv) target of a gaggle to conduct terrorist attacks and activities, (v) manifestation of terrorist activities, (vi) availability of authentic information, warning, and or intelligence activities that indicates preparations for specific terrorist operations by a suspect group, and (vii) political and security measures of

the given area (Aynul,2008). According to these threat indicators, the probability and risks of the potential terrorist threat in Bangladesh cannot be ignored at any cost. In spite of banning radical and terrorist organizations, activities of those terrorist organizations are still noticeable in our country. Bangladesh scored very high in a study on threat level prediction for 2008-2015 within the lists of threat to national security of the country (Islam, 2008). Confronting government's 'zero tolerance policy' and continuous attempts by the law and security forces, the militant forces are now moving slowly by changing and adopting new techniques. Many banned extremist groups are still reorganizing their tactics and regrouping by changing their names and symbols. The existence of the militant groups in a certain territory and its neighbors is the foremost indicator to understand the threat of terrorism and Bangladesh fits very well in this ground (Aynul 2008). Increase of Islamic militant activities has been an alarming issue and there has been a significant increase particularly in 2015. It seems that militant groups have identified Bangladesh as one of their newly safe havens for instance, AQIS and IS have claimed their existence in Bangladesh. The Ansar Al Islam which is also known as the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) claimed to be the unit of India based militant group AQIS which has taken responsibility of murdering atheist bloggers and the publisher of one of the atheist blogger's book (Riaz, 2017). In 2016, July 1, during the holy month of Ramadan terrorist attacks and killing of seventeen foreigners, three Bangladeshis and two police officers trembled the whole country and the world also. Another attack was followed by this attack was the attack on Sholakia, Kishoregang district at the Eid congregation. IS (Islamic State) the global terrorist group took the responsibility of those attacks. They posed the causes of attacks on the grounds like absence of democracy, insufficient regulation and

application of law, lack of good governance despite rapid growth of the Country. It is not worthy that rapid economic growth, social emancipation and development of a country reject appeal and grounds for extremism, violence. To change the idea and to mark Bangladesh as a failure country such terror tactics have been used to isolate Bangladesh from global and regional interaction.

Fortunately, Bangladesh has been marked among those four nations in South Asia that have exceeded in controlling terrorism and experienced a reduction in extremism. According to the 2018 Global Terrorism Index, Bangladesh has proved effective improvement in tactics and measures to maintain national and regional security alongside Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

In 2018, Bangladesh climbed down four spots to the extent of nations experiencing medium impact of terrorism, ranking 25th among 163 countries with a score of 5.697 out of 10. Bangladesh scored 6.181 and was placed at 21st. In 2019, Bangladesh ranked 31, by obtaining score 5.208, which is a six-step improvement than 2018. According to the observation of Global Terrorism index, six among the seven South Asian countries have proved improvement in Global Terrorism Index with the record largest improvement by Bangladesh (Staff Reporter, 2019, November, 30, Bangladesh improves 6 notches, *the Independent*).

Bangladesh has taken some steps to check terrorism. Community engagement with a holistic approach has been given importance. A reform in educational system is under review. Funding training on media gives to the students. Students of schools, colleges, Madrasas and Universities are had been given special attention to promote critical thinking and scientific approach in checking fake news and hate speech.

Chapter Five

Role of Inter-religious Empathy in Building Peace and National Integrity

For building peace and national integrity in Bangladesh, there is no alternative to work collectively irrespective of religious beliefs and political ideologies. The respondents have asserted that Bangladesh has been a unique example of inter-religious harmony down through the centuries. People from different religions have a common identity that they are Bangladeshi and indigenous people of this country also have respect for the culture, language and religions of different people besides their own language and culture. This is the real example of inter-religious empathy which can uphold the notion 'beauty in diversity'. The respondents have given utmost importance on 'inter-religious empathy' in order to build peace and national integrity. In their conceptualization it remains simultaneously as socio-religious and psychological phenomena. Respondents argue that the doctrine of inter-religious empathy should not be confined in theoretical framework; rather it should be in reality and in practice.

According to respondent 'A', interfaith empathy is fruitful in building peace and harmony among followers of different religions. Any discussion that tries to bring about unity is fruitful. When followers of different religions try to understand viewpoints and concepts of peoples of other Faiths, they come closer together and find points of agreement. This helps in building harmony and this harmony leads to greater national integrity and peace. Respondent 'B' analyzes the meaning of 'peace' for clarification. Peace can be defined in positive and negative terms. The positive definition of peace is 'a state of harmony' where the negative is a state

existing during the absence of war'. For a stable peace and integrity of a nation, a state of harmony is inevitable. Interfaith empathy ensures peace in its positive form because empathy binds together and it makes us feel to walk in another's shoe. Respondent 'E' agrees with the former respondents and asserts that it is now recognized by many religious scholars almost from all the religions of the world, that main goal, and purpose of all religions is peace and prosperity. This recognition comes from a realization of, or a sense of integrity among all faiths, which is enlightened by interfaith empathy.

In response to the problems of interfaith empathy in Bangladesh in building peace and national integrity, respondents have put forward some important issues. Respondent 'E' opines that neutral people are intensely engaged in material excellence. Extreme people are hyperactive to destroy the culture of tolerance. Building Awareness among general people regarding the needs and benefit of interfaith empathy and attracting and engaging intellectuals and social leaders to a process of interfaith dialogue and activities could bring a positive change. According to respondent 'D', the faulty education system of our country is responsible for the lack of understanding the nature and meaning of inter-religious empathy. It means a issue of great regret that in our textbooks, teachings of inter-religious empathy and harmony are absolutely absent. Even the teachers are unaware of these life-oriented teachings, he added. Respondent 'B' opines, the problems can be traced to the religious leaders who instigate people against the followers of other religions. The main source of the problem is ignorance about other religions and their basic oneness. If everyone would see them as part of a single divine Revelation that is sent to humankind in various evolutionary stages and at different times, unity would be established. Respondent 'E' agrees with

respondent 'D' in terms of the education system. The solution lies in education, the kind of education we need that is not academic but ethical in nature. Moral education can remove the problems associated with negative attitudes towards followers of other religions, cultures and nations. School syllabus itself needs to include lessons on acceptance, respect and empathy towards people who follow a different religion, she suggests. Respondent 'C' suggests that mass media, especially today's common trend social media could be a strong medium to reach people easily and make them understand the positive and constructive consequences of inter-religious empathy.

Respondent 'F' reveals that, lack of interfaith dialogue is one of the major causes. Mass people do not have proper knowledge regarding different faiths. So, the government should encourage and patronize interfaith dialogue in remote areas also. Respondent 'G' supports respondent 'F' and adds that, as Bangladesh is a Muslim majority country, the religious personalities including Imams and Mullahs play a major role. Most of them often propagate misinterpretations of Qur'an regarding other religious faiths and defame other religions marking them as enemy of Islam. They discourage common people to meet people from other religions. With a view to overcoming this lack of understanding, religious scholars can play a crucial role in producing books and journal articles on interfaith empathy and harmony. And the government should have a monitoring team to stop these types of hatred towards other people in Waaz and other public gatherings. Reforming the textbooks is a vital requirement. Teaching of other religions should be included in the text books. This is the easiest possible way to teach and enlighten common people about the other religions, he added.

Respondent 'A' opines that, it is impossible to live without inter-religious empathy in Bangladesh. As we live in a heterogeneous society, we cannot deny other's faith and religious culture. Above all, we are at first Bangladeshi. There are four cornerstones in the Constitution of Bangladesh. They are nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism. The term secularism in Bangladesh denotes respect for all the faiths without any discrimination. In order to protect the honor of our Constitution, we need to practice interfaith empathy to establish peace and national integrity. Respondent 'B' opines that youths are the future of this country and they can play a positive role in establishing peace and integrity in Bangladesh. Respondent 'G' suggests that young minds can be both positively and negatively influenced as they mostly remain vulnerable stage of their life. Fanaticism can lead to criminal behavior. In order to combat the impact of negative influences, positive influences need to be built up and reinforced through the means of education and awareness building. According to respondent 'F', practice of tolerance is a key factor in establishing interfaith empathy. Young age is the proper and perfect time to sow the seeds of tolerance, in the future which will prove to be empathetic. So, to strive for achieving the best degree of tolerance in anyone's (youths) life will be the best application of interfaith empathy in his or her life.

Interfaith empathy could be a constructive approach toward making Bangladesh a country of harmony and peace where people shower love for others in every respect of life i.e., political, religious, and social and culture spheres. According to respondent 'A' interfaith dialogue can go far in changing people's attitudes about followers of other religions. They can see things from a different perspective through such dialogues as it helps them to understand other Faiths and learn that the foundation of all religions is basically one. They all came from a single source

and aimed at educating mankind. Hatred, intolerance and divisions have only come about because certain religious leaders instigated hatred in order to safeguard their own positions. Respondent 'D' is very positive in this sense and opines that the desire for peace and progress very much common within common people also. So, if it can be presented to the common people about the concept that peace and progress are conditional with interfaith dialogue and empathy, and if some simple and easy technique of dialogue and thoughts of empathy could be taught, they (the people of Bangladesh) will surely understand and will spread out their understanding through their words and deeds. Responded 'C' suggests that a country where religious bigotry exists cannot prosper further. Thus, building peace and national integrity become tough for a country. It is inter-religious empathy that can eradicate these religious bigotries. As a result, it becomes easier for a country to establish peace, national integrity and harmony on a strong footing.

Respondent 'G' asserts that, first of all, the government should take necessary measures to initiate inter-religious empathy. What the government needs to do is that a well standard modern curriculum should be developed. A complete reformation in the education system is required. Students should be enlightened by the teachings and ethics of other religions besides their own religious beliefs. Respondent 'E' suggests that in our country there are multiple education systems. Government should have proper and complete control over these education systems and strong monitoring cells should be in force to monitor what is contained in the syllabus. Exemplary punishment should be ensured if any educational institute is found to have involved in propagating inter or intra religious hatred and conflict. It should make it compulsory to know other religions properly from the primary education system to university level.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This thesis is the study of the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace for national integrity in Bangladesh. This exploratory work particularly focuses on the necessity of inter-religious empathy in combating terrorism and religious fanaticism. Empathy is needed in every aspect of society and everyone should admire and practice empathy with utmost importance. Although empathy is crucial for the peaceful living, research works on empathy are not so sufficient. Few works have been done on 'inter-religious dialogue' but the basis of interfaith dialogue that is 'empathy' remains silent in those studies. Through this research work, the researcher has taken a humble attempt to discuss and explore the role and necessity of inter-religious empathy for an effective inter-religious dialogue and its role in building up national integrity.

To be a human being, one must have sympathy and empathy for others. In explaining the role of empathy in making better human being the statement of Hoffman can be quoted here. American psychologist, Martin Hoffman, an emeritus professor of clinical and developmental psychology of New York University says, "When I tell people my field is moral development, the first response is usually silence, sometimes 'oh!' They think I mean religion, telling the truth, the decline of traditional family life, and prohibitions against drugs, alcohol, and teenage pregnancy. When I tell them my interest is people's consideration for others, they perk up at first but then say something like it must be frustrating to study that because everybody is interested in themselves; who cares about anyone else, except maybe their family? But when I say humans could not have survived as a

species if everyone cared only about himself, they pause, think about it, and then say something like ‘You might be right’. The evolution argument carries weight, as though it were self-evident that hunters and gatherers had to help each other to survive, so humans must have helping gens” (Hoffman, 2012).

Without sympathy and empathy, one cannot achieve the moral and ethical footing of being called human being because empathy is in our genes so that people must be empathetic towards others. Sympathy and empathy equally denote selfless benevolent tendencies for others. Again, empathy is much deeper than sympathy. Empathy is greater than compassion. Empathy brings a change with heart and lets one feel to walk in the other’s shoe to experience the distress of others. A society full of love and kindness can be assured if each one feels the pains of others as their own and this is the highest form of humanity that all religions propagate.

To know others and understand others, we need to come close to others. We need to listen to others. This process is called dialogue. Dialogue is important for eradicating misconceptions. Dialogue enhances a sense of understanding. Dialogue can be practiced in every sector including family to world politics. In the case with religion, dialogue is inevitable because this world is full of variations and it is the variation of religions that makes the world like a flower garden with so many different flowers with so many colors. This world itself is a pluralistic world where people with different faiths exist. Some believe in God, some do not. Everyone has a set of beliefs system. As this world is like a family, we must know our family members. This is why inter-religious dialogue is so significant. This thesis has found that inter-religious dialogue initiates inter-religious empathy. By dialogue with empathy, one gets close to another and that refreshes his or her mind from prejudices and stereotypes. Empathy directs us towards the concept that different

faiths have different beliefs and that is the uniqueness and beauty of the world, thus inter-religious empathy encourages and ensures acceptance the diversities rather turning them into one.

Although religion propagates peace and harmony, terrorism in the name of religion has already been appeared as a big threat to the peaceful coexistence of humanity in this world. The present researcher has investigated that one becomes a terrorist for various reasons because various motivators work behind it. Psychological and social motivators work behind in promoting terrorism. Psychological and social factors denote that empathy plays a significant role in developing child and adolescence psychology. Lack of empathy from family, peer groups, and society create empathy gap into the mind of children and anyone which can results aggressive attitude, radicalism, extremism and terrorism.

The world is trembling with the fear of the consequences of terrorism and desperately searching for solutions. As this research work concludes, inter-religious empathy can mitigate this problem on a large scale. Inter-religious empathy gives one the ability to think the other's pain and this can prevent killing and hatred. Psychological and social motivators that worked for the rise of extremism can be eliminate through a sense of genuine empathy. Inter-religious empathy can be a solution for bringing back those victims who were being brainwashed and inspired to become terrorist. Through the teachings of interfaith empathy, one can get back those lost fellow feelings and love for their brethren.

Development and national integrity depend on the stability of a sovereign state. Not only by financial indicators, but also a country's development can be measured by its religious harmony and stability of peace in that particular country. To explore the role of inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity

in Bangladesh, the researcher has conducted interview sessions with respondents from various disciplines. As the respondents opine, public awareness is must for preventing religious hatred. Inter-religious dialogue and empathy should be practiced in family also. Government should make it compulsory for school children. Education system needs to be reformed and teachings of inter-religious harmony and practical sessions for dialogue should be applied as compulsory syllabus. Implementation of law is must for preventing terrorism. Political stability and democracy should be maintained. Role of religious leaders is very crucial in establishing inter-religious empathy as they can preach the message of harmony and empathy. Mass media can play a pivotal role in preventing hatred and can spread the notions of harmony and inter-religious empathy. Over all a systematic step is needed to develop inter-religious harmony and empathy with the support of all sections of people.

Inter-religious empathy is a vast issue to discuss. It is quite impossible to cover this full subject in this research paper. Inter-religious empathy and its importance are gaining momentum in today's world. People are becoming aware about inter-religious dialogue to understand the inner meaning of peace from the perspective of different religions. This study gives insight to take the subject matter like inter-religious empathy in building peace and national integrity with utmost importance. This thesis contributes by offering more subject matters like interfaith empathy in education sector, interfaith empathy in the psychology to be studied in a more exclusive way.

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Appendix

List of the Interviews

Respondents	Place of interviewing	Date and time	Occupation
A	Dhaka University, Bangladesh	2 February 2019 1 pm-2 pm	Professor
B	East West University, Bangladesh	4 February 2019 12.30pm - 1.40 pm	Professor
C	Shantinagar, Dhaka	3 March 2019 4pm-5.30 pm	School Teacher
D	Khulna, Bangladesh	10 March 2019 1pm-2.20 pm	H.S.C Candidate
E	Dhaka	13 March	University

	University, Bangladesh	2019 11 am- 1.pm	Student
F	Azimpur, Dhaka	14 March 2019 4 pm-5 pm	Home Maker
G	Jagannath University, Bangladesh	15 March 2019 3 pm-4.30 pm	University Student

Sample Questionnaires

1. Do you think interfaith Dialogue is fruitful in building peace and harmony among different religions?
 - If yes, how?

 - If no, why?

2. What are the problems of spreading interfaith dialogue in Bangladesh?

3. How to minimize these problems?

4. Why young generations are engaging in terrorism and religious extremism?
 - Can interfaith dialogue stop them from doing so?

 - How to apply interfaith dialogue among them?

 - How much interfaith dialogue plays role in your life?

- Do you have any real-life experience of how interfaith dialogue has changed your life? Explain-

 - As a representative of young generation how can you apply interfaith dialogue in your life?

 - How can you make common people make understand about interfaith dialogue? Explain-
5. To what extent interfaith empathy can check religious extremism?
6. What are the possibilities of interfaith empathy in Bangladesh through interfaith dialogue?