

Inclusive Education of Students with Special Education Need and Disability: Reflections from Policies and Data of Bangladesh Government

By

Tahrima Hossain
Student ID 16357033

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Master of Education in Educational Leadership & School Improvement

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Tahrima Hossain

Tahrima Hossain
Student ID 16357030

Approval

The thesis/project titled " Inclusive Education of Students with Special Education Need and Disability: Reflections from Policies and Data of Bangladesh Government" submitted by

1. Tahrira Hossain (16357030)

of Summer, 2016 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Leadership & School Improvement on 6th April, 2021.

Examining Committee:

Supervisor:
(Member)

Shamnaz Arifin
Lecturer, BRAC Institute of Educational Development

Program Coordinator:
(Member)

Dr. Mohammad Mahboob Morshed
Assistant Professor, BRAC Institute of Educational Development

External Expert Examiner:
(Member)

Sabrina Ahmed
Research Associate, BRAC Institute of Educational
Development

Head of the Institute:

Dr. Erum Mariam
Executive Director, BRAC Institute of Educational Development

Ethics Statement

This research is completed with full compliance with the ethics norm and upon approval of BRAC Institute of Educational Development's research ethics committee. This research has no direct involvement of human participants. In the qualitative part, different policies regarding inclusive education of students with special education needs (SEND) in the primary level of Bangladesh has been studied. In quantitative part Education Household Survey, 2014 has been analyzed. Thus, secondary data has been interpreted to answer the research questions in both parts of the research. None of these sources presented any data that is identifiable for any human participants.

Abstract

With a prevalence of the population with a disability up to 14%, lack of inclusive education poses obstacles to equity in education for around 22 million people of Bangladesh. This research was undertaken to study the inclusive education of the students with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) at the primary level within Bangladesh. With that aim, this study explores the policies of Bangladesh and Education Household Survey, 2014 regarding inclusive education of the students with SEND. This study involved a parallel mixed-method approach. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered from the different secondary source. A content analysis of the policies in the qualitative part found that even though there is a complete range legislative setup for inclusive education for students with disability, none of the policies outlines any detailed strategies about how to achieve inclusive education for students with SEND. A regression analysis of the quantitative data revealed that the literacy rate of students with SEND is significantly low than other students. Based on the findings, this research recommends standard definition and language for inclusive education should be a high priority that will be the first step to ensure the implementation of inclusive education. The next step after defining inclusive education and student with SEND should clearly outline the scope for implementing inclusive education. Then a detailed strategy will be needed as a next step that will include understanding the change by all actors, curriculum change, and school leaders and teachers. Strategies should also include the infrastructure change and support for students with SEND. After the implementation of the strategy, it should be monitored and supervised regularly.

Keywords: Inclusive education; Students with SEND; Primary schools; Bangladesh

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my maternal uncle, a person with a disability, and didn't get any institutional education.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Shamnaz Arifin Mim, who gave me another chance to complete this research. She provided me with continuous supervision, encouragement, and enthusiastic support in any way she could. If not for her constant support, it would never be possible for me to complete this. Further, I am eternally grateful to my best friend, Dawid Gryzlo, for his all-around support during this research. Finally, thanks to my parents, sisters and friends for believing me and for always being around for me.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Approval	iii
Ethics Statement.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Dedication	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
List of Tables	xi
List of Figures.....	xi
List of Acronyms	xi
Chapter 1 Introduction and Background	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Topic	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.4 Research Questions	4
1.5 Purpose of the study:	4
1.6 Significance of the study:.....	5
Chapter 2 Literature Review and Conceptual Framework.....	6
2.1 Student with SEND in Bangladesh.....	6
2.2 Inclusive Education.....	9
2.3 Inclusive Education in Bangladesh.....	10
2.4 Barriers to Inclusive Education in Bangladesh.....	11

2.4.1 Religious and cultural issues.....	11
2.4.2 Literacy and Awareness Issues	12
2.4.3 Economic Issues.....	13
2.4.4 Mobility issues	13
2.5 Conceptual framework.....	14
2.5.1 Actor-Network Theory.....	15
Chapter 3 Methodology.....	17
3.1 Research Approach.....	17
3.1.1 Mixed Method Research	17
3.2 Sample design and sample size.....	19
3.3 Data collection	20
3.4 Validity and Reliability.....	20
3.5 Data Analysis.....	21
3.5.1 Qualitative data	21
3.5.2 Quantitative data	22
3.6 Ethical Issues and Concerns	22
3.7 Credibility and Rigor.....	23
3.8 Limitations of the study.....	24
Chapter 4 Findings	25
4.1 Introduction.....	25
4.2 Policy Study:.....	25

4.2.1 The Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990.....	26
4.2.2 Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act – 2001	27
4.2.3 National Education Policy (NEP) 2010	28
4.2.4 National Child Policy 2011.....	28
4.2.5 The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013	29
4.3 Education Household Survey, 2014.....	29
Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusion.....	33
5.1 Discussion.....	33
5.2 Conclusion	36
5.3 Recommendations	37
5.3.1 Definition and Common language for inclusive education	37
5.3.2 Using and creating the scope of inclusion	38
5.3.3 Detailed Strategies for implementing inclusive education	38
5.3.4 Monitoring and supervision for the reality check.....	38
References.....	40

List of Tables

Table 4. 1 Literacy rate of person with disability	30
Table 4. 2 t test outcome	31

List of Figures

Figure 2. 1 Conceptual framework for Inclusive education policy studies	16
Figure 3. 1 Research design (Parallel complimentary mixed method)	18
Figure 4. 1 Literacy rate of students with different disability.....	30

List of Acronyms

SEND	Special Education Need and Disability
IE	Inclusive Education

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

The world is currently experiencing a historical period of COVID-19 pandemic that severely impacts life aspects, including education. Education was not inclusive enough before the pandemic started, and now the inclusion is more challenging, specially for the student with Special Education Need and Disabilities (SEND) (Burgess and Sievertsen, 2020).

The current education system worldwide is going through a challenging phase to ensure inclusive education (IE). No matter the country's economic background, inclusive education poses different aspects of challenges to each. Depending on these various aspects, challenges to inclusive education can appear in very different ways. The challenge is to get all children in the classroom who never experienced a classroom learning environment in some education system. On the other hand, economically developed countries face issues like a lack of skills and qualifications among the pupils in the classroom (Ainscow, 2005). Some students get access to institutional education but not to the mainstream one, and some drop out from school as they cannot connect with the learning they are offered. Bangladesh is a country that is facing challenges of inclusive education implementation of the introductory level where children are yet to see inside of a classroom given their special needs and disability (Malak et al., 2013). On the other hand, Bangladesh has enacted several acts and policies regarding inclusive education, agreeing to international treaties, for example, Rights of Children (1989), of Education For All (EFA) (UNESCO, 1990) and the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994). Yet, the implementation of inclusive education in Bangladesh does not reflect as much in practices as it is in the policies (Malak et al., 2013).

From the researcher's personal experience as a teacher, teacher trainer, and later on education researcher, the researcher is motivated to work for education equity. Having firsthand experience of inclusion issues in terms of equity, this researcher intends to learn more about inclusion issues in Bangladesh. This research explored the policies and Education Household Survey 2014 related to inclusion in Bangladesh for students with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

In this study, the research problem has been defined in the introductory chapter and the research scope, background, questions and rationale. The initial chapter also included the purpose and significance of the research. A detailed literature review of the related key topics of this research and a conceptual framework based on the literature is described in the second chapter. Chapter three illustrated the methodology adopted for this research. Chapter four and five gathered all the learnings from the study with a discussion based on the findings and recommendation based on the reviewed literature.

1.2 Research Topic

The topic for this research is the inclusive education scenario for students with SEND.

Several decades now, a worldwide push has been started to make educational opportunity more inclusive for children with disabilities. The segregated educational system is being questioned for justification with the circulation of individual rights for disabled persons in society (Winzer, 1993). In that motion, Bangladesh also initiated inclusive education for students with SEND; however, the policies regarding this inclusive education are vaguely stated, and when it comes to practice, the inclusive education for students with SEND is poorly ensured.

Within Bangladesh, the policies have been able to mark several milestones in the journey towards inclusive education. In the last 20 years, policies ensured free and compulsory education for all and established the right to access education for children with SEND in

Bangladesh. However, the same policies leave confusion in conceptions among the practitioners and teachers regarding inclusive education for students with SEND (Malak. et al., 2014).

This research draws attention to the concerns regarding inclusion in Bangladesh for students with SEND. This research explored policies regarding disability and education in Bangladesh to explore what scopes and challenges are posed for the inclusion of students with SEND in Bangladesh. To understand the scenario from a different aspect, Education Household Data 2014 will be the data available regarding students' education and literacy with SEND at the school level.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The current education system of Bangladesh is not a representation of inclusive education, specially for the students with SEND. Ensuring inclusive education is a long way. To be exact, the definition of inclusive education was not inclusive enough in the beginning. It took few decades to define inclusive education that indicates inclusive practices. Inclusive education started bringing the end of segregated education (Barnes and Mercer, 2010). As for UNESCO (1994), inclusive education calls for the inclusion of all in terms of access and presence, ensuring participation and achievement. Barton (2003) argued and tried to draw attention to emphasize the reason, process, time, place and outcome of inclusive education. He also mentioned the politics of inclusion in terms of who gets included and who gets excluded not only in education but also in overall society. The most straightforward definition of inclusive education was presented by Hodkinson's (2019), where all children will be ensured access to mainstream education with no condition applied. Bangladesh is facing a situation of inclusive education that is described as a complex phenomenon by Aniscow (2005) because of the absence of a common language. As Malak et al. (2014) concluded, current policies leave

significant conceptual confusion for the practitioners and teachers regarding inclusive education for students with SEND. Although the starting of inclusive education happened on the grave of segregated education, because of these conceptual conceptions borne from policies, most students with SEND receive integrated education in the name of inclusive education. Although there are studies regarding the policies of the inclusive education of Bangladesh, very few, try to explore the niches within inclusive education borne from policies and try to find evidence from quantitative data. From that lack of research point, this study will examine the policies regarding inclusive education for the students with SEND and how it reflects in data presented in Education Household Survey, 2014.

1.4 Research Questions

Research Question

What are the main learnings related to the inclusion of students with SEND at the primary school level reflected in Bangladesh's policies and government data?

Key Questions:

1. How the policies and data of the Bangladesh government reflect the inclusion of the student with SEND?
2. What government education and literacy data reveal about students with SEND?

1.5 Purpose of the study:

This research intends to understand the level of inclusion issues posed in Bangladesh's current policies for the students with SEND. Bangladesh has a wide range of policies regarding inclusive education. However, the awareness about inclusive education is still policy bound in Bangladesh. This study looked closer to the available policies regarding students with SEND to explore inclusive education's scope and challenges in Bangladesh. This study will also

analyze the data regarding the literacy rate of students with SEND to see the reality of the situation of inclusive education. Additionally, this study will explore how practices develop issues in inclusion. Overall, to go one step closer to equity in education, the issues on the way of inclusion for the most disadvantaged group will be explored.

1.6 Significance of the study:

To ensure equity in any education system, the first step should be providing all students' inclusion. This study will identify the inclusion issues of Bangladesh, indicating favourable policies and practices. Moreover, the analysis of policies and practices will lead to recommendations for increasing inclusivity. This recommendation would be helpful for the policymaker, teaching practitioners and contribute to these stakeholders' efforts to reduce inequality. Additionally, this research will complement the work of academics in this field.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This research aims to shed light on the situation of inclusive education for students with SEND from the policy perspective. Therefore, this study explores the policies regarding inclusive education for students with SEND within Bangladesh. This literature review is organized to present the definition of students with SEND. Then it will focus on inclusive education in details. After that, evidence has been collected in inclusive education to define the situation and explore the need of current research.

2.1 Student with SEND in Bangladesh

Students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are the most vulnerable group of learners when it comes to inclusive education (Humphrey, Lendrum, Barlow, Wigelsworth, & Squires, 2013). When it comes to the estimates of the prevalence of SEND, it varies from country to country, for example, 21% in England (Department for Education, 2010), 13.2% in the USA and 7.6% in Australia (Snyder and Dillow, 2014). It also varies within the same country based on the difference in the definition of SEND, methodology of data collection and social and political and influences (Humphrey et al. 2013, Ministry of Planning, 2015; Robson, 2005). Special educational needs and disability code of practice (2014, 2), UK defined,

"A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child has a learning difficulty if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions." (Special educational needs and disability code of practice 2014, 2)

Bangladesh does not acknowledge the students with special education need in the policies; it only covers children with disability. The approved definition of disability under the Disability Welfare Act of 2001 is,

"A person with disability is one who is physically disabled either congenitally or as a result of disease or being a victim of accident, or due to improper or maltreatment or for any other reasons has become physically incapacitated or mentally imbalanced as a result of such disableness or one to mental impairedness has become incapacitated, either partially or fully and is unable to lead a normal life. (Ministry of Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs 2001, 11)

This disability definition covers visual impairment, physical disability, hearing impairment, speech impairment, mental disability, multiple disability and autism. Under the legislation of Disability Welfare Act of 2001, this type of disability covers the following:

- "• Persons with visual impairment are classified as: no vision in any single eye, no vision in both eyes, visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (Snellen) in the better eye even with correcting lenses or limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 (degrees) or worse.
- Persons with physical disabilities are classified as: Lost either one or both the hands, lost sensation, partly or wholly, of either hand, lost either one or both the feet, lost sensation, partly or wholly, of either or both the feet, physical deformity and abnormality, permanently lost physical equilibrium owing to neuro-disequilibrium.
- Persons with a hearing impairment are classified as: Loss of hearing capacity in the better ear in the conversation range of frequencies at 40 decibels (hearing unit) or more, or damaged or ineffective hearing abilities

- Persons with a speech impairment are classified as: Loss of one's capacity to utter/pronounce meaningful vocabulary sounds, or damaged, partly or wholly or dysfunctional
- Persons with a mental disability are classified as: One's mental development is not at par with his chronological age or whose IQ (Intelligent Quotient) is below the normal range, or has lost mental balance or is damaged, partly or wholly
- Person with multiple disabilities is classified as one who suffers from more than one type of the above-stated impairments." (Ministry of Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs 2001, 12)

In addition to the disabilities mentioned above, another form of disability that impacts how people communicate and interact with the world is included in the act. It is termed an autistic disability. (The National Autistic Society 2015).

Bangladesh is identified as a top 10 countries of Asia- Pacific regarding the prevalence of disability (ESCAP, 2012). This high prevalence of disability is believed as a result of population growth, poverty, malnutrition, less care during pregnancy, superstition, and medical care. Even though the prevalence of disability is high in Bangladesh, there is an absence of reliable data, especially national survey on a person with a disability. Since 1981 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) surveyed through population census every decade, and the highest prevalence found till 2001 was 0.82 (Haqueans Shahnaz, 1997). Different non-government organization's finding differs from the government data regarding the prevalence of person with a disability, for example, Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV) found 8.8%, Bangladesh Protibandhi Kalyan Samiti records 7.8%, Action Aid Bangladesh (1996) records 14.04% (Titumir 2005). The prevalence of persons with a disability in Bangladesh can be up to 14% based on what method is used to survey them.

2.2 Inclusive Education

The definition of inclusive education still going through an evolution. Researchers (Hodkinson, 2019; Aniscow, 2005; Malak et al., 2014) have defined inclusive education from different perspectives. To become inclusive, the definition of inclusive education has to go through a long way. The government of the UK, which is considered of the leading education system in ensuring inclusivity in education, has left scope for exclusion for a pupil with particular education need (SEN) in their Excellence For All Children Green Paper, 1997 mentioning children with SEN will go to mainstream education wherever it is possible (DfEE, 1997). Barton's statement opposes this definition of inclusive education, to him

"Inclusion is not about the assimilation of individuals into an essentially unchanged system of educational provision and practice." Barton (2003, 9)

The concept of inclusive education keeps changing with time. Inclusive education is compared with fashion by Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou (2010) when they try to explain the evolution of inclusive education. For them, inclusive education was started from imagination where only rich people get to try it. Once an affordable version of it came, it started being used rapidly, even sometimes not knowing the concept behind the formulation of this trend (Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou, 2010). However, inclusive education brings at the end of segregation and make aware of integration. Both later means introducing education to students with SEND but either in a separate system or even in the same system but treated differently (Barnes and Mercer, 2010). Inclusive education does not mean pushing children into the same classroom where two separate systems exist, and the label 'mainstreaming' cannot be used while only non-academic activity is happening together (Lipskey and Gartner, 1994). Slee and Allan (2005) agreed and extended that inclusive education cannot occur in excluded places, for example, special schools. Researchers (Aniscow, 2005; Aniscow & Sandill, 2010) agreed that the concept of inclusive education is not uniform, and the absence of common

language may lead to a multitude of practices (Glazzard, 2013). To reduce this ambiguity, Dyson (2009) has suggested defining the aspects related to inclusive education, which includes a discussion of policies to find who is fit and who is excluded rather than just what a school should look like. Bangladesh is also facing a lack of common language regarding inclusive education, resulting in differences in practices, so this study explored the policies and government data regarding inclusive education, as Dyson (2009) suggested.

2.3 Inclusive Education in Bangladesh

The analysis of the national educational plan from Asia presented the absence of inclusive education and inclination to segregated education in the form of special and non-formal education means Ahuja (2005). This trend led to particular threat for people with disability and special education need in Bangladesh as Bangladesh represents 10% population of South Asia. Being a relatively new nation, gaining independence in 1971, Bangladesh has enacted all the policies regarding inclusive education, agreeing with all international treaties. Yet, the policies in the education system do not reflect the practices in the Bangladesh education system in terms of inclusion. The difference is so big and acute until now in all sectors; for example, no ramps in most schools and public transport are not inclusive (Šiška and Habib, 2013). In CSID and AAB report in 2002 showed the lack of participation of children with disability is concerning low; it was only 11% of enrollment in the education of students with SEND. Ten years from that report being published, the situation has not been improved much for the students with SEND. The current education system in Bangladesh can not be called an inclusive one yet. As in inclusive education, the politics of recognition is a concerning issue (Barton, 2003), the policies regarding inclusive education need to be analyzed systematically. Policy analysis serves to enlighten current thinking, future policy studies, and future policy-making when it aids to reduce the ambiguity of current practices and highlight the scope for initiatives (Tatto, 2012; McKinney and Hocutt, 1988).

As stated in the problem statement, Bangladesh has enacted adequate policies to implement inclusive education until now; the practice is not reflecting it yet. Therefore, this research explores the existing policies to explore the scope of inclusive education for students with SEND of primary level within Bangladesh. All current policies that integrated inclusive education are studied under a set out conceptual framework and government data is analyzed to check the reality in this research.

2.4 Barriers to Inclusive Education in Bangladesh

2.4.1 Religious and cultural issues

Bangladesh exhibits a culture that is challenging for inclusion. Bangladesh is a country with 90% of the Muslim population. Islam does not present disability as a curse; rather, it is termed as a test to get Allah's Mercy (Watters, 2010). Islam made it clear that all human are the best creature and should not be discriminated (Wafi, 1991). However, when it comes to practice, both religious and cultural practices pose threats to inclusion. It is found that mothers of children with disability got blamed for the disabled children and perceived as a punishment from Allah for some misconduct (Warner, 1999, 2019; Šiška & Habib, 2013). Asian families with children with a disability are likely to deprive of fulfilling their requirements because of different cultural practices (Regan and Speller, 1989). Šiška & Habib (2013) found that children with disability get refrained from social events considering the events are auspicious. People with disability do not get to meet pregnant mothers sometimes, thinking that may make the unborn baby disable. Even though these findings cannot be generalized for the whole country, it shows evidence that society has a long way to go in terms of cultural and religious practice to ensure inclusivity.

2.4.2 Literacy and Awareness Issues

Literacy and awareness level has a manifold impact on ensuring the inclusivity of disable people. In the previous section of religious and cultural issues against a person with disability implies a lack of awareness. Person with disability reported being not treated as they supposed to by their care giver and even teachers because of a lack of knowledge and understanding. Sometimes parents lack of awareness foster and prolong disability for children, results of parents identifying and delaying to access medical help (Šiška & Habib, 2013; Watkins, 2008). For example, children risk of stunting can be reduced to 22% when parents are aware, specially mother has minimum primary education (Watkins, 2008).

On the other hand, when it comes to teachers preparedness regarding inclusive education, researchers (Forlin and Sin 2010; Leyser et al. 2011) found a strong positive relation among teachers preparedness and confidence with the implementation of inclusive education. Due to the lack of teachers preparedness and skills in Asia pacific, the implementation of inclusive education is way behind (Sharma et al., 2013; Ahsan and Sharma, 2018). When teachers are judged based on the students' outcome and achievement, the motivation and scope mostly get lower to support students with special education needs (Florin, 2010). Similar is reflected in Jordan, Glenn, & McGhie-Richmond's (2010) report:

"A disposition to offer places to students who require higher levels of support may, thus, be compromised, resulting in limited options for students with special educational needs to attend a school of their choice." (Jordan, Glenn, & McGhie-Richmond 2010, 261)

In a competitive education system, attaining inclusion is challenging for students with SEND requiring higher support (Forlin & Sin, 2010). Bangladesh's primary education system is uniquely highly competitive, where students have to sit for a nation wide public exam PECE

to pass primary education. It is not only a matter of passing; students are the victim of expectation stress for certain grades in this exam. This assessment system, PECE, is not in the policy as it is being practised and posing a challenge to inclusive education (Hossain, 2020)

As reflected in Florin's (2010) statement,

"A system of target setting has led to a culpable culture that has raised tensions for schools. On many occasions, as schools strive to become more inclusive, they are still required to achieve inflexible curricula and pedagogy, making the process untenable".
(Florin 2010, 653)

In a similar situation, Bangladesh is struggling to ensure inclusivity for students with SEND.

2.4.3 Economic Issues

In this current world of industrial development and capital wage economy, people who do not fit into the definition of a wage earner are labelled as disable (Russel, 2003). In the current economic situation of Bangladesh, people, especially males, are expected to earn at a certain age. People who are unfit to get involved in traditional wage-earning ways, especially people with disability, got excluded at the first stance in this economic race. Because of generalized assumption, employers are reluctant to employ people with disability (Russel, 2003). This results in parents lack of interest to send their children with disability to school as they are not likely to get involved in wage-earning. That further lead to another type of exclusion in a developing country like Bangladesh and having a capitalist economy for not having an income people considered as having less human worth (Oliver, 1990)

2.4.4 Mobility issues

Less mobility poses a massive challenge to inclusion. Persons with a disability face mobility challenges in various range. In Bangladesh, this mobility issues start in the own area for a student with SEND; most of the schools does not have any ramps or accessible toilet. Public

space, public transport does not have ramps or space for people with disability as well (Šiška and Habib, 2013).

No matter the mobility is within the county, or outside the country, students with SEND get exposed to exclusion in both cases (Šiška and Habib, 2013; Watkins, 2008; Warner, 1999).

When mobility happens inside the country, it indicates an economic shift, but it creates social segregation in most cases. Inside Bangladesh, mobility mainly happens from rural areas to urban areas, from small to big cities. As a result, in the main cities like Dhaka, there are already many slums. This unplanned mobility to cities creates a lack of social responsibility that leads to unemployment, especially regarding people with disabilities (Šiška and Habib, 2013).

2.5 Conceptual framework

Intending to find the situation of inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh, this research focused on the policies and existing data regarding it. Sociocultural studies of policy as a practice has been suggested by researchers (Shore and Wright 1997; Levinson, 2001) to study global education policies. A sociocultural approach investigates policies as a cultural production of the political process where social actors shaped the practice, while some approaches only focus on what works (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014). The actors mentioned in the sociocultural approach differ depending on how they define the problem, shape interpretations for problem solutions, and determine the vision of change (Hamann and Rosen, 2011). However, Levinson (2001) argued that policy formation and implementation should get preference under a sociocultural approach while approaching educational policies. That will include the definition of policy, how strategies will be implemented and corresponding inducement or punishment. To better understand the enactments of educational policies, actor network theory has been discussed and put in the center while conceptualizing this research.

2.5.1 Actor-Network Theory

It has been half a century when actor network theory started being used in scientific research to put both social and technical aspects in the core. For the last couple of decades, actor network theory gained popularity in education research (Bencherki, 2017). The actor-network theory explores how human and nonhuman elements or actors create a web of network to function (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010). Researchers (Latour, 2005; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014) described actor-network theory as considerate to how people and objects get involved, excluded, and enrolled within networks. Jill Koyama (2011), in her study of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Policy, followed Nespore (2002) take on actor-network theory that recognizes actors who are rationally connected by a social relation has a complex, dynamic and often competitive relationship. To Koyama (2011, 705), networks are thus 'assemblages' of heterogeneous materials, 'all of which can move educational practices across space and time'. In her study, Kayoma (2011) discovered how for-profit corporations, principals, teachers, and city leaders join a network, adopt the NCLB agenda, and then strive to deliver test scores that are nonhuman actors in and of themselves. The test scores then "act" by constraining future behaviour and keeping students, teachers, and administrators accountable.

Latour (2005) found that actor network theory is strong as it follows the always changing relationships among the actors that is fragile, controversial like Kayoma (2011) revealed in her study. Another strength of actor-network theory is it examines the particular associations and translations that assemble all of these actors, objects, structures, ideas and organizations into presence, at the same time it follows the movements or transition or transformation of these acts (Fenwick, & Edwards, 2010; Latour, 2005).

This study explored both social and material actors as emphasized in actor-network theory. This theory conceptualizes that for any actor to act, many others in the network must act as well (Fenwick, & Edwards, 2010; Latour, 2005). While it comes to inclusive education, to

implement it for students with SEND, all the stakeholders need to act to ensure it in total capacity. On this ground of research on sociocultural studies of policies (Hamann and Rosen, 2011; Levinson (2001) and actor network theory (Bencherki, 2017; Fenwick, & Edwards, 2010; Latour, 2005; Bartlett, & Vavrus, 2014; Kayoma, 2011) the conceptual framework of this study has been illustrated in figure 2.1.

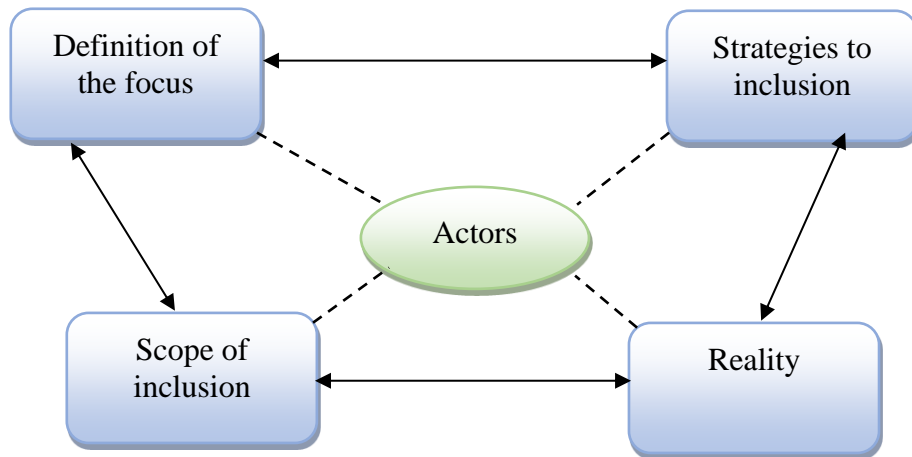


Figure 2. 1 Conceptual framework for Inclusive education policy studies

As this research aims to find the reality of inclusive education for students with SEND, the policies available on inclusive education for students with SEND in Bangladesh and Education Household Survey data 2014 has been investigated. The policies and data are explored under themes of the definition of the problem or inclusive education, scope of inclusion, strategies to inclusion and reality. These themes are derived from literature related to sociocultural studies of policy and actor network theory to understand the situation of inclusive education for students with SEND.

Chapter 3

Methodology

As the discussion and evidence in the literature review chapter suggests ensuring inclusive education for the students with SEND requires contribution from each actor simultaneously.

As there is a lack of study regarding inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh, this research attempted to understand policies and recent data regarding inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh.

This chapter detailed the research design employed in this study. The reason behind adopting mixed-method research, secondary data, content and regression analysis to analyze the data has been explained here in this chapter.

3.1 Research Approach

This study adopted a scientific approach to exploring the policy context regarded as input and data reality as an output of inclusive education initiatives. This design involved mixed-method research of quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions better.

3.1.1 Mixed Method Research

In this study, a parallel mixed-method research design based on secondary data has been used. In the qualitative part, policies related to inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh is explored and analyzed. In the quantitative part, data pertaining to inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh has been collected from Education Household Survey data 2014 and interpreted (Figure 3.1).

The mixed-method research combines qualitative research and quantitative research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell, 2017; Creswell, 2005). Qualitative data such as policies, interviews, and observation are open-ended, whereas quantitative data is close-ended and statistical data-focused. A mixed method research data from both qualitative and quantitative

is analyzed distinctly to find answers to research questions. In this research, policies and Education household survey data 2014 has been analyzed distinctly to find solutions for the research questions regarding the situation of inclusive education.

To get a idea of a education structure, it is important to explore the basis or inside of the structure and the structure's outcome (Edward, 2010). As a combination of exploratory and confirmatory approaches, mixed-method research substantially benefits this research while exploring the inclusive education situation from policy analysis in the qualitative part and the data analysis in the quantitative part. Therefore mixed-method research design was chosen for this research to best answer the research questions of this study.

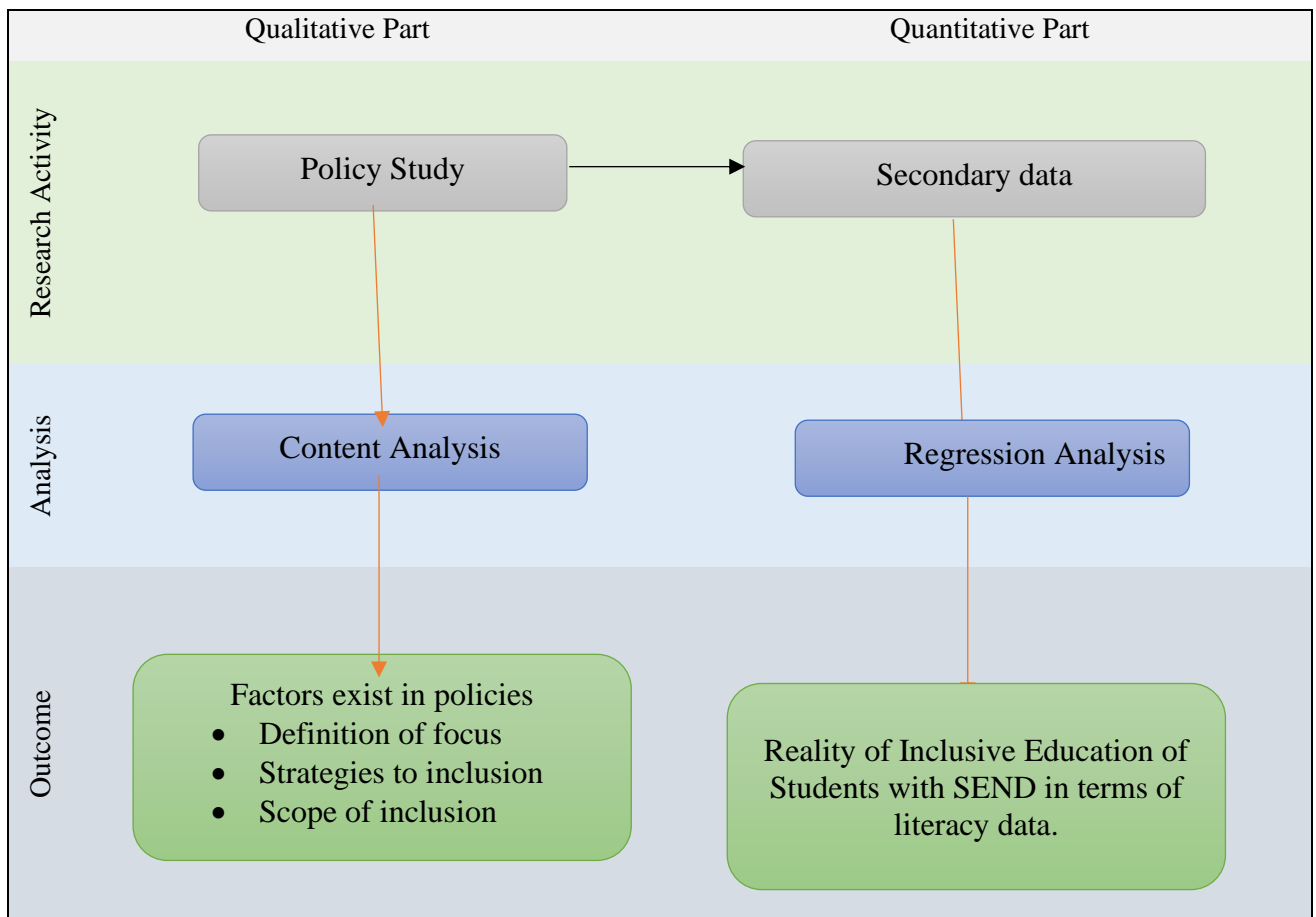


Figure 3. 1 Research design (Parallel complimentary mixed method)

Moreover, mixed-method research creates the option to reach opposing findings from different part of the research. Those divergent findings may lead to a new perspective and baseline for

new research (Greene et al., 1989). Simultaneously, mixed-method research provides the option for triangulation (Creswell, 2017); in other words, cross-check the findings that are very important for this research. Hence, to understand the inclusive education situation of students with SEND at the primary level within Bangladesh, mixed-method research was a strong choice.

There are many different types of mixed-method research design based on the purpose and characteristics in social science research (Creswell, 2005; Greene et al., 1989). Among them, a similar complimentary research design has been adopted for this study. In a complementary design of research, the findings of qualitative and quantitative part complement the findings of each other. A parallel mixed-method research design indicated conduct the data collection and analysis phase of both qualitative and quantitative part of research parallelly where the results from one part do not contribute to development of others (Creswell, 2005; Greene et al. , 1989; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

This research involved a parallel mixed-method design for the study. The data collection and analysis of both parts was conducted parallelly, and information from the qualitative part, policy study, was complemented by the finding of the qualitative component, government data analysis.

3.2 Sample design and sample size

In the qualitative part, policies are selected based on two criteria, if the policy is enacted within Bangladesh and have any mention about the inclusion of students with SEND. The selected policies are the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990, Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act 2001, and National Education Policy (NEP) 2010, National Child Policy 2011, The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013.

In the quantitative part, data is exported from the Education Household Survey, 2014 by BBS.

In this survey, a two-stage stratified random sampling technique is used to determine Primary

Sampling Units (PSUs) composed of 1500 PSUs. In the first stage, a fifth of the total PSUs were selected for the survey, which comprised 166 rural PSUs and 140 urban PSUs. In the next stage, PSUs was chosen from each stratum. In this survey, 323 children with SEND were surveyed, where 188 were from the rural area and 135 were from urban areas.

3.3 Data collection

As the research design part indicated, this study involves both qualitative and quantitative data. For both parts of this research, secondary data has been used. In the qualitative part, all policies regarding inclusive education for students with SEND has been reviewed and analyzed. The quantitative part data regarding literacy of students with SEND has been collected from Education Household Data 2014 and analyzed. Secondary data analysis is used in research study and analyses existing data collected by other researchers, usually for further research or as a report or policies (Heaton, 2003). Secondary data ensures savings of resources and increases data quality and opportunity to cover a larger sample (Heaton, 2003; Hinde, 1991). For policy study Hox and Boeije (2005) suggested using secondary data, describing its advantage as easy to gather larger data base with the lowest cost. After a study about inclusion in schools of England, Smith (2009) concluded that secondary analysis of relevant data is an important tool to understand the persistent inclusion issues in education. Therefore, this research to find the inclusion situation for students with SEND secondary data, policies, and government data has been analyzed.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

In a mixed-method research design, qualitative and quantitative part equipose each others weakness (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Therefore mixed-method research design is considered to provide more validity and reliability than any single method approach (Abowitz and Toole, 2010). As this study looked at the same matter inclusive education for the students with SEND in primary level within Bangladesh using two different types of data analyzing

with different analysis method, the factual inference are more valid for this research with a higher reliability.

The data used for the quantitative part, Education Household Survey, 2014, is collected in two-stage following seven steps probability proportional to the size that increased the data's validity. To increase the reliability of the findings of inclusion situation of the students with SEND after reviewing policies, related data was also analyzed to find status from different approaches.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Qualitative data

In this study, to analyze the qualitative data gathered from policy studies, content analysis has been implemented. Content analysis provides the means of deeper understanding any concepts or identifying concepts from written documents or communication (Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe, 2009). As a qualitative data analysis tool, the content analysis uses a systematic approach to infer different concepts (Hossain, 2020). Weber (1990,43) defined content analysis as "a research methodology that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from the text." Content analysis is being used for policy analysis for decades because of its blunt nature. It also allows longitudinal analysis less expensively and efficiently (McBeth, Shanahan, Arnell, & Hathaway, 2007). Therefore in this study, content analysis is used to infer the issue posed by policies and practices regarding inclusion for students with SEND.

Based on the purpose of the study, content analysis can be inductive or deductive in nature. When there is less knowledge about a particular phenomenon or learning is not organized, inductive content analysis is suitable (Lauri & Kynga's 2005). When research data has a base of previous organized knowledge, deductive research is recommended (Kynga's & Vanhanen 1999). As this research is based on prior knowledge about inclusive education and aims to analyze organized policies in the qualitative part, deductive content analysis has been used to

analyze policies regarding inclusion for students with SEND at the primary level within Bangladesh. For the study, first, the policies related to inclusive education for students with SEND have been selected and read thoroughly to make sense of the policies as a whole, then based on the codes and focuses mentioned in the conceptual framework based on literature data are gathered by content and grouped. From the learning of selected contents group analyzed data are presented in the findings chapter.

3.5.2 Quantitative data

The quantitative data is analyzed using the R programming language. To see the difference among students' literacy and education data with SEND and other students, a t-test has been conducted. The following is the equation used to do a t-test.

$$\text{T-test} = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\text{SEM}}$$

Here \bar{x} is the mean of the gathered data, μ is the Hypothesized mean, and SEM is the Standard error of the mean. The assumption here is the literacy of students with SEND is significantly low compared to the other students and the national average. Considering the α value 0.05, a significance is tested of the collected data using their P-value.

3.6 Ethical Issues and Concerns

This study analyzed secondary data from policies and Educational Household Data 2014. Therefore no individual has been contacted directly for this research. In other words, as secondary data has been used in this research, it did not include individual-level data. Data used in this study is non-identifiable. So it is confirmed no issue raised through this research that can cause any harm to any individual or no possibility of unethical use of data or breaching confidentiality. In terms of addressing bias while defining inclusive education or students with

SEND, a wide selection of literature has been reviewed and defined accordingly. A detailed conceptual framework based on related literature also keeps this research away from bias.

3.7 Credibility and Rigor

This study's researcher has six years of experience in the primary education sector and firsthand experience of the inclusion situation at the primary school level in Bangladesh. She is an experienced researcher in the education sector collaborating on three international research projects, One of them is about inclusive education for international students in terms of learning environment, published paper in an international journal, and having a Dean's List Award for outstanding performance in dissertation project from a Russel Group University, University of Southampton UK.

Before initiating this research, two well-articulated research module has been attained in BRAC Institute of Education Development. That covered research designs, method and practices related to education. That module also covered the whole process of education research, starting from problem ideation, research proposal preparation to writing, and final thesis submission.

In this study, the research problem is identified from the literature based on education policy covering inclusive education. The research proposal was then formulated based on guidance from the research module and presented to a committee of experienced researchers and teachers. From the feedback of the committee, the final proposal was submitted and accepted. Later, based on the literature, this study conceptualized a structure to study the policies and data and analyze inclusive education for the students with SEND. Detailed feedback has been received for each chapter of the study and been updated accordingly. Finally, the whole thesis has been presented once again to the thesis defence committee and been approved by them with

minor changes. Across the entire research process, a dedicated thesis supervisor was guiding and supervising to ensure the highest quality of this research.

3.8 Limitations of the study

Inclusivity is an extensive term in education; in this research, only inclusivity issues for the students with SEND are studied. Moreover, this study uses secondary data, for example, policies, academic papers published in this field and data collected from Bangladesh Bureau Statistics. So there could be issues regarding not having any input from someone with SEND and not including primary data. To decrease its impact, data from Education Household Survey, 2014 is analyzed to get the perspective of how many students with SEND are getting into the education system. This study's major limitation was the quantitative data regarding literacy of students with SEND used in this research; the Education Household Survey, 2014 is the only latest government data regarding literacy of students with SEND. This seven-year-old data posed a risk of overlooking the current situation in terms of literacy. However, to overcome this limitation, data is analyzed with a t-test that provides a test among two sets of data to check if they are significantly different. In this case, the mean value expressed in relation to population makes the outcome more reliable.

Chapter 4

Findings

4.1 Introduction

This research intends to explore the situation of inclusive education for students with SEND. With that aim, the research questions were, 'How the policies and data of the Bangladesh government reflect the inclusion of the student with SEND? and What government education and literacy data reveal about students with SEND?'. To answer these questions, a mixed-method research design was employed in this study where the qualitative part was exploratory to answer the first research question, and the quantitative part was both confirmatory and exploratory to answer the second research question. Data was collected from existing policies regarding inclusion issues and Education Household Survey 2014. The analysis of data has been presented to the sequence of research questions. The qualitative part answered the first research question regarding the scope and challenges of inclusive education for students with SEND derived from the policies of Bangladesh. Each policy is analyzed in terms of the definition of the problem, scope of inclusion, strategies to inclusion. The quantitative part answered the second research question to confirm the reality of inclusive education of students with SEND in Bangladesh. The first research question is responded to under the policy study part with a subsection of each policy, the second research question is responded under the Education Household Survey, 2014 part. The discussion and recommendation based on the findings are presented in the next chapter.

4.2 Policy Study:

Bangladesh has enacted a good number policy regarding inclusive education, starting from the constitution of Bangladesh. From that perspective inclusive ducation in Bangladesh is still policy focused. To ensure inclusive education, Bangladesh has introduced policies following

all international treaties. Bangladesh has agreed with the declaration of Education For All (EFA) (UNESCO, 1990), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994), the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-UNCRPD. Besides these, Bangladesh also aimed to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (United Nations, 2008) and Sustainable Development Goals (2015), both of which included uniformed and quality education as a core goal. Based on these international treaties and agreement Bangladesh has embedded policies like Compulsory Primary Education Act, 1990; National Education Policy for the Disabled, 1995; Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act, 2001 and National Education Policy, 2010; Persons with Disabilities Rights And Protection Act 2013. In the following section, these policies are analyzed with the lens of the conceptual framework developed in this study to find out the situation of inclusive education for the students with SEND in Bangladesh.

4.2.1 The Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990

After signing the international treaty of Education For All in 1990, Bangladesh passed the Compulsory Primary Education Act in the same year. According to this policy, all children have to attend primary school unless critically ill to attend school, no school in two kilometers, could not get admitted to a school even after applying or according to education officer that the child has equal education or mentally restarted to join a school. Children are defined as someone age between six to ten years old. Places, where compulsory education will be in place will be a compulsory education committee to ensure all children are going to school; otherwise, parents may face a penalty as presented in this law (MOPME, 1990).

4.2.2 Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act – 2001

The first legislation on disability in Bangladesh, is Bangladesh Persons with Disability Act 2001 that was in line with Salamanca Statement 1994 and Dakar Framework 2002 (Malak et al., 2013). For the first time in this policy defined disability elaborately. However, in this act, disability is defined as a person with different medical conditions, including being physically handicapped, hearing impairment, speech impairment, and mental disability in terms of less IQ. Committees at various levels were advised to create to implement this act (MSW, 2001). This act urges to make free education all children with disabilities; however, it created scope for special education in terms of segregation,

"To encourage the establishment of Specialized Education Institutions to cater to the special needs of the special categories of children with disabilities, to design and develop specialized curriculum and write special textbooks and to introduce Special Examination System." (MSW, 2001, 11)

At the same time, this act created scope for students to be a part of regular school; however, the act used the term "integration" that is entirely not the idea of inclusion,

"Endeavor to create opportunities for integration of students with disabilities in the usual class-set-up of regular normal schools wherever possible "(MSW, 2001, 12).

However, this act brings out the topic to train teachers and other employees working with students with disabilities and arrange transport facilities for students with disability to join the school. Moreover, this act focused on creating public awareness about disability by adding lessons in social science about the lifestyle and associated problems faced by persons with disability (MSW, 2001).

4.2.3 National Education Policy (NEP) 2010

The most recent education policy of Bangladesh is National Education Policy (NEP) (2010). In this act, the commitment to inclusive education is clearer than other previous policies. NEP 2010 declared education is a fundamental right for everyone. Its main objectives include,

"22: Bringing all socio-economically disadvantaged children into education including street children;

23: Ensuring the scopes of development of cultural and linguistic characteristics of all the indigenous and ethnic groups in Bangladesh;

24: Ensuring the rights of all children with disabilities." (Ministry of Education, 2010, p. 1-2).

In a separate part, NEP 2010 explain the arrangement for education for the challenged learner. This act defined challenged children as someone "blind, deaf and dumb and physically and mentally handicapped" (MoE, 2010; 43). According to this act, the education system will depend on their health and mental condition. Based on this condition, children will either go to mainstream school or special education provision who are acutely handicapped, including special care and nursing (MoE, 2010). A set of strategies is described in NEP 2010 about how the education for the challenged learner will be arranged. These strategies include a survey to get the number and category of handicapped population, creating coordinated education system in specific schools to ensure challenged children can keep pace with other children, teacher training, integrated education, separate special schools, flexible curriculum, and inclusion of lessons regarding disabled children in primary education (MoE, 2010)

4.2.4 National Child Policy 2011

Under the national education policy, disabled children got a mandate of a special program. Even though this policy did not define disabled children, it calls for ensuring recognition and respectable living for disabled children. This policy calls for measures for mainstreaming

disable children in society, including education. However, this policy left scope for creating special education for disabled children (MoWCA, 2011; 9).

4.2.5 The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013

The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013 is the latest act in Bangladesh regarding person with a disability, and it has defined disabled peoples right elaborately. In this act, disability is defined as,

"any person who is physically, psychologically, and/or mentally not functioning properly due to social/environmental barriers. Any person who can't take part actively in the society is considered to be disabled" (Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2013; 7)

This act included the person with psychosis or down syndrome or any other mental inability as disability and reserved their rights. In this act, inclusive education is defined as an equal education opportunity for all students with disability in every school in Bangladesh. Institutions cannot deny admitting any students for any reason. However, like other policies regarding person with disability, this act also left a provision for special education in the form of residential or non-residential institution. This act reserves the right to complain against any kind of discrimination. (Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2013; 7)

4.3 Education Household Survey, 2014

Education household survey (EHS), 2014 was published by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in September 2015. It is the only latest government data regarding the literacy rate of the students with SEND. As a disability, this data considered autism, physical disability, mental or intellectual disability, vision, speech and hearing impairment, down syndrome and others. That made up the total of 339 disabled persons out of a total of 26626 people surveyed. That implies in the national level, there are 1.33% of people with disability.

Table 4. 1 Literacy rate of person with disability

Type of Disability	National	Rural	Urban
Autism	5.02	0	62.79
Physical disability	42.45	37.63	59.87
Mental/intellectual/cerebral palsy	25.25	24.17	30.76
Vision/Speech/Hearing	27.21	29.93	17.94
Down Syndrome/Multiple disability/Others	39.16	35.48	57.98
National	32.59	31.18	38.13
N	323	188	135

Source: EHS 2014 (BBS,2015)

This survey data reported that children with a physical disability have higher literacy rates, and children with autism have the lowest.

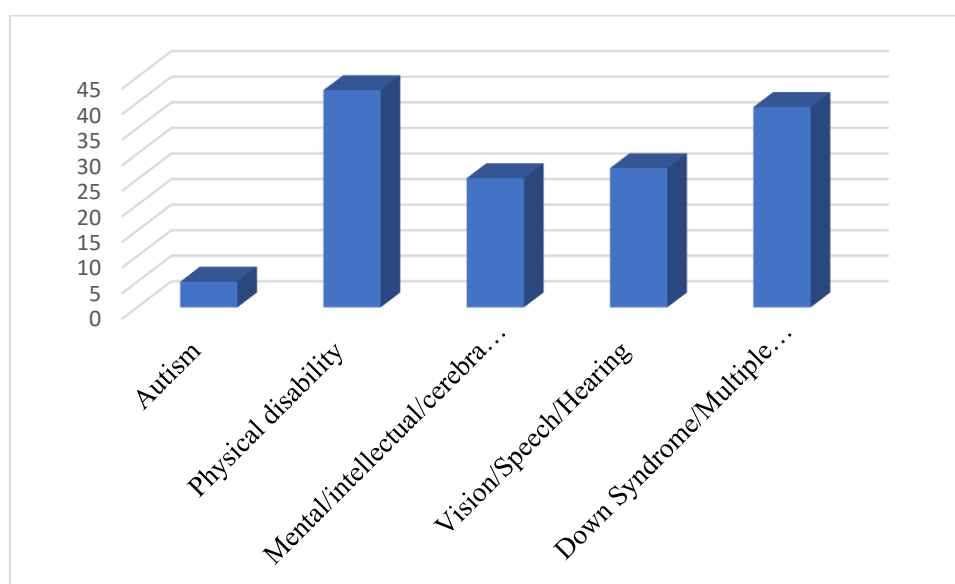


Figure 4. 1 Literacy rate of students with different disability

In Table 4.1, the t-test outcome shows that the assumption about students with SEND literacy rate is significantly less than our national literacy is proper.

In the Education Household Survey, 2014, the literacy rate for the population of (7+ years) is 59.09%, and the literacy rate for people with disability of (7+ years) is 32.59%.

In plain eyes, there is a vast difference in these two literacy rates. As these rates are calculated from a small sample, this research checked if this data is significant enough for the whole population. A t-test was employed to analyze if this data is substantial enough. The alternative hypothesis is that the literacy of students with SEND is significantly low compared to the other students and the national average, whereas the null hypothesis is there is no difference. The α value is 0.05.

Table 4. 2 t test outcome

Mean (x-)	27.818
Standard deviation (s)	14.74321437
Count (n)	5
Standard error of mean (SEM)	6.593366
Degrees of freedom (df)	4
Hypothesized mean (μ)	59.09
t- statistic	-4.74295
p-value	0.009018

A negative value of the t-test indicates that the average literacy rate of the students with SEND is lower than the hypothesized mean, the national literacy rate. The P-value (0.009) is smaller than The α value (0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is established. 'The literacy of students with SEND is significantly low compared to the other students and national average.'

Overall, the analysis of all policies and data found scope and challenges for inclusive education at the same time and answered the questions of this research. Policies have set definition for inclusive education and disability. In the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013 defined inclusive education is defined as an equal education opportunity to all students

with disability in every school in Bangladesh. However, not all the policies covered the definition of inclusive education, nor all of them is uniformed that implies a lack of common language. There is also a gap in determining the scope for implementing inclusive education. Different policies are enacted by various ministries, for example, MoPME, MSW, and MoP. Therefore the actors are different who are responsible for implementing inclusive education for students with SEND. Lack of collaboration among these actors left the scope for implementing inclusive education more policy-based than in practice. The Education Household Survey, 2014 revealed a huge difference around 27% between the literacy rate of students with SEND and the national average. A t-test further showed a significant difference in literacy rate between students with SEND and the national average that is representative of the whole population.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

From the evidence of a good number of enacted policies and a lower literacy rate of students with SEND, it is apparent that inclusive education is policy-focused and still in the idea phase within Bangladesh. This range of policies starting from the constitution of Bangladesh laid the ground bricks of creating an inclusive education system. From the birth of Bangladesh as a country, it declared the right to education for all children. The Article 28 and 17 of the constitution of Bangladesh states,

"Article 28 (3): No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth be subjected to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to access to any place of public entertainment or resort, or admission to any educational institution.

(MoLJPA, 2000, p. 5)

Article 17 (a)] ...establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law."

(MoLJPA, 2000, p. 8).

However, even with this strong constitutional background for inclusive education in 1972, no such policies were enacted in Bangladesh, outlining the roadmap to achieve inclusive education until 1990. The first initiative in this regard was passing the Compulsory Primary Education Act 1990 after being a signing country of Education For All (EFA), 1990 declaration. With this act, the right to compulsory and free education for all children was established. This act also added the provision of fining the parents if they did not send their children to school (MOPME,

1990). However, this act reserves the right of deciding whether a child should go to school or not to a primary education officer based on if the child has a mental condition or already achieved the learning outcomes of primary school. This part of the act provides the scope of exclusion or chance of exclusion based on the discretion of the primary education officer. This act also used words like "mentally restarted" that provokes exclusion or segregation (MOPME, 1990, P.1).

Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare (BPDW) Act (2001) is considered the first policy on disability. This act was enacted in line with Salamanca statement, 1994 and Dakar Framework, 2002. Different disabilities have been explained comprehensively in this act for the first time (MSW, 2001). This act moves forward to ensure free education for all children with disability with access to free educational material. To provide better education, this act proposed training of teachers and other staff who will be working with children with disability (MSW, 2001). However, to researchers (Malak et al., 2013; Šiška & Habib, 2013), this act appeared more as a charity act than as a step forward to ensure inclusivity. This act did not focus on the detailing of the education of students with SEND. Moreover, being published from the Ministry of Social Welfare rather than the Ministry of Education strengthen the perception of considering this act as a charity act that may imply that policy makers are considering ensuring the right of people with disability as an act of charity rather ensuring their right as the whole population (Šiška & Habib, 2013).

Moreover, this act was also criticized for defining the disability from the medical perspective only (Šiška & Habib, 2013). The definition of disability is not inclusive here, excluding all the disabilities other than few limited clinical disabilities. Additionally, this act promoted segregation by suggesting a segregated school setting for students with SEN.

"To encourage the establishment of Specialized Education Institutions to cater to the special needs of the special categories of children with disabilities, to design and

develop specialized curriculum and write special textbooks and to introduce Special Examination System, if situations so demand." (MSW, 2001, p. 11).

This statement indicates direct opposition to the concept of inclusion, leading to the segregation of people with disability.

Nevertheless, National Education Policy (2010) tried to be more inclusive than the Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare (BPDW) Act 2001. National Education policy stated to involve everyone in the education process. This act also included strategies to ensure inclusive education, such as arranging teacher training and other involved persons to be inclusive in service. (NEP, 2010). Yet this act left some ambiguity around whether children with disability will go to mainstream school or in a special arrangement as the policy's statement is quite vague. How the students will be embraced in the mainstream school, will it be in the same classroom, will there be additional support for them, this policy failed to detail these crucial parts. Even though this policy encouraged students with SEND to join the mainstream school, this very act did contradict its objective by saying,

"Separate schools will be established according to special needs and given the differential nature of disabilities of the challenged children" (MoE, p. 43).

This policy also displayed the lack of common language defining inclusive education. Moreover, how people are being labelled express the intention, and for some labelling, there can be a negative impact (Hart, Dixon, Drummond, and McIntyre, 2004). In the National Education Policy, words like "handicapped" and "dump" have been used for children with SEND. Labelling students with SEND with terms like these implies policymakers lack of knowledge and awareness. This can be related way back to the Compulsory Right of Education Act (1990), where children with disability were referred to as "mentally retarded". Twenty years from the Compulsory Right of Education Act (1990) to National Education Policy (2010) did

not change the attitudes of the policymakers towards children with disability. That explains the slow to no implementation of inclusive education for the students with SEND in these 20 years.

The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disability Act, 2013 is the latest act in Bangladesh regarding person with a disability and the only act that has defined disabled peoples right elaborately. This is the only act defined inclusive education in clear words, an equal education opportunity for all students with disability in every school in Bangladesh. Institutions cannot deny admitting any students for any reason. However, like other policies regarding person with disability, this act also left a provision for special education in the form of residential or non-residential institution. (Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, 2013; 7).

Though none of those mentioned above policies gives any detailed guidelines for inclusive education in Bangladesh, these acts set up the primary base for inclusive education either specifically or vaguely. For practicing inclusive education in a real setting, each of these policies gave some scope.

The data evidence from Education Household Survey, 2014 confirmed the absence of inclusive education for students with SEND. The literacy difference between students with SEND and the national average is around 27% and significant for the total population, as revealed through a t-test. That implies a gap in the education system for the students with SEND and the absence of inclusive education.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion above, this study can conclude some issues—first, lack of common language to define inclusive education and students with SEND. Different policies enacted from different ministry tried to describe these concerning terms either differently or didn't define them at all. Policy maker showed a lack of empathy, sometimes using exclusive words to label students with disability. The mention of students with special

education need rarely found in the policies. Actors for implementing inclusivity, such as teachers, policy makers, parents, and community, are not united to establish a common language for inclusive education, let alone implement it. Secondly, even though having a range of policies regarding inclusive education in Bangladesh for students with SEND, the policy study shows that these policies failed to detail the scope of implementing inclusive education. Policies contradict each other at one point or another (Hossain, 2020). Some guidelines mentioned the scope in vague terms, leaving the scope of encouraging segregated or excluded features. Thirdly, even some policies mentioned and tried to initiate inclusive education but failed to present a detailed strategy to do it in reality. Only intention to train teachers and staffs who will work with students with SEND will not ensure inclusivity when there are no accessible means for students with SEND to reach school and classroom. Finally, a lack of reality checks to analyze what strategies working and what is not working is absent here. Even the data collection method regarding students with SEND needs to be inclusive that reflects data of all disability individually, not a variety of disability grouped under one broader term. However, it is never late to improve the situation and now is the high time to start that.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings and discussion, it is apparent that Bangladesh still has a long way to achieve inclusive education. From that ground following four recommendation is proposed in this research:

5.3.1 Definition and Common language for inclusive education

The findings section from the policy study displayed the gap of defining disability, students with SEND and inclusive education. That further implies that a common language for the implementation of Inclusive Education is missing. The difference or the lack of clearly defining

disability and absence of clear policy mandates made it challenging to implement Inclusive education for students with SEND. (Donohue and Bonman, 2014). In this regard, a common language for inclusive education should be a high priority to ensure the implementation of Inclusive Education for everyone.

5.3.2 Using and creating the scope of inclusion

The findings presented evidence that Bangladesh has a good number of policies that paved the way for inclusive education to some extent. However, the scope of implementation of inclusive education is not clearly defined. So, the next step after defining inclusive education and student with SEND should clearly outline the scope for implementing inclusive education. Policies could be amended to accommodate more scope to ensure inclusive education for students with SEND.

5.3.3 Detailed Strategies for implementing inclusive education

As found in the findings section, there is a lack of clear strategies regarding inclusive education implementation strategies. Once the necessary terms are defined as a common language and scopes are set clearly, a detailed strategy will be needed as a next step. Strategies should include understanding the change by all actors (Fullan, 2007), curriculum change and training for school leaders and teachers (Ahsan et al., 2011). Strategies should also include the infrastructure change and support for students with SEND.

5.3.4 Monitoring and supervision for the reality check

This research found out that there is a significant difference between the literacy rate of the students with SEND and the national literacy rate. So it is essential to keep monitoring the practices for inclusive education and supervising the strategies as being implemented. The collaboration and coordination among the different actors have to be in a manner that serves the best purpose for students' inclusive education. Data should be collected at a different level

to keep monitoring the progress and need. As the literature suggested, there are various social barriers for restricting students with SEND to get an equal education. Awareness should be built to reduce those barriers.

These recommendations will lead to the starting of conceptualizing inclusive education as a piece of common knowledge among the actor involved. It can work as a synthesized document to build awareness among the involved parties and bring attention to all other actors who need to be concerned, such as transport designer, school building designer, public space planner, about increasing inclusivity for students with SEND.

The subsequent study based on this research should be on best practices to implement inclusive education in practice, a framework for creating a working group from all different actors who need to be involved in implementing inclusive education for the students with SEND in the primary level within Bangladesh.

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