

CenRaPS Journal of Social Sciences

International Indexed & Refereed



ISSN: 2687-2226 (Online)

<https://cenraps.org/journal/>



Original Article

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17834286>

The Role of Major Religious Festivals in Fostering Communal Harmony: Perspectives from Bangladesh

Abdullah Al Masud

Assistant Professor, Department of General Education, Northern University Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh. masudwrcdu@yahoo.com

Marufa Islam

Lecturer, Department of General Education, Northern University Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh. marufa27713@gmail.com

Md. Omar Faruk

Lecturer, Department of General Education, Northern University Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh. ofierdu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is a moderate, multicultural, and multi-communal society where adherents of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and other faiths coexist while celebrating diverse religious festivals. These vibrant celebrations enrich the nation's socio-cultural fabric, fostering communal harmony and mutual respect. Reflecting this diversity, the Bengali phrase 13 festivals in 12 months underscores the integral role of religious festivals in shaping Bangladesh's collective identity. This study examines the socio-religious functions and potential of major festivals—such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima—in promoting interfaith solidarity and social cohesion. Employing descriptive and analytical methodologies, the research critically evaluates existing literature, including scholarly works, digital resources, and relevant documents. The findings aim to propose pragmatic strategies for enhancing interreligious understanding and respect, thereby contributing to sustainable communal harmony in Bangladesh. By highlighting the unifying power of religious festivities, this study seeks to reinforce their role as catalysts for peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society.

Keywords: *Religious festivals, communal harmony, multiculturalism, religious coexistence, Bangladesh.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh, a nation renowned for its rich cultural diversity and religious pluralism, serves as a compelling example of communal harmony in South Asia. With a population comprising Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and indigenous faith communities, the country celebrates numerous religious festivals that not only reflect its multicultural ethos but also serve as vital instruments for social cohesion (Rahman, 2024, Al Mahmud, A. 2023). These festivals—such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Durga Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima—transcend mere ritualistic observance; they function as dynamic platforms for intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, and collective celebration (Siraj, 2025). In a global context where religious intolerance and sectarian violence often dominate discourse, Bangladesh's experience offers valuable insights into how shared festive traditions can bridge divides and reinforce national unity (Rahbarianyazd & Doratli, 2017). This study explores the socio-cultural and communicative roles of major religious festivals in Bangladesh, analysing their capacity to

cultivate communal harmony through shared participation, symbolic inclusivity, and interfaith solidarity.

Religious festivals in Bangladesh hold significant social importance at multiple levels. They serve as sites for the expression of spiritual devotion, the reinforcement of ethical and moral values, and the cultivation of emotional well-being. Simultaneously, they create opportunities for cross-community interaction, encouraging participants to transcend religious and social boundaries through shared rituals, feasts, and cultural performances. Festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima exemplify this inclusive ethos, wherein members of different faiths engage with one another, thereby nurturing mutual respect, empathy, and trust (Rahman, 2024). These practices demonstrate that festivals are not confined to a single religious group; instead, they operate as dynamic cultural institutions that facilitate social integration and intergenerational learning (Yeakub, 2022).

From a socio-cultural standpoint, religious festivals in Bangladesh serve as an important means of safeguarding cultural heritage and passing on traditional knowledge. Rituals, music, culinary practices, and artistic expressions embedded in these celebrations function as living archives of the nation's pluralistic ethos. In addition, they stimulate local economies through religious tourism, seasonal markets, and festival-related trade, further enhancing their societal significance (Rahbarianyazd & Doratli, 2017). Festivals thus operate as both symbolic and practical mechanisms for strengthening communal ties, supporting local livelihoods, and reinforcing national identity (Roy et al., 2020).

In the contemporary context, where global and regional societies face increasing social polarization and religious tension, the Bangladeshi model of inclusive festival celebration offers a compelling example of peaceful coexistence. Governmental policies, community practices, and grassroots initiatives collectively reinforce the legitimacy and accessibility of these festivals, ensuring that minority and majority communities alike can participate in shared cultural spaces (Pressenza, 2024). Interfaith interactions—whether Muslims visiting puja mandaps, Hindus joining Eid festivities, or Buddhists welcoming visitors during Buddha Purnima—illustrate the integrative potential of religious festivals as instruments of peacebuilding and social cohesion (Siraj, 2025).

Despite their unifying power, religious festivals face challenges, including commercialization, rising fundamentalism, and occasional sectarian tensions. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts at the policy, educational, and community levels to safeguard the inclusive character of festivals and ensure their continued role as instruments of social harmony (Pressenza, 2024). Recognizing this, the present study critically examines the socio-religious functions and inclusive dimensions of major festivals in Bangladesh, analyzing their contributions to communal harmony, interfaith dialogue, and cultural preservation. By highlighting both the spiritual and socio-cultural significance of these celebrations, this research underscores the vital role of festivals in fostering a resilient, pluralistic, and harmonious society (Yeakub, 2022).

2. RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS IN BANGLADESH

Festivals are indispensable to religious life, which undoubtedly encouraged bodily and mental purification for all classes of different faiths. It is an often-periodic celebration or entertainment with a specified focus (Wilson et al., 2017), frequently observed in the context of sustainability and social responsibility. Festivals are usually celebrated by the community and centre on some distinctive facet of its religious or cultural practices (Getz, 2010) but incorporate unique features, e.g., relation to a specific public place, involve planned and organized activities, and create a unique experience (Getz, 2008; Van Winkle & Woosnam,

2014). Most religious festivals are considered pure, sanctified, and inseparable parts of religions (James, 1902).

As a country of colourful festivals, Bangladesh and its people celebrate a wide variety of festivals organized with inexorable enthusiasm and intricate details throughout the year. Many religious festivals have been observed in our country for over a hundred years and have now attained a universal appeal among followers of different faiths. They have broken their periphery and entered into other communities as well. Nowadays, these festivals are more enjoyable and colourful than before. Still, emergent social dimensions and demands have emerged, resulting in opportunities for mutual exchange among religious groups, diverse racial and ethnic communities, friends, and relatives. The major religions of Bangladesh, including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, along with their festivals and observances, and their impact on fostering communal harmony, will be addressed and discussed.

2. 1. Islamic Festivals

Islam is the largest religious tradition in Bangladesh, and the majority of Bangladesh's population is Muslim. Muslims and the governments widely celebrate Islamic festivals. Muslims around the world observe two official Islamic holidays: *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*. These celebrations occur according to the Islamic lunar calendar, which differs from the solar Gregorian calendar. There are various other significant days and festivals, some observed by all Muslims and others specific to Shia Islam in general or to particular branches, such as *Eid ul-Fitr*, *Eid ul-Adha*, *Chaand Raat*, *Ashura*, *Eid-e-Meeladun Nabi*, *Shab-e-Qadr*, *Shab-e-Baraat*, *Shab-e-Miraj*, and *Bishwa Ijtema* (Gulevich, 2004).

Eid-ul-Fitr

Eid-ul-Fitr, which marks the beginning of the Arabic month of Shawal, is the biggest festival for Muslims in Bangladesh. After one month of Ramadan, Muslims observe *Eid al-Fitr* with great excitement and interest, where people of all classes exchange greetings with their friends and families. After performing Eid prayers, people go back home, visit one another, and enjoy sweet dishes such as firni, payesh, and semai. During the whole day, men greet one another with embraces. It is also traditional for younger members of the community to show respect by touching the feet of their elders, who in return offer blessings, sometimes accompanied by a small monetary gift. (Gulevich, 2004).

Eid-ul-Fitr promotes the moral, social, and ethical values of Muslims, who experience relief from stress and tension during the occasion. Muslims not only celebrate the end of fasting but render thanks and gratitude to Allah for the holy Qur'an, which was first revealed towards the end of holy Ramadan. The contribution of *Eid al-Fitr* to the social and cultural integration of people is noteworthy at various levels. It preserves and strengthens values and ideals in social relationships (Huque & Akhter, 1987). It is also customary to wear a fresh new outfit on *Eid al-Fitr*. Families also exchange gifts with their loved ones. Older people and children often receive most of the attention; gifts are distributed among friends and relatives. Thus, the economy meets very high expectations. Both the Muslim and non-Muslim traders become happy.

Eid-ul-Adha

Eid-ul-Adha is the second-largest festival of the Muslim community in commemorating the noble duty of Prophet Ibrahim (A), who sacrificed his son for the satisfaction of Allah (SWT). Celebrated on the tenth day of *Dhu al-Hijjah*, the festival is commonly called the 'Feast of the Sacrifice'. Animals are sacrificed with due solemnity by affluent Muslims. Less wealthy people also participate in the festivity by visiting the affluent houses and

participating in *Qurbani*. *Eid-ul-Adha* is also known as *Bakr-Eid* in Bangladesh. A significant amount of the meat is distributed to people experiencing poverty after the *Qurbani*. They wait for this auspicious gift on the very day, as they cannot afford to buy meat at other times. On this occasion, having a sumptuous meal, togetherness, and sharing meat take a high position in the Muslim community (Rahman, 2024).

Muslims are entertained with special foods and meals, and distributed among neighbours and the destitute. Non-Muslim friends are welcomed with warm hearts and enjoy a lot together. The Eid fair is also organized across the country, where people from all classes, religions, and communities visit and make merry. On the Eid occasion, people come from abroad, towns, and cities to their families to celebrate Eid together. *Eid-ul-Adha* festival is much more than just a day of a family get-together. It is an observance of happiness and reinstates the spirit of hope, kindness, charity, and nobility, which increases communal brotherhood and solidarity (Yeakub, 2022).

Ashura

Ashura, the most significant festival in Islam, happens on the tenth day of Muharram, marking the first month in the Islamic lunar calendar, which holds socio-political significance for Muslims. It commemorates the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (sm.), along with his close family members, during the Battle of *Karbala* (Morrow, 2013). Besides *Karbala's* tragedy, many historical events took place on this great day. Shia Muslims honour the tragedy through heart-touching processions and various mourning ceremonies. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Tazia procession was celebrated with great pomp and splendour in every Muslim-majority village of Bangladesh (Islam, 2003). The Husaini Dalan serves as the primary hub for *Muharram* observances in Dhaka. Many Shia Muslims hold the belief that participating in Ashura can cleanse them of their previous sins (Pinault, 2011).

On this day, devotees gather in mosques to mourn Hussein's death and to reflect on the family of the Prophet's commitment to justice and truthfulness. They arrange numerous activities and discussions with intense grief and mourning on this day. Many people from other communities visit their places and watch their activities with high curiosity. To make the moment more significant, it is a common practice for mosques and individuals to offer free meals (Nazri or Votive Food) to all on a designated night (Jason, 2012). This traditional incident is also observed in Bangladesh, where visitors are often entertained with a complimentary meal, regardless of their religious affiliation.

2. 2. Hindu Festivals

Hinduism is characterized by numerous religious festivals that are rich in rituals and traditions. The ancient festivals are gaining new dimensions every day. The Hindu community performs various pujas as acts of devotion to God. *Durga Puja*, *Shivaratri*, *Holi*, *Makar Sankranti*, *Ganesh Chaturthi*, *Dussehra*, *Diwali*, *Vasant Panchami*, *Lakshmi Puja*, *Raksha Bandhan*, *Krishna Janmashtami*, *Rama Navami*, *Naga Panchami*, *Kali Puja*, etc., are some prominent Hindu religious festivals.

Durga Puja

Durga Puja is the largest and oldest religious festival celebrated by the Hindu community in Bengal, in which members of the community take part with great fervour and excitement. In the 16th century, Emperor Akbar's mace-bearer Raja Kangsanarayana, the diwan of Bengal and ruler of Tahirpur, brought Durga Puja to Bengal (Islam, 2003). The fifteenth century saw the most ancient manifestation of the goddess Durga, who killed the Mahisasura. The ritual awakening of the goddess Durga usually happens on the sixth day of the bright phase of the

moon in the Bengali month of Axwin. Four days are typically dedicated to Durga Puja in Bangladesh: Mahasaptami, Mahashtami, Mahanabami, and Bijaya Dashami. To promote communal harmony, Hindus and adherents of other religions visit the puja mandaps, share views and opinions, and demonstrate their respect for one another's faiths. The mantra reading is halted during Durga Puja whenever the sound of the Muslim Azaan is heard, and the same procedure is repeated when the Christian church bell rings. The fact that Muslims, Hindus, and others celebrate Durga Puja together in some parts of Bangladesh is a beautiful illustration of communal unity.

Durga Puja symbolizes nationalism and anti-communism, giving a heartwarming message of communal harmony rather than divisiveness. Participating in the event is a testament to the generosity of both the local Muslim and non-Muslim communities, uniting all people, regardless of their religion, caste, or class. It also stands as one of the numerous celebrations of the festival, reflecting communal harmony in a world increasingly marked by religious conflict and social division ("Tales of communal," 2017). Hindu-Muslim and the followers of different faiths come forward and go away with an entirely peaceful motive. Thus, *Durga Puja* is a comprehensive celebration, serving as an accurate representation of harmonious syncretism. Durga Puja, grounded in the values of tolerance, regional integration, harmony, and peaceful coexistence, constitutes an inclusive, decentralized, and participatory cultural practice that encapsulates the ethos of women's empowerment (Pachauri, 2018).

Saraswati Puja

Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge and learning, representing the free flow of wisdom and consciousness. She is the mother of the Vedas; Vedic teachings frequently start and end with chants to her, known as the "Saraswati Vandana". According to Hindu tradition, the blessings of Goddess Saraswati are viewed as vital for academic achievement, success in competitive assessments, and the pursuit of higher learning. At the same time, the occasion signals the onset of preparations for Holika and Holi, held forty days afterwards (Roy, 2005). On this day, many families engage in the practice of guiding infants and young children to inscribe their first words with their fingers, while others devote time to studying or creating music together (The Himalayan Times, 2020).

A wide range of educational institutions commemorate this occasion by organizing poetic recitations, musical renditions, and devotional prayers intended to invoke the blessings of the goddess. The idea of *Saraswati Puja* embodies a cosmopolitan and multicultural character, as it attracts not only the Hindu community but also people from other religions and communities, showcasing the country's deep-rooted cultural heritage, spirit of unity, and a unique example of harmony (Roy et al., 2020). In Bangladesh, the most extensive *Saraswati Puja* is held at the University of Dhaka at Jagannath Hall premises. All departments of the University of Dhaka arrange this puja with their own funding to build their puja mandaps. Learners and students from far and near visit and appease their eyes.

2. 3. Buddhist Festivals

Buddhism promulgates enduring principles of non-violence, compassion, and tolerance, functioning simultaneously as a religious tradition and a philosophical doctrine. It advocates for altruistic concern and ethical responsibility toward all sentient beings, extending beyond the human realm. John Walters says, "*Buddhists have never waged wars over their religion. There have been no Buddhist inquisitions or persecutions, or conversion by force, or bloody assaults on devotees of non-Buddhist sects*" (Chakma, 2004). The Buddhist community in Bangladesh, however, observes many notable and significant days throughout the year. Many Buddhists regard engagement in festivals and celebratory events as an essential component of their religious practice (Nguyen & Thanh, 2020). Beyond their spiritual significance, specific

festivals also encompass important social and cultural dimensions (Wickramanayaka, 2025). There are variations in Buddhist festivals as they have developed in different countries and cultures (Prabnok, 2025).

Buddha Purnima

Buddha Purnima is the largest religious festival of Buddhism, annually observed in May, specifically on the night of the full moon. It is known as Buddha Day, *Buddha Purnima*, or *Buddha Jayanti*. Though Bangladesh is a Muslim-majority country, Buddhist monks and priests ornament temples with elaborate decorations and candles, creating a sacred atmosphere. This is followed by the offering of a prayer to the Buddha, after which participants collectively light candles and recite the Three Jewels and the Five Precepts, reinforcing both spiritual devotion and communal practice (“*Buddha Purnima Aj*,” 2012). It is also an event that brings together members of other faiths and reflects Bengali culture. It is celebrated with great diversity. As a result, sincerity and compassion proliferate within the community. This festival signifies the victory of good over evil, a universal sentiment crucial to human existence. Liberal and progressive people of other religions extend their best wishes to Buddhist community members on this auspicious occasion. They also reinforce their inclusivity and embrace religious and ethnic harmony, which is essential in making them more robust, resilient, and united (Ganeri, 2003).

The occasion serves as a significant exemplar of promoting interreligious and communal harmony, particularly among Buddhists and individuals of diverse faith traditions. It provides an opportunity to reflect on the Buddha’s distinctive, profound, and nuanced teachings, which delineate the path toward the cessation of suffering (Chowdhury, 2022). This festival reminds us of the noble teachings of the Buddha. It applies them to human life, irrespective of caste, creed, or nation, as Buddhism is not only a religion but also a philosophy. *Buddha Purnima* promotes the attainment of a pure soul and the embracing of the principles of Buddhism: peace, non-violence, and harmony.

Kathina Cibar Dan

The Kathina Festival is also known as a robe offering ceremony. It is one of the magnificent religious festivals in Buddhism, and it is the time of the year when the laity may offer new robes and other requisites to the monks. This event occurs at the conclusion of Vassa, the three-month rainy season retreat observed by Theravada Buddhists in Bangladesh, also referred to as *Kaṭhina Cībar Dān*. It represents a period of charitable giving, during which laypersons demonstrate their gratitude toward bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) (Vassa [Rains Retreat] and Kathina [Robe Offering] Ceremony). According to the Buddha’s instructions regarding Vassa, mendicant monks are advised against travelling during the rainy season to prevent inadvertently causing harm to crops or insects along their route (Kewon, 2013).

The *Kathina* ceremony represents a celebration of communal harmony, where individuals from diverse races, traditions, and beliefs come together under the unifying guidance of the Buddha’s sacred teachings. Moreover, this festival serves as a conduit for promoting love, compassion, and peace, extending from individuals to communities, societies, and across different races (Chowdhury, 2022). This ceremonial observance holds profound significance, both as a commemoration of the historical Buddha’s enduring legacy and as a moment for individuals to seek spiritual refuge and tranquillity. In alignment with the Buddha’s teachings, participants are encouraged to cultivate universal compassion and loving-kindness toward all sentient beings, encapsulated in the injunction, “*Sabbe sattā sukhi hontu*” (May all living beings be happy) (Chowdhury, 2024). Many devotees and non-Buddhist people also visit temples, pour water at the base of the Bodhi tree, give alms to people experiencing poverty, and meditate (Roy, 2005). The Buddhist community organizes a

range of activities at pilgrimage sites throughout the country, especially during periods when these sites receive substantial attendance from non-Buddhist visitors. Prayer sessions emphasize fostering the spirit of compassion and benevolence as taught by the Buddha, to mitigate conflict and prevent the devastation wrought by war (The Daily Asian Age, 2022). This ceremony is a unique observance to establish communal harmony.

2. 4. Christian Festivals

Christianity shares its origins and early history with Judaism. Portuguese traders and missionaries introduced Christianity to the historic region of Bengal in the sixteenth century CE. Easter, the most significant festival in Christianity, commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after his crucifixion. Other notable Christian religious festivals observed in Bangladesh include Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Saints' Days, among others. Additionally, key rites of passage in a Christian's life are marked by special celebrations and religious services. These include Baptism (symbolizing initiation into the Christian church), Confirmation (a conscious affirmation of church membership), weddings, and funerals.

Christmas Day

On December 25 each year, Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whom they believe to be the Messiah and the Son of God. The observance of December 25 was established in the 4th century CE by Pope Julius I to align with and Christianize pre-existing pagan solstice celebrations (Leadbeater, 1920). By the early 20th century, the occasion had come to be recognized as a secular family holiday, embraced by both Christian and non-Christian communities. In Bangladesh, Bengali Christians commemorate Christmas, locally referred to as “Bara Din” (Big Day). Bengali Christians greet friends and family and offer traditional sweets and *pithas*.

The holy Christmas is the most widely celebrated religious festival of the Christian community, which strengthens this country's tradition of communal harmony. Christian faith believes that Christmas is a celebration of rebirth, a new beginning, forgiveness, and peace. It is a renewal of the relationship between God and human beings. In Bangladesh, Christians commemorated the Christmas festival with notable zeal and religious dedication, conducting special prayer sessions, illuminating church premises, and erecting temporary Christmas trees in private residences, places of worship, and mission establishments (“Christmas celebrated with,” 2016). Elderly members of the community, assuming the role of Santa Claus, frequently engage children in lighthearted activities while giving gifts, reflecting a widespread Christian practice (BSS, 2024). Many non-Christians visit on Christmas Day and enjoy it a lot.

Easter Sunday

Easter stands as the most significant festival in Christianity, embodying a cultural celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection, as described in the New Testament. It is a time to celebrate the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection (Howard, 2005). Easter traditions differ throughout the Christian world, encompassing sunrise services, midnight vigils, ritualistic expressions, and the exchange of Paschal greetings within the church (Simpson & Roud, 2003). The Christian community in Bangladesh celebrates the day with special church services that foster mutual love and harmony among people of various faiths. It plays a crucial role in preserving our glorious tradition and promoting harmony. Non-

Christians admire this day for this teaching and lead a harmonious ideology with the Christians.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study employed a qualitative research design with a descriptive-analytical orientation to explore the role of major religious festivals in fostering communal harmony in Bangladesh. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it facilitates the examination of socio-cultural meanings, interfaith interactions, and symbolic practices embedded in festival traditions, rather than relying solely on quantifiable measures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The festivals examined in this study include Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima.

The research relied exclusively on secondary sources, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, reports, government publications, religious texts, newspapers, and credible digital databases. Emphasis was placed on studies published over the past twenty years to maintain contemporary relevance, although seminal classical studies were also reviewed. Data were collected through an extensive literature review conducted between January and June 2025.

Following data collection, the materials were thematically categorized into domains such as religious significance, socio-cultural practices, interfaith participation, and outcomes related to communal harmony. Thematic analysis was conducted following the framework outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) to identify recurring patterns and points of convergence across different traditions. Particular emphasis was placed on analyzing how inclusive practices during festivals contribute to solidarity, mutual respect, and interfaith dialogue.

The primary limitation of this study is its exclusive reliance on secondary data, which constrains the ability to capture lived experiences at the grassroots level. The absence of ethnographic fieldwork or participant interviews reduces the depth of understanding regarding individual and community perspectives. Future research integrating field studies, surveys, or oral histories could strengthen this area by providing more nuanced insights into the experiential dimensions of interfaith interactions and festival practices.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS IN BANGLADESH

Religious festivals provide a meaningful opportunity to explore both the similarities and differences between religious and non-religious celebrations. These events are not only a time of joy and spiritual renewal but also serve as a powerful means of fostering unity among diverse communities by emphasizing shared values and beliefs. A key aspect of religious festivals is acculturation—the exchange and blending of traditions when people gather for these occasions. This process strengthens social bonds and reinforces moral values such as compassion, gratitude, and togetherness. Beyond their religious importance, these festivals play a vital role in cultural preservation and education. They ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge, including arts, music, and heritage, to future generations. Additionally, they promote cross-cultural understanding by exposing people from different regions to new customs and ways of life. In essence, religious festivals are more than celebrations—they are essential for cultural continuity, moral learning, and social harmony, helping societies bridge differences while upholding universal human values.

In Bangladesh, nothing unites people more powerfully than festivals. Whether religious celebrations like *Eid-ul-Fitr*, *Durga Puja*, *Buddha Purnima*, and *Pohela Boishakh* (Bengali New Year), festivals serve as vital social institutions that strengthen communal bonds while providing emotional balance (Haque, 2019). Festivals in Bangladesh reinforce “*samajik bandhutwa*” (social kinship) networks by reuniting families and friends who have become detached. For instance, during *Eid*, millions undertake laborious journeys

to their ancestral villages (“*Chhuti*” migration), demonstrating how festivals renew affectionate bonds through shared rituals, gift-giving (“*Salami*”), and communal meals (Ahmed, 2021). As Maguire (2002) notes, festivals enable religions to attract new adherents while reinforcing commitment among existing followers—a phenomenon evident in Bangladesh’s growing interfaith participation (e.g., Hindus joining *Eid* feasts, Muslims visiting *Puja pandals*) (Datta, 2020).

Religious festivals significantly accelerate religious tourism in Bangladesh by transforming sacred sites into vibrant destinations. During major celebrations, religious places adopt a colourful and festive ambience that attracts devout visitors (Rahman & Hossain, 2021). As a multi-faith nation, Bangladesh serves as an essential destination for religious tourism, boasting numerous significant pilgrimage sites that have drawn devotees for centuries (Ahmed, 2019). Bangladesh's tourism sector remains underdeveloped, receiving minimal international arrivals and generating limited revenue (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Suchana (2018) emphasizes that religious tourism fundamentally involves establishing meaningful connections between visitors and sacred spaces through communicative practices.

Religious festivals serve as powerful catalysts for fostering familial and social bonds, while enhancing social solidarity and promoting communal harmony. As Skoultos et al. (2020) demonstrate, these celebrations provide a vital platform for manifesting shared purposes, cultural values, and traditions. However, the process of cultivating a genuine sense of community remains complex and long-term in nature (Getz, 2004). These festivals function as fundamental building blocks for communities by promoting interethnic understanding, preserving local traditions and cultural heritage, and celebrating collective history and identity (Jepson et al., 2015).

Thus, religious festivals generate significant socio-economic benefits, including economic stimulation, strengthened community identity, intergenerational learning, enhanced social bonds, and improved organizational skills in event management. These outcomes are consistently observed across diverse religious traditions, demonstrating their universal value.

5. RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS AND COMMUNAL HARMONY IN BANGLADESH

Religious festivals serve as a bridge connecting participants to their religious heritage and ancestral traditions. It functions as a transgenerational vessel, conveying spiritual messages and serving as an effective mechanism for stress relief and psychological well-being (Sunith, 2018). These celebrations foster social cohesion by promoting interfaith understanding and dispelling misconceptions about different religions. Additionally, they provide valuable opportunities for communal gathering through shared rituals and collective celebrations, thereby counteracting modern social fragmentation (Putnam & Campbell, 2010, Al Mahmud, A., & Gulshan, J. 2024) and strengthening bonds among family members and close associates.

Religious festivals in Bangladesh serve as vital platforms for intercultural exchange and social cohesion. As Goswami (n.d.) notes, the Bangladeshi government institutionalized religious inclusivity by mandating that all national programs – both domestic and international – commence with recitations from the Quran, Gita, Tripitaka, and Bible. Festivals play a vital role in shaping local communities by creating cultural and social benefits. It serves as a cultural bridge, allowing visitors to engage with and critically assess local traditions, ideologies, and identities that are often influenced by political narratives (Quinn, 2009). It also facilitates social cohesion by bringing people together, fostering interaction, and strengthening communal bonds. Beyond their cultural importance, they contribute to local economic growth and elevate the social standing of host communities. As a result, religious festivals have become an indispensable part of societal life, enriching both individual and collective experiences (Sohi et al., 2018).

Bangladesh represents a unique case study in religious pluralism and communal harmony, where diverse faith communities freely celebrate their religious festivals with complete cultural legitimacy and state support. The Bangladeshi model of religious coexistence demonstrates how: Islamic (Eid), Hindu (Durga Puja), Buddhist (Buddha Purnima), and Christian (Christmas) festivals receive equal state recognition and Majority Muslim communities actively participate in minority festivals (e.g., Hindus joining Eid celebrations, Muslims attending Puja pandals) with traditional "para" (neighborhood) systems facilitate interfaith celebration (Hussain, 2022).

6. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that major religious festivals in Bangladesh serve as dynamic cultural institutions that transcend ritualistic boundaries, operating as platforms for fostering communal harmony, interfaith dialogue, and social cohesion. Analysis of secondary literature identifies recurring patterns across religious traditions, including inclusivity, shared participation, and the reinforcement of moral values such as compassion, generosity, and tolerance. These patterns demonstrate that festivals are not merely ritualistic ceremonies but multidimensional events that shape collective identity, facilitate intercultural communication, and strengthen communal solidarity.

6. 1. Religious Festivals as Instruments of Social Integration

Across Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian celebrations, festivals consistently provide opportunities for shared participation that extend beyond religious boundaries. For instance, during Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, gift exchanges, communal meals, and charitable practices (such as zakat and the distribution of qurbani meat) benefit not only Muslim households but also poor and marginalized groups from other faiths. Similarly, Durga Puja and Saraswati Puja invite participation from Muslim and Christian communities at puja mandaps, reinforcing Bangladesh's spirit of syncretism. These inclusive practices illustrate how religious festivals cultivate social integration by transcending barriers of caste, creed, and faith.

Communal gatherings during festivals also encourage intergenerational and cross-community learning. Younger participants inherit rituals while observing gestures of tolerance, such as halting puja mantras during the Muslim azaan or Christians extending greetings during Eid. These acts symbolically reaffirm values of coexistence and help establish shared norms of respect in multicultural Bangladesh.

6. 2. Promotion of Interfaith Dialogue and Mutual Respect

Religious festivals in Bangladesh operate as cultural bridges for interfaith dialogue. Examples include Muslims attending Christmas masses, Hindus visiting Eid fairs, and Buddhists welcoming diverse groups during Buddha Purnima. Such practices embody a pluralistic spirit that normalizes interfaith participation, challenges sectarian stereotypes, and fosters empathy while reducing prejudice.

Governmental policies and social customs further institutionalize inclusivity. National events often begin with recitations from the Quran, the Gita, the Tripitaka, and the Bible, symbolizing the state's recognition of all major faiths. This institutional endorsement enhances the legitimacy of minority festivals and reinforces the state's commitment to religious pluralism. Thus, festivals embody both grassroots-level interfaith interactions and state-supported models of coexistence.

6. 3. Festivals as Catalysts for Communal Harmony and Solidarity

Festivals play a vital role in sustaining communal harmony within Bangladesh's socio-political landscape. Shared celebrations serve as psychological equalizers, countering social fragmentation and isolation, thereby fostering a sense of community. For example, millions of people travelling to ancestral homes during Eid reinforce kinship networks (*samajik bandhutwa*). Similarly, Buddha Purnima emphasizes compassion and non-violence, values that both Buddhists and non-Buddhists share. Such symbolic values generate trust across communities and reinforce a shared sense of national belonging.

Festivals also serve as mechanisms of conflict prevention by diffusing potential sectarian tensions. Reciprocal respect, such as Muslims assisting in setting up puja pandals or Christians participating in Eid festivities, serves as a social adhesive against communal polarization. This is particularly significant in South Asia, where religious violence has often undermined harmony. Bangladesh presents a positive counter-narrative, demonstrating how festivals can reinforce unity.

6. 4. Socio-Economic and Cultural Impacts

Festivals also yield significant socio-economic benefits. Seasonal markets, fairs, and tourism during religious occasions contribute to local economies through trade and employment generation. Both Muslim and non-Muslim traders report increased commercial activity during Eid and Puja, illustrating that festivals extend beyond religious communities to generate universal economic advantages.

Culturally, festivals preserve and transmit traditional art, music, crafts, and cuisine. They also promote interethnic exchange, such as Muslim families enjoying pithas at Christmas or Hindu youths engaging in qawwali at Sufi shrines. Such exchanges nurture cultural hybridity and reinforce Bangladesh's pluralistic identity.

6. 5. Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Identity

Religious festivals play a crucial role in maintaining cultural heritage while facilitating the intergenerational transfer of traditional knowledge. Through rituals, songs, prayers, and culinary practices, festivals serve as living archives of identity and heritage. For example, Eid fairs, Christmas celebrations featuring traditional sweets, and Saraswati Puja in educational institutions sustain both religious symbolism and cultural heritage. These practices ensure intergenerational continuity and safeguard Bangladesh's pluralistic ethos in the context of globalization.

6. 6. Challenges and Contradictions

Despite their unifying potential, festivals face challenges. Rising religious fundamentalism, the politicization of religious identity, and occasional violence against minority groups threaten the inclusive character of festivals. Recent communal clashes during Durga Puja illustrate the fragility of harmony when extremist narratives disrupt celebratory spaces. Additionally, the commercialization of festivals risks shifting their focus from spiritual enrichment to consumerism, thereby weakening their capacity to foster genuine solidarity.

Nonetheless, these challenges do not diminish the broader contributions of festivals to harmony. Instead, they emphasize the importance of conscious safeguarding through public policies, community initiatives, and interfaith dialogue platforms to preserve the inclusive aspects of religious celebrations.

6. 7. Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study align with Durkheim's (1912) conception of festivals as sites of "collective effervescence," where shared rituals reinforce social bonds and communal values. They also correspond with Putnam's (2000) theory of "social capital," as festivals generate

bridging capital by linking diverse religious groups through trust and reciprocity. In Bangladesh, festivals embody both symbolic and practical mechanisms of peacebuilding, resonating with Ammerman's (2013) notion of "lived religion," wherein everyday faith practices manifest inclusively within communal settings.

Religious festivals transcend borders and foster integration at international, national, and regional levels. Beyond facilitating national integration, communal harmony, friendship, and social gatherings, festivals offer numerous additional benefits and positive qualities. Bangladesh, as a multi-religious country, has followers of different faiths coexisting peacefully. Adherents of various religions observe numerous festivals, several of which have been discussed previously. These religious festivals are celebrated annually with dignity and respect, occurring not only in urban centres but also in rural villages. During festival periods, devotees universally exhibit happiness and camaraderie, serving as exemplary demonstrations of brotherhood. It generates positive emotions and enhances social security among community members. However, excessive religious dogmatism and fundamentalism can foster fanaticism and disrupt social harmony. In this context, religious festivals emerge as vehicles of peace, stability, and goodwill within communities.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, several strategies are proposed to enhance the role of major religious festivals in promoting communal harmony in Bangladesh. Interfaith participation should be encouraged through structured initiatives, such as cultural exchange programs, youth volunteer groups, and "open festival days." At the same time, religious and community leaders emphasize shared values such as compassion, generosity, and respect.

Policy support is essential; the government should recognize all major festivals as official holidays, allocate resources accordingly, and conduct public campaigns to promote religious tourism, thereby fostering both economic development and social cohesion. Educational integration is critical, with curricula, interfaith events, and academic seminars cultivating pluralism, supported by training for teachers, journalists, and policymakers to counter divisive narratives.

At the community level, NGOs, local organizations, and religious institutions should facilitate joint celebrations, dialogue forums, and youth-focused initiatives to extend communal harmony beyond urban centres. Safeguards against extremism, including vigilance committees and equitable law enforcement, are necessary to protect all festivals.

Economic and cultural dimensions should be leveraged, with festival-related markets, fairs, and training in handicrafts and event management creating inclusive economic opportunities. Meanwhile, documentation projects will preserve cultural heritage for future generations. Engagement with the diaspora and regional exchange programs can further promote Bangladesh's model of interfaith coexistence internationally.

Systematic implementation of these measures can sustain the inclusive, pluralistic spirit of religious festivals, ensuring they continue as cultural, educational, and socio-economic platforms that reinforce peace, tolerance, and communal harmony.

8. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that major religious festivals in Bangladesh play a vital role in fostering communal harmony, interfaith understanding, and cultural cohesion in a pluralistic society. Festivals such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha, Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Christmas, and Buddha Purnima provide inclusive spaces where people of diverse faiths interact, collaborate, and celebrate collectively. Through shared participation, intergenerational learning, and reinforcement of moral values, these festivals cultivate mutual respect, empathy, and trust across communities. Inclusive practices, such as Muslims attending puja mandaps or Hindus

participating in Eid celebrations, serve as essential mechanisms for social integration and peaceful coexistence.

Beyond spiritual significance, these festivals preserve traditional knowledge, arts, and heritage while stimulating local economies and strengthening social networks. They also offer platforms for interfaith dialogue, helping to reduce prejudice and promote inclusive narratives. The dual role of festivals—as grassroots social practices and state-endorsed cultural institutions—enhances their visibility and legitimacy, reinforcing Bangladesh's commitment to religious pluralism.

Nevertheless, challenges such as commercialization, rising fundamentalism, and occasional sectarian tensions require proactive safeguarding through policy support and community engagement. Overall, the Bangladeshi experience illustrates that religious festivals, when actively celebrated and institutionalized, transcend ritualistic boundaries to become instruments of peacebuilding, social solidarity, and national identity. Sustained efforts in education, community initiatives, and policy interventions will be essential to maintain this inclusive and harmonious legacy.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, S. (2019). Sacred geography: Pilgrimage in Bangladesh. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 14(3), 215–230.
- Ahmed, S. (2021). Migration and kinship in Bangladeshi festivals. Dhaka University Press.
- Ammerman, N. T. (2013). *Sacred stories, spiritual tribes: Finding religion in everyday life*. Oxford University Press.
- Al Mahmud, A. (2022). The Role of The Turkish Muslims in The Socio-Cultural Formation of Bengal during The Sultanate Period (1204-1525). *Sinop Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 6(1), 23-43.
- Al Mahmud, A., & Gulshan, J. (2024). İngiliz Doğu Hindistan Şirketi'nin gelir ve ticaret politikasının Bengal'deki etkisi: Büyük kıtlık bağlamında. *The Journal of Academic Social Science*, 135(135), 476-488.
- Al Mahmud, A. (2023). The Intellectual Movement of the Bengali Muslims (1858-1924).
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- BSS. (2024, December 25). *Christmas Day being celebrated*. The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/christmas-day-being-celebrated-3784186>
- Buddha Purnima Aj*. (2012, May 6). The Daily Kaler Kantho. Retrieved August 2, 2022, from <https://www.kalerkantho.com/print-edition/Court/2012/05/06/251076>
- Chowdury, S. R. H., Gökteş, V., & Al Mahmud, A. (2022). Internationalization of Higher Education Policy in Japan: The Role of International Student Mobility. *Journal of Higher Education Theory & Practice*, 22(4).
- Chakma, N. K. (2004). Love and tolerance: The Buddhist view and its relevance. In D. N. Chakma & D. A. Salauddin (Eds.), *Inter-religious dialogue: Chance for peace* (pp. 53–62). Goethe-Institut.
- Chowdhury, S. B. (2022, May 5). An inspiration for celebrating communal harmony with Buddhists and beyond. *The Daily Sun*. Retrieved from <https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/618969/>
- Chowdhury, S. B. (2024, May 31). *Remarkable Buddha Pūrṇimā: An inspiration for celebrating community harmony with Buddhists and beyond*. Buddhistdoor Global. <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/remarkable-buddha-pur>

- Christmas is celebrated with a call to strengthen communal harmony. (2016, December 26). *Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha*. <https://www.bssnews.net>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Datta, P. (2020). Interfaith harmony in Bangladeshi festivals. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 12(3), 45–60.
- Durkheim, É. (1995). *The elementary forms of the religious life* (K. E. Fields, Trans.). Free Press. (Original work published in 1912)
- Ganeri, A. (2003). *Buddhist festivals throughout the year*. Black Rabbit Books
- Getz, D. (2004). *Event management & event tourism* (2nd ed.). Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: Definition, evolution, and research. *Tourism Management*, 29(3), 403–428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.07.017>
- Getz, D. (2010). The nature and scope of festival studies. *International Journal of Event Management Research*, 5(1), 1–47. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17852951011029298>
- Goswami, S. N. (n.d.). *Religion in Bangladesh*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Bangladesh
- Gulevich, T. (2004). *Understanding Islam and Muslim traditions: An introduction to the religious practices, celebrations, festivals, observances, beliefs, folklore, customs, and calendar system of the world's Muslim communities*. Omnigraphics.
- Haque, M. (2019). *Psychology of festivals in Bangladesh*. BRAC University Publications.
- Howard, H. (2005). The significance of the resurrection. Bible.org. <https://bible.org/article/significance-resurrection>
- Huque, A. S., & Akhter, M. Y. (1987). The ubiquity of Islam: Religion and society in Bangladesh. *Pacific Affairs*, 60(2), 200–225. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2758132>
- Hussain, M. (2022). *Para culture and religious harmony*. Dhaka University Press.
- Islam, S. (Ed.). (2003). *Banglapedia: National encyclopedia of Bangladesh* (Vols. 1–14). Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.
- James, W. (1902). *The varieties of religious experience: A study in human nature*. Longman, Green & Co.
- Jason, P. (2012). Votive food traditions in Muharram observances. In L. Smith (Ed.), *Rituals and food in Islamic festivals* (pp. 112–129). Cultural Heritage Press.
- Jepson, A., Clarke, A., & Ragsdell, G. (2015). *Managing and developing communities, festivals, and events*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Keown, D. (2013). *Buddhism: A concise introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Leadbeater, C. W. (1920). *The inner side of Christian festivals*. Theosophical Publishing House.
- Maguire, J. (2002). *Religion and the social order: Festivals as cultural performance*. Routledge.
- Mahmud, Al A. (2024). The citizen archive and strategic silencing: A study on Rohingya genocide. *History Studies*, 17(2), 259–272.
- McGuire, M. B. (2008). *Religion: The social context* (5th ed.). Waveland Press.
- Mahmud, M. H., & Al Mahmud, A. (2024). Good governance and student politics in public university campuses: Bangladesh perspective. *Yönetim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 23(56), 1338–1338.
- Morrow, J. A. (Ed.). (2014). *Ashura*. In *Islamic images and ideas: Essays on sacred symbolism* (pp. 228–250). McFarland & Company.
- Nguyen, C. H., & Thanh, N. H. (2020). The values of cultural beliefs from traditional festivals among the Khmer Mekong Delta—Study typical traditional festivals.

- International Journal of Philosophy, 8(4), 82–87.
<https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijp.20200804.11>
- Pachauri, S. (2018, October 16). Inclusive, syncretic, and empowering: There is much to celebrate about Durga Puja. *The Indian Express*.
<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/art-and-culture/inclusive-syncretic-empowering-celebrate-durga-puja-5408804/>
- Pennington, J. W., & Thomsen, R. C. (2010). A semiotic model of destination representations applied to cultural and heritage tourism marketing. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 10(1), 33-53.
- Pinault, D. (2011). The Socio-Political Significance of Ashura Commemorations in South Asia. *Journal of Islamic Cultural Studies*, 8(2), 45–62.
- Prabnok, P. (2025). The cultural identity construction of temples for tourism. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 3(7), 3131–3149. <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i7.4448>
- Pressenza. (2024, October). *Communal harmony in Bangladesh must be maintained*.
<https://www.pressenza.com/2024/10/communal-harmony-in-bangladesh-must-be-maintained/>
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Putnam, R. D., & Campbell, D. E. (2010). American grace: How religion divides and unites us. Simon & Schuster.
- Quinn, B. (2009). Festivals and cultural tourism. In T. Jamal & M. Robinson (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of tourism studies* (pp. 483–503). SAGE Publications.
- Rahbarianyazd, R., & Doratli, N. (2017). A case of festivals in Old Dhaka and its impacts. *Proceedings of the ICCAUA 2022 Conference*, 567–575.
https://iccaua.com/PDFs/2022_Conference_full_book/SESSION_C_2022/ICCAUA2022EN0033_Kabir_567-575.pdf
- Rahman, M. A. (2024, June 15). Religious festivals in Bangladesh signify interfaith fraternity. *The Daily Asian Age*. <https://dailyasianage.com/news/324592/religious-festivals-in-bangladesh-signify-interfaith-fraternity>
- Roy, C. (2005). *Traditional festivals: A multicultural encyclopedia* (Vol. 1). ABC-CLIO.
<https://archive.org/details/traditionalfesti0000royc>
- Roy, S., Huq, S., & Abdur Rob, A. B. (2020). Faith and education in Bangladesh: A review of the contemporary landscape and challenges. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 79, Article 102290. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102290>
- Sabbir, A., Al Mahmud, A., & Bilgin, A. (2023). India: Conflict with minorities in the conventional political system. The status of Muslims. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 43, 36-46.
- Simpson, J., & Roud, S. (2003). *A dictionary of English folklore*. Oxford University Press.
- Simpson, J., & Roud, S. (2003). Clipping the church. In Oxford Reference. Oxford University Press. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clipping_the_church
- Siraj, M. S. (2025). Inter-religious harmony: Promoting unity and tolerance: An investigation into inter-religious harmony in Bangladesh: Examination of initiatives, challenges, and implications. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 4(7), 1375–1381.
- Sabbir, A., Al Mahmud, A., & Bilgin, A. (2022). Myanmar: Ethnic cleansing of Rohingya. From ethnic nationalism to ethno-religious nationalism. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, (39).
- Skoultzos, S., Georgoula, V., & Temponera, E. (2020). Exploring “sense of community” in the festival tourism experience: Review of the relative literature. In V. Katsoni & T.

- Spyriadis (Eds.), *Cultural and tourism innovation in the digital era* (pp. 65–80). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-36342-0_5
- Sohi, K. K., Singh, P., & Bopanna, K. (2018). Ritual participation, sense of community, and social well-being: A study of seva in the Sikh community. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 57(4), 2066–2078. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-017-0424-y>
- Suchana, J. J. (2018). The scope for religious tourism: An overview of Bangladesh. *Journal of Business Studies*, 39(2), 193–207.
- Sunith, C. K. (2018). Sociological significance of festivals and pilgrimages. *International Research Journal of Human Resources and Social Sciences*, 5(11), 13–23.
- Tales of communal harmony this Durga Puja. (2017, September 14). *Business Standard*. https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/tales-of-communal-harmony-this-durga-puja-117091400826_1.html
- The Daily Asian Age. (2022, May 16). *Prayers for peace on Buddha Purnima*. The Daily Asian Age. <https://dailyasianage.com/news/286322/prayers-for-peace-on-buddha-purnima>
- The Himalayan Times. (2020, January 30). *Shree Panchami being observed today*. The Himalayan Times. <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/shree-panchami-being-observed-today>
- Van Winkle, C. M., & Woosnam, K. M. (2014). Sense of community and perceptions of festival social impacts. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 5(1), 22–38. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEFM-09-2013-0041>
- Wickramanayaka, S. M. (2025). A sociological study on the contemporary nature of popular Buddhist rituals in Sri Lanka and their impact on society. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(4), 1215–1222. <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90400094>
- Wilson, J., Arshed, N., Shaw, E., & Pret, T. (2017). Expanding the domain of festival research: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(2), 195–213. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12080>
- Yeakub, M. (2022). Maintaining communal harmony in Islam: Bangladesh perspectives. *Journal of The People's University of Bangladesh*, 9(1–2), 217–230. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369419820_Maintaining_Communal_Harmony_in_Islam_Bangladesh_Perspectives_Md_Yeakub