

Perception of Parents, Writers, and Publishers on Integrating
Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks.

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the BRAC Institution of Educational Development in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

BRAC Institution of Educational Development

BRAC University

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing a 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.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: Perception of Parents, Writers, and Publishers on Integrating Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks

Student name: Farhana Tasnim

1. Source of population: Dhaka City
2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)
 - a) Physical risk to the subjects
 - b) Social risk
 - c) Psychological risk to subjects
 - d) discomfort to subjects
 - e) Invasion of privacy
3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)
 - a) Nature and purpose of the study
 - b) Procedures to be followed
 - c) Physical risk
 - d) Sensitive questions
 - e) Benefits to be derived
 - f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study
 - g) Confidential handling of data
 - h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved
4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)
 - a) from study participants
 - b) from parents or guardian
 - c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects?
5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:
 - a) Proposal
 - b) Consent Form
 - c) Questionnaire or interview schedule

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Abstract

This study explores how parents, writers, and publishers in Bangladesh view the integration of environmental themes into children's story books. The study identifies the core thoughts, driving forces, and difficulties encountered by each group through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis. Parents emphasize the value of hands-on education and demonstrate a preference for relatable stories that teach environmental responsibility through daily activities. Writers place a strong emphasis on creating organic and captivating tales that raise children's awareness of the environment without being overbearing. They feel that by fostering a sincere bond between children and the environment, storytelling can promote sustainable practices. Publishers encounter practical obstacles, including restricted resources and market limitations, in the production of high-quality, environmentally themed storybooks. They promote experiential learning opportunities that enhance children's appreciation for nature. The study highlights a notable deficiency in the market for children's storybooks centered on environmental themes and demonstrates how competition from digital media undermines conventional reading practices. These findings provide significant insights for educators, writers, and policymakers in creating storybooks that enhance environmental awareness, with the objective of cultivating a generation that values sustainability.

Keywords: Environmental theme, Children's Storybooks, Environmental Awareness.

Dedication

To my incredible mother, whose everlasting support, patience, and sacrifices have always motivated me to do my best and reach for the stars. My inspiration has always come from her courage and support.

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List of Acronyms

ECD	Early Childhood Development
IDI	In Depth Interview
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
NGO	Non-Government Organization

Chapter I

Introduction and Background

A book with stories or collection of stories written with children in mind is considered a children's storybook. Typically, these books feature narratives, illustrations, and topics that are intended for the young readers. Children's books come in all shapes and sizes. There is a wide range of books available for all ages, ranging from vibrant picture books with short storylines for young children, to more extensive chapter books filled with thrilling adventures for older children (Wellington, 2013).

Storybooks play a crucial role in nurturing young minds. Though in general it is considered as a source of entertainment, it is more than that. It's a form of conveying important lessons that will instill the foundation of future knowledge and behavior in children (Pulimeno et al., 2020). Acknowledging this, the integration of environmental themes into children's storybooks has drawn more attention than before. The term "environmental themes" covers a broad spectrum of concerns related to the environment such as pollution, sustainability, biodiversity, and the consequences of human actions on the environment. Parental publishers and writers' perceptions influence this integration largely since their understanding plays a crucial role in determining the extent to which environmental themes are included in children's storybooks. Here, perceptions refer to the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and views these groups hold regarding environmental themes depicted in story books.

Parents are the ones who choose storybooks for their children. Therefore, to assess the impact of including environmental themes in children's storybooks, first and foremost we need to understand the insights of parents because their perspective on environmental awareness will shape their children's reading choices and consequently, their understanding of environmental themes.

At the same time, publishers are accountable for instilling curiosity and imagination in young readers through reflective storytelling. These stories not only entertain but also create pathways to explore and encounter new knowledge and experiences for young readers. For the past few years, children's books are experiencing a significant change in crafting stories based on environmental themes.

The inclusion of environmental stories in children's books is greatly influenced by parents and publishers. But they come to life because of the writer. A writer who cares about the environment can create a story that goes beyond the facts. Their knowledge adds credible facts, and their passion makes the message feel genuine rather than like a lecture. Depending on their goal, the writer can adopt a hopeful tone or offer a call to action. As environmental issues might be difficult for young readers to understand, a competent writer can describe things in a way that children can understand. Perhaps writers will employ an imaginary universe to demonstrate the risks of pollution, or have characters struggle with deforestation. The goal is to connect with children rather than overwhelm them with facts. The narrative demonstrates to children the significance of protecting the environment by forging emotional bonds with it. Characters who contribute positively to the environment become role models for young readers, who are then motivated to do things like plant trees, cut down on waste, or just embrace the world around them (Medress, 2008).

The mid-20th century witnessed a rise in children's literature that incorporated environmental themes, especially in Australia and America. However, in spite of this early evolution such themes were still unusual in children's picture books until the 1960s. In 1977, a game-changing moment occurred with the Tbilisi Intergovernmental Conference, highlighting environmental education as a key tool in combating environmental degradation (Gonen & Guler). This facilitated extensive integration of environmental education in different educational settings.

Therefore, a wave of children's literature featuring environmental themes became evident in the late 1970s.

Rather than just being silent witnesses in environmental challenges, children can be empowered to take a proactive role in fostering changes. Swedish environmental activists are a perfect example for this. Her heartfelt call for climate action ignited a fire around the world, demanding action on climate change from world leaders. It's truly remarkable how at the young age of eight Greta Thunberg attained environmental awareness and her anxiety over the failure to address the issue fueled her activism (Watts, 2019).

The story of Greta Thunberg exemplifies, even a child's voice can ignite power and underscores the necessity of responding to environmental themes such as- climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollutants which are more pronounced than ever. So, we should continue to harness the power of storytelling to cultivate a generation of environmentally conscious individuals. Experts and activists are also urging for immediate actions to minimize the harm caused by human actions. Considering this backdrop, children's story books evolve as an effective tool for environmental education. The magic of storytelling can cultivate a sense of responsibility and compassion for nature (Watts, 2019).

It is evident that storybooks hold immense potential to shape young minds and foster a love for the environment. Besides, environmental literature has a long and rich history of storytelling to cultivate a deeper understanding and appreciation for the environment. Through skillfully crafted stories that illustrate how every living being is connected and how our actions impact that interconnection, these books can cultivate a generation of environmentally conscious individuals committed to safeguarding our planet by ensuring a sustainable future.

Statement of the Problem

Environmental education is instrumental in accelerating the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals agenda, especially in the case of Bangladesh. As a country Bangladesh is highly susceptible to environmental challenges because of its adverse weather conditions and extensive ecological hazards (Ahsan & Warner, 2014; Sharif and Uddin, 2023).

To address the forthcoming risks of climate change as well as the country's commitment to attain Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, we need to prioritize an inclusive environmental education. It is essential that we empower the next generation with this knowledge to foster a generation that is more environmentally aware. Environmental education evolves into a vital tool for achieving sustainable development in Bangladesh by promoting awareness and encouraging environmental friendly behavior.

Besides, the majority of the studies that have been conducted so far, largely focused on the benefits of children's literature and the impact of environmental education programs in formal settings. But the role of storybooks in cultivating experiential environmental learning outside the classroom settings has yet to be explored. This knowledge gap creates uncertainty regarding parent's understanding of the importance of integrating environmental themes in children's storybooks or what factors influence their decisions in choosing books for their children.

While the importance of environmental education is well acknowledged, a key area for further study is needed to understand parent's, publisher's and writer's attitudes regarding the inclusion of environmental themes in children's books. The market offers a wide variety of children's books, from classic tales to modern adventures. Yet a gap exists in understanding how often environmental themes emerged into these narratives and how they affect young readers.

A crucial area that necessitates further research is how parents influence their children's reading choices. Parents play a major role in shaping their children's literary experiences by

selecting the books they read. Analyzing parents' perceptions of environmental messages in children's storybooks can provide valuable understanding of consumer interest, selection criteria, and expected benefits as well as challenges of introducing environmental education in early years.

Likewise, publisher's viewpoints are very important to understand how the children's book market works and what variables affect decisions about book production and distribution. With an exquisite eye, publishers design the topography of children's literary world with the stories they choose to bring to life. Looking into the publisher's viewpoint can offer better understanding of opportunities, challenges, and motivations for producing and promoting children's storybooks that address environmental themes.

A similar gap exists when considering the writer's perspective on environmental themes. Much research has focused on the reception and impact of these themes, but less is known about the motivations and creative processes that lead writers to incorporate them into their work. Understanding the writer's viewpoint is crucial, as their passion, knowledge, and approach to environmental issues significantly influence the effectiveness of the message delivered in the storybook (Medress, 2008).

A significant lack of research exists regarding how people perceive, what they prefer, and what types of challenges arise when environmental themes are included in children's storybooks. Through a qualitative approach, this study aims to delve into these areas to bridge the gap. By conducting interviews, surveys, and thematic analysis, this study seeks to reveal the underlying factors motivating parental choices of storybooks with environmental themes and the factors impacting publisher's decisions to produce such books. Furthermore, the study will point out possible challenges encountered by each group. Eventually this study will empower educators, authors, publishers, and policymakers to craft children's books that's not only captivating but also instill knowledge and a sense of responsibility for the environment in young minds.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore various aspects of incorporating environmental themes in children's storybooks for ages 4-8. Its primary objective was to assess how parents perceive and understand environmental themes in children's storybooks, with the aim of understanding the effectiveness of current approaches in fostering early environmental awareness among young children. It also sought to understand how publishers and writers view the inclusion of environmental themes in storybooks to better comprehend the industry's attitudes and the possible hurdles for incorporating such themes.

The study also examined the educational and developmental benefits of environmental themes in children's storybooks aiming to understand their role in enhancing cognitive, emotional, and ethical development. Ultimately, the research aimed to find current gaps and obstacles hindering the successful incorporation of environmental education in children's storybooks. Through an in-depth analysis of these aspects, this study delved into how storybooks can be a powerful tool for raising environmentally conscious and responsible future generations.

Significance and Justification of the Study

During the early years of childhood, individuals develop attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns that endure throughout their lives. Integrating environmental education during this stage can effectively foster environmental awareness in children. In environmental education, the aim is to cultivate a sense of care and responsibility for the environment. It also fosters pro-environmental behaviors that contribute to a more sustainable future. Its primary emphasis is on individuals' capacity to develop a more comprehensive understanding that has a lasting impact on their attitudes, behavior and overall worldviews (Clayton & Myers, 2009). In this regard, Story books can be an effective tool to promote environmental education. Through the inclusion of environmental themes in storytelling, we can spark a child's curiosity, expand their

understanding of language, and empower them with knowledge to manage their emotions. Stories about the environment can ignite creativity, stimulate problem solving skills and forge a connection with the natural world, and enable a deeper understanding of complex ecological concepts in a clear and age- appropriate way. As environmental themes are becoming more pressing, children are constantly encountering discussions about climate change, pollution and destruction of habitat through various media platforms. While these topics are important to discuss, they can induce feelings of fear, anxiety, and helplessness among children. Children's books that thoughtfully address environmental themes with sensitivity and hope, can offer a comforting space for kids to process their emotions, voice their concerns, and develop coping skills for dealing with environmental challenges

Another powerful way to teach environmental responsibility is through leading by example. Children learn best by observing (Parvinder Kalra, 2022). When adults practice what they promote regarding sustainability, it makes the lesson more impactful and convincing. It is possible to greatly affect children's environmental attitudes and behaviors through consistently modeling sustainable practices and demonstrating enthusiasm for them. Children's perceptions, beliefs and behaviors are greatly influenced by their parents from a very early age. Offering parents resources and insights into selecting books that foster environmental awareness will help them play a more effective role as educators and raising more environmentally responsible individuals.

To incorporate environmental themes in story books and empower parents with proper information first we need to understand the market of children's books. Therefore, understanding publishers' and writer's viewpoints need to be analyzed thoroughly. The landscape of children's literature evolves in response to changing consumer preferences and emerging trends. Authors and publishers may acquire insight into potential growth opportunities and market demand for environmentally themed children's books by

understanding what parents look for and how they choose environmentally themed story books. Publishers and authors can create more engaging and commercially successful children's books that appeal to both children and parents by evaluating market gaps and unmet needs. Delving into the inspirations and challenges encountered by publishers in crafting children's books with environmental themes, this research can contribute to the development of a supportive system that motivates writers and publishers to utilize storytelling as a means to address environmental themes.

The integration of environmental themes into children's storybooks is a promising approach to foster environmental awareness. There are studies that acknowledge the role of storytelling in fostering environmental awareness in young children, yet there's a lack of actual data on parents' views regarding this integration. Recognizing what parents think and prefer can help in crafting strategies that effectively promote environmental education in an informal learning context.

Addressing this gap is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, by integrating environmental education within storybooks, this study will support the global objectives of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly goal 13, which focuses on climate action. It also aims to cultivate a generation that is more conscious and dedicated to environmental sustainability. This initiative aligns with Bangladesh's goal of meeting the SDGs by 2030, while responding to the environmental challenges of the country.

Furthermore, the research outcomes will support the formulation of environmental education policies and practices not only in Bangladesh but also in other parts of the world with similar context. Policymakers can prioritize the development and distribution of learning materials that enhance young children's environmental literacy by emphasizing the significance of integrating environmental themes in children's books. Also, the research findings will provide valuable insights that educators and publishers can use to produce engaging storybooks that

effectively address environmental themes in a manner suitable for their age group. Therefore, to achieve the successful integration of environmental themes into informal learning context, we must understand the perceptions of both parents and publishers.

Research Questions:

1. What level of understanding do parents, publishers, and writers have about environmental themes and how are the environmental themes relevant to children?
2. What are the motivations and challenges faced by parents, publishers, and authors to integrate environmental themes in children's storybooks?
3. How does a writer's personal environmental knowledge and beliefs influence their approach to integrating environmental themes in children's stories?
4. How do publishers incorporate environmental themes into children's storybooks without compromising commercial success?

Chapter II

Literature Review

Promoting environmental consciousness during early development is essential for cultivating a lasting sense of responsibility towards our planet. With reference to relevant literature, this part will delve deeper into the significance of environmental education in early childhood, the role of storybooks in shaping children's understanding of environmental themes, and the current state of the children's literature industry in Bangladesh.

ECD and Environmental Awareness:

Since children are more open to new ideas and habits than adults it is essential to equip them with environmental education (Medress, 2008). Also, being in nature during childhood is believed to instill a fondness for nature-based activities, leading towards fostering a sense of environmental responsibility later in life. Such early interaction with nature can positively affect a child's mental and physical health over time. As Piaget's constructivist theory proposes that individuals develop knowledge and create meaning through their personal experiences (Piaget, 1973).

Children can develop environmental behaviors from a very early age. Like they can be taught not to walk on flowers from the age of three. By four, they exhibit a protective attitude towards plants and animals. At five, they begin to understand the importance of plants and animals like- how plants give us food and clean air and how environmental threats such as- wildfires and pollutants harm these resources. When they reach the age of six, their behavior starts to reflect more environmentally friendly behavior and they exhibit compassion towards plants and animals (Gonen & Guler). Books play a crucial role in broadening children's understanding of the world by opening doors to discover diverse experiences, fascinating information, fueling

their curiosity and all in such ways that resonate with their interests and needs. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate environmental themes in children's story books to instill environmental awareness in children from an early age.

Importance of story books in shaping children's understanding of environmental themes:

Across varied cultures and settings, storytelling has been and still is a common tradition playing the role of a pathway to share experiences, customs, norms, and values, while entertaining and promoting new perspectives (Pulimeno et al., 2020). Children's literature serves as a cultural mirror, helping children to explore their identity and understand the role they can play in shaping the future.

Children's books on the environment often tend to be categorized into two groups: one that provides an overview of the natural world and the other group highlights the consequences of environmental damage. Introductory books offer fundamental knowledge about geological formations, various water bodies like- lakes, rivers, oceans etc. and their role in the environment. On the other hand, some books explore the vast array of animals, marine life, insects, and their characteristics. Also, there are specialized map books that offer in-depth insights about various plants and animals existing in diverse regions around the globe.

Unlike traditional methods heavily reliant on textbooks and tedious lectures, modern methods involve children in an active and participatory manner to foster awareness of environmental themes. By implementing this method, children are encouraged to think critically about how human actions affect the natural world. Storybooks have the ability to introduce complex themes like sustainability and social responsibility in a way that initiates future discussions and inspires a generation to prioritize environmental awareness.

Children's book industry of Bangladesh:

The landscape of children's books in Bangladesh is experiencing a remarkable change. Emerging publishers like "Ikri Mikri" and "Mayurpankhi" are crafting a new narrative in children's books that embrace Bengali culture and reflect the experiences of contemporary Bangladeshi children. A fresh wave of books is replacing older ones that relied heavily on translations or featured themes that no longer captivate younger readers.

These stories emphasize on crafting narratives that portray Bengali lifestyle and contemporary issues, such as environmental awareness and socio-emotional learning (Naher, 2022). Even so, the issue of affordability continues to be an obstacle. The high production cost associated with maintaining quality can make these books pricey, particularly for families with financial constraints.

Meanwhile, the publishing industry as a whole is experiencing a major crisis. Due to the global situation, especially Russia-Ukraine war has caused a surge in the prices of paper and printing materials. Publishers have been compelled to increase the price of their books by 25%, putting them out of reach for many middle-class families already burdened by increasing living expenses. This results in a substantial decrease in book sales, with some publishers witnessing a decline of 15-35% compared to 2022. The reduction is also evident in the decreased sales recorded at the Ekushey Book fair (Kamol & Halder, 2023).

Publishers are facing significant challenges and are struggling to stay in business. They are facing difficulties releasing new books, especially those with creative content, due to financial constraints. Even reprinting existing books is also becoming a challenge. This financial pressure is forcing them to reduce prints for the Ekushey Book Fair, while also limiting opportunities for new authors (Lipi, 2022).

Furthermore, a significant challenge is the scarcity of writers who can craft stories that resonate with the current generation of Bangladeshi children. According to critics, today's children's literature lacks depth and is unable to portray complexities faced by young readers (Naher, 2022).

Another domain that requires attention is the quality of books. A large number of books are afflicted with error and lack creativity (Naher, 2022). Despite these challenges the industry is actively working to produce children's books that meet global standards and can compete internationally.

From trees to tales: Eco-friendly practices in Children's Literature Production:

Children's book production has an exceptional opportunity to teach young readers about environmental concerns and encourage eco-friendly practices. In addition to setting an example for future generations, publishers can greatly lessen the environmental impact of the publishing industry by using recyclable materials. Adopting eco-friendly practices in book production not only addresses major environmental challenges, such as deforestation and carbon emissions, but also fosters a sense of environmental responsibility in children.

The traditional book publishing industry has an enormous environmental impact, largely due to the extensive use of paper and the associated carbon emissions. Every year, about 32 million trees are cut down in the United States alone for book production. With over 40 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emitted globally, book publishing ranks as the third-biggest industrial greenhouse gas emitter in the pulp and paper manufacturing industry. The harvesting of wood and reduction of biomass contribute to nearly 46% of the environmental impact of books. Furthermore, the inefficiency of the system is evident as more than 16,000 truckloads of unread books are discarded, while 10 million trees are cut down to produce books that are eventually destroyed (Talbot, 2023).

A possible approach could be encouraging environmentally friendly materials in local production. One way to do this is to support local paper mills that use recycled or sustainably sourced paper. Another way to lessen our impact on the environment and save money is to switch to more sustainable materials for book covers, such as bamboo paper or biodegradable materials. Supporting the use of sustainable materials in children's book production through government incentives can encourage this change and increase the availability of environmentally themed books for families.

However, there are several strategies to mitigate the environmental impact of the publishing industry. There are publishers and authors who have already taken steps in this regard, for instance, J.k. Rowling has insisted on printing her books using sustainable or recycled materials, thus reducing their environmental impact (Talbot, 2023). Similarly, a leading children's book publisher, Scholastic confronts unique challenges emerging from the need for vibrant, ink-intensive illustrations. Regardless of these difficulties, Scholastic remains committed to sourcing at least 60% of its paper from FSC certified sources. Additionally, the company has taken robust recycling initiatives within its warehouses, recycling 1328 tons of corrugated cardboard in 2021 alone (Talbot, 2023).

An excellent case of children's books fostering environmental awareness comes from the collaboration between "Waste Free Oceans" and "Teijin". They collaborated to create the world's first children's book entirely made from ocean-recovered plastic, titled "How Pippa Became the Queen of the Ocean" (Kaplan, 2019). This innovative book educates young readers about the danger of plastic pollution through its content and its eco-friendly material.

The Writers as Architect: Bridging the Gap Between Environmental Issues and Young Readers in Children's Literature:

The writer's perspective in a children's storybook plays a crucial role in raising a child's environmental awareness. It serves as a connection between complex environmental problems and the thoughts and emotions of young readers. This bridge is constructed using the writer's passion and expertise, but its durability relies on two essential components: sympathetic characters and a hint of humor.

According to Krailing, the connection between the reader and the protagonist is vital for a storybook to have widespread appeal. The protagonist develops a friendship and companionship while embarking on a voyage of exploration. Professor Chapman agrees with this viewpoint, emphasizing the significance of developing a "captivating" protagonist - somebody who youngsters can look up to and relate to (Chapman, 2008).

For young minds, environmental issues might seem intimidating. Here, the writer's point of view can incorporate humor- a crucial component that serves as a "safety valve", making difficult subjects like global warming more approachable and interesting (Saxby, 1989). A witty touch stimulates children's interest about their surroundings while letting them laugh and learn at the same time.

A well-written storybook lets a child's natural interest grow. The author can't make people care about the environment right away; it's a seed that needs to be cared for. The author plants the seed of environmental knowledge in the child by telling an interesting story with likable characters and a bit of humor. This seed will hopefully grow into a lifelong appreciation and responsibility for the world, fed by the child's imagination and the message of the story (Watson, 2008). Essentially, the writer's perspective serves as a bridge, reinforced by relatable characters and playful wit, that enables children to not only acquire knowledge about the environment but also to feel motivated to make a difference.

Chapter III

Methodology

Research Design/Approach:

This research employed a qualitative approach to delve into parents' and publisher's perceptions concerning the integration of environmental education within children's storybooks. Qualitative research is essential for understanding the core reasons behind human behavior and experiences. In contrast to quantitative approaches that rely on numbers and statistics, qualitative research explores the depths of perceptions, attitudes, and motivations. This rich data offers invaluable insights into how people interact with their surroundings, revealing emotions and complexities that numbers cannot express. A study, conducted by Acumen Fieldwork, highlights the usefulness of qualitative research in understanding “why consumers and those they might wish to target act in the way they do.” Because of this deeper understanding, more effective products, services, and social programs can be developed. Also, qualitative research can be extremely beneficial for finding out more about new and under-researched areas, which can lead to future quantitative studies.

Research Participants:

The study sample consisted of three groups in Dhaka city- parents, publishers and writers of children's books. Parental groups consisted of 2 mothers and 2 fathers who met the following inclusion criteria: 1) having children aged 4-8 years, and 2) residing in urban areas of Dhaka city. These parents offered insights into their perceptions of environmental themes in children's literature and their selection process for books. Secondly, 2 publishers who specialize in the publication of children's literature and with at least 1-5 years of experience in this field were recruited. They offered their thoughts on current trends, selection criteria, and publishing issues

pertaining to environmentally themed storybooks for young readers (ages 4 to 8) through In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). Thirdly, the study included 2 children's book writers with a minimum of 1-5 years of experience. These writers' perspectives were crucial for understanding the creative process behind incorporating environmental themes into children's stories for this age group. There were no restrictions based on age or gender for this group of 8 participants.

Research Site:

The study was conducted exclusively in Dhaka city. Dhaka faces challenges like pollution and limited green spaces, making environmental awareness particularly important for young children. Understanding parents' and publisher's perspectives on how storybooks can address these concerns helped inform strategies for promoting environmental education through storytelling in similar urban environments around the world.

Furthermore, Dhaka offers a wider variety of bookstores and publishing houses compared to rural areas. Exploring parents' choices within this diverse selection provided valuable insights into their preferences and decision-making processes when selecting children's books that integrate environmental themes. This knowledge can be beneficial for publishers in developing resources and promoting storybooks that resonate with parents and children in urban settings.

Participant Selection:

This study employed purposive sampling to recruit a group of 8 participants residing in Dhaka city. Four parents were selected who had children aged 4-8 years. Two publishers were also selected who are specialized in the publication of children's literature and with at least 1-5 years of experience in this field. In addition, two writers with a minimum of 1-5 years of experience were recruited for this study. While a seemingly small number, it was designed to achieve thematic saturation, where additional participants were unlikely to provide new insights.

Data Collection Procedure:

The primary method of data collection for this study was in-depth interviews. To ensure consistency and integrity throughout the IDIs, a comprehensive guideline was developed in collaboration with the supervisor. This guideline provided a structured series of questions that are designed to gather in-depth thoughts, experiences, and perspectives on the subject matter. It also included probing questions in order to seek clarification or delve deeper into intriguing topics that emerged during the conversation.

Before the interviews, all the participants were thoroughly briefed on the study goals in a clear and simple manner. After the briefing session, participants were asked for their informed consent to record the conversation, with a clear explanation provided regarding the purpose and storage of the recordings.

These interviews were conducted face-to-face. The duration of each IDIs was 45-60 minutes. During the IDIs, participants were encouraged to share their thoughts, experiences, and perspectives on the topic, with both open-ended and probing questions used to delve deeper into specific areas of interest. After each interview the audio recordings were then transcribed to identify patterns, themes, and key takeaways from the interviews.

Data Management and Analysis:

Content analysis served as the technique for data management and analysis. The process involved several steps:

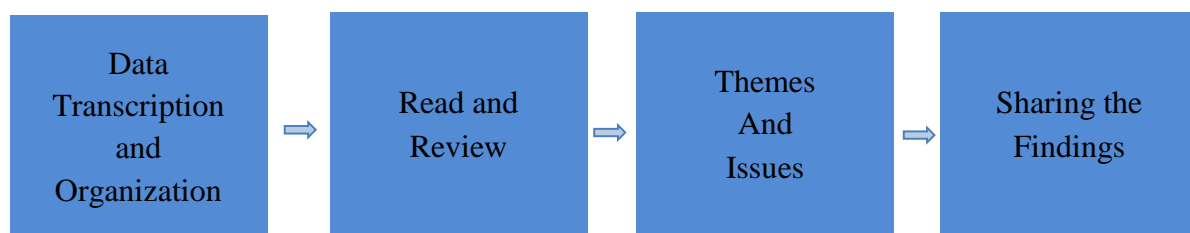


Figure 1: Data Management and Analysis Process

i) Data Transcription and Organization: Both recordings and field notes were utilized to organize and transcribe the data. The In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were conducted in Bengali. Initially, all spoken words were transcribed into written text, followed by a meticulous screening process for accuracy. Transcriptions were compiled into a single electronic file for storage.

ii) Read and Review: To grasp the themes present in the responses, the transcripts were read and reread thoroughly. This step was crucial for understanding the nuances and depth of the data

iii) Themes and issues: Throughout the review process, a thematic analysis was conducted to explore parental, writers and publishers' perception regarding the integration of environmental themes in children's storybooks. This involved identifying main themes and subthemes across data collection from fathers, mothers, writers, and publishers and as well as findings from in-depth interviews.

iv) Sharing the findings: it was imperative for researchers to remain neutral during in-depth interviews, avoiding the inclusion of personal biases. However, when it came to analyzing the data, researchers' point of view became valuable tools for uncovering the themes and subthemes. This approach fostered a more comprehensive interpretation of the data.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Tool:

The primary data collection tool for this study was the In-Depth Interview (IDI) guideline. Prior to its implementation, the initial draft of this guide was subjected to review by academic experts. Subsequently, incorporating the suggestions from the expert reviewers, the questionnaire was refined and standardized, serving as the definitive tool for conducting the IDIs. The guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to explore various aspects of

parents' and publisher's perceptions regarding the integration of environmental education in children's storybooks.

Ethical Issues:

Ethical considerations were taken from BRAC IED, BRAC University before conducting the study by the researcher. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they fully understand the purpose of the study, their role, and their rights as participants. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, with all data anonymized during transcription and analysis. Additionally, steps were taken to minimize potential harm or discomfort to participants, and the research adhered to ethical guidelines and standards set forth by relevant institutional review boards.

Limitations of the Study:

While this study provides valuable insights, there are some areas that limit the applicability of the findings. One of the major focuses of this study was parental perception which can be impacted by numerous factors like- educational background, socio-economic status and personal beliefs regarding environmental themes. This might result in biases and data variability. While the qualitative method offers detailed understanding, it might not encompass the diverse perspectives of a larger population, as this study is limited by its scope, focusing only on participants from Dhaka City. Considering the timeframe this research only focused on assessing immediate impacts, while longitudinal studies would be better suited for tracking developmental changes over time. Acknowledging these limitations underscores the need for careful interpretation of the findings and identifying opportunities for further research.

Chapter IV

Findings

The findings derived from the data collected through in-depth interviews (IDI) with parents, writers, and publishers reveal their perceptions regarding the integration of environmental themes in children's storybooks. The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach, leading to the emergence of various themes and subthemes. The chapter begins with a discussion of the demographic details of the participants. This is followed by the presentation of four main themes, each accompanied by relevant subthemes. The themes were categorized according to the research questions, and the data collection tools assisted the researcher in achieving the research objectives.

Participant's Demographic Information:

For this study, I conducted in-depth interviews with three groups of participants, summarized in this table. I interviewed a total of eight individuals, comprising four parents, two writers, and two publishers.

For the parents: I spoke with two mothers and two fathers, whose occupations ranged from business to private service and household management. Their ages varied from 30 to 45 years, and most held a Master's degree. All of these parents reside in Dhaka.

For the writers: They were aged between 35 and 50 years, with five to ten years of experience in children's literature.

For the publishers: They were aged between 45 and 55 years old, and they also had between five and fifteen years of experience in publishing children's books.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants

Study Tools	Category	Total Participant	Age Range	Education (maximum)	Living Area	Details
IDI	Parents	4	30-45	Masters	Dhaka	Mothers: 2
						Occupation: Housewife, Service Holder
						Fathers: 2
						Occupation: Business, Private Service Holder
	Writers	2	35-50	Masters	Dhaka	Experience: 5-10
Publishers	2	45-55	Masters	Dhaka	Experience: 5-15	

Theme 1: Understanding of Environmental Themes Among Parents, Writers, and Publishers and Their Relevance to Children

Sub Theme-1: Perceptions regarding Environmental Themes

The responses from parents reflect a diverse but interconnected set of beliefs, they perceive environmental themes as encompassing eco-friendliness, cleanliness, and the natural elements that surround their children. For one parent, environmental themes are integrated with everyday acts that children may easily notice and imitate. She believes that environmental consciousness begins with basic, practical acts such as nurturing pets or maintaining cleanliness in public areas. She stated, *“For me, environmental awareness is demonstrated when my child tends to the tree, pets the dog or cat, or refrains from trashing the street”* (IDI:4, August 24, 2024).

Another parent presents a more comprehensive view of environmental concerns, connecting them to overarching ideals of sustainability and wellness. He conveys concerns regarding the quality of food his child ingests and the surrounding environment, stating, *“By environmental theme, I refer primarily to eco-friendliness. I endeavor to provide my infant with less processed food. Food that is delivered directly from the farm to the consumer without undergoing factory processing is authentic food in my view”* (IDI:5, August 24, 2024). His viewpoint transcends the natural realm to incorporate elements of personal health and wellness, arguing that the environment also incorporates food quality and the availability of green areas. He highlights a clear distinction between rural and urban upbringing, reminiscing about his own childhood: *“I myself grew up in the village. I have observed that urban residents experience illness more frequently than rural inhabitants”* (IDI:5, August 24, 2024). He contends that the fresh air, plentiful greenery, and immersion in nature that characterized his upbringing substantially enhanced his health and resilience, qualities he aspires to impart to his child through similar experiences and teachings in sustainable living.

One parent recommends narratives for urban children that instill environmental respect through familiar, daily behaviors, such as refraining from tearing leaves and disposing of waste in designated bins. She asserts, *“If the children can be instilled with the notion from childhood that disposing of waste is unnecessary, this habit will continue into adulthood”* (IDI:7, August 25, 2024). She contends that these minor, intentional actions, supported by storytelling and parental guidance, can progressively cultivate a child's environmental consciousness.

Another perspective comes from a parent who nostalgically recalls about the natural landscapes of his young age, which are mostly gone in places like Dhaka because of urbanization. His perspective on environmental themes is both comprehensive and profoundly rooted in the natural world. *“The initial images that come to mind when I hear the term “environment” or*

"environment theme" are vastness, water, mountains, sky, and green" (IDI:8, August 26, 2024) he reflects. He is particularly worried about the disappearance of natural places in modern urban environments and how it affects children. *"There aren't enough trees and playgrounds in this city" (IDI:8, August 26, 2024)*. he laments, noting that the current generation lacks the lush greenery and open places that were once commonplace.

Publishers emphasize that environmental themes in children's storybooks are not just about storytelling; they aim to instill a holistic worldview in children. One publisher notes that *"environmental themes should be presented in an age-appropriate manner, allowing children to connect with their immediate surroundings and fostering a sense of kindness towards the environment" (IDI:2, August 23, 2024)*. While the other publisher approached the definition of environmental themes through the lens of activism and criticized the lack of child-friendly materials in Bangladesh. He articulated, *"Environmental themes stem from environmental awareness, but we are not environmentally conscious" (IDI:3, August 24, 2024)*. This perspective highlights systemic issues within the publishing industry, pointing out that, *"the paper and ink used for printing are not safe for children—they are harmful" (IDI:3, August 24, 2024)* which highlights a critical disconnect between the ideals of environmental education and the practical realities of publishing.

Sub Theme-2: Importance of Environmental theme in children's storybooks and its relevance to children

All the parents see storybooks as a powerful medium for conveying these values, envisioning narratives that go beyond mere depictions of natural beauty. They advocate for stories that integrate lessons about cleanliness, healthy living, and community involvement. For example, one parent suggests that children's books could include stories like, *"Ahan (pseudonym) went for a walk with his father to the seashore. He goes there and sees that there is a lot of dirt on*

the beach. He asks his father why there is so much dirt here. Dad said that littering like this is not good. Then they started cleaning the beach together. After cleaning the beach, dad takes Ahan (pseudonym) to eat ice cream as a reward for a good job” (IDI:5, August 24, 2024). Such narratives, he believes, would make environmental responsibility relatable and rewarding for children.

Few parents also underscore the importance of their own behavior in teaching these values, noting that children are keen observers who often mimic adult actions. As one parent put it, *“If parents are environmentally conscious, children will learn it too. Children mostly mimic what they see in their parents” (IDI:7, August 25, 2024).*

All the writers acknowledge the significant importance of environmental themes in children's literature. A writer recalls a childhood memory of a picture book enriched with illustrations of animals and beautiful landscapes, which profoundly influenced her journey as a writer. Reflecting on her childhood experiences, she stated, *“I think it is very important to include the environmental theme in children's storybooks. Because children love to listen to stories, and they learn a lot through stories and remember them for life” (IDI:6, August 25, 2024).* Children are captivated by stories, which facilitate significant learning and long-lasting retention. The author asserts that storybooks possess the capacity to influence a child's perspective, educating them about their environment through captivating plots and vibrant visuals. By incorporating environmental themes into narratives, writers can motivate children to nurture the environment in a manner that appears natural and instinctive, rather than didactic or forced.

One writer emphasized the necessity for children to form a natural bond with books prior to the introduction of any themes, including environmental issues. *“It is important to engage the children with the book before the environment is introduced; the theme comes later” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024)* she asserted. She emphasized that children must not perceive themselves as

recipients of instruction but should rather be subtly guided through narratives that foster a sense of concern for their environment. She believes that storytelling should be as organic and engaging as language acquisition, without the kid perceiving it as instruction. *“The association with the book must be gradual to prevent him from recognizing that ‘Oh, you’re teaching me!’”* (IDI:1, August 22, 2024) she states. Her methodology integrates environmental themes naturally into storytelling, avoiding direct instruction, as she contends that such an approach may provoke resistance or a feeling of compulsion.

This writer further addresses the difficulty of balancing inspiration with market need in the creation of stories featuring environmental themes. She analyzes the creative process, asserting, *“If I think that I have to write about the environment because now there is a demand for it in the market, it is not possible to actually write it just by thinking about it”* (IDI:1, August 22, 2024). The motivation for a story should stem from authentic concern and emotion, rather than external influences. She asserts that this sincerity is essential for preventing the emergence of 'eco phobia' while effectively communicating the urgency of environmental concerns. Her goal is to motivate children to envision a better world and understand their responsibility in executing it. *“Children’s greatest wealth is dreams. Without dreams, the world will be destroyed. Dreamless people are actually dead. So our job is to weave dreams into it”* (IDI:1, August 22, 2024).

Both publishers expressed the urgency of cultivating a connection with nature among children. One publisher expresses concern about the ongoing destruction of biodiversity and stresses the critical need for environmental restoration. He says, *“when we cut down trees and use harmful fertilizers to assert our dominance, we disrupt the delicate balance of biodiversity. Unfortunately, this is happening worldwide: trees are being destroyed, soil is being degraded, and air is being polluted”* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). By introducing these themes early on,

children can develop a profound respect for all forms of life, ultimately contributing to a more humane and balanced world. He states, *“Early exposure to environmental themes can have a lasting impact. If children grow up with these values embedded in their lives and culture, they can help make the world a more beautiful place”* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). The publisher also highlights the importance of practical, hands-on learning experiences by recalling his own childhood memories, *“we would spend hours watching grasshoppers, learning about the many types and colors they come in. This kind of experiential learning fosters a sense of empathy and respect. When children learn about nature in this way, they are less likely to harm animals or cut down trees—they become compassionate individuals. If they grow up with this mindset, they will be less likely to harm the world as adults”* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). Conversely, the other publisher lamented the loss of rooftop and balcony gardens in urban environments, noting, *“Now, out of fifty houses, you might find only two or three with any plants”* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024). This disconnection from nature, he argued, is reflected in children’s literature, which often fails to engage young readers with the beauty and importance of the natural world. He emphasized that children's literature should evoke feelings of belonging and connection to the environment, a sentiment that resonates deeply in the context of modern, technology-driven lifestyles that often isolate children from nature.

Theme 2: Integrating Environmental Themes in Children’s Storybooks: Motivations, Challenges, and Approaches

Sub Theme-1: Parental Preferences and Approaches Towards Environmental Themed Storybooks for Children

Despite their differences, all of the parents wanted to teach their children about the importance of protecting the environment. One parent underscored the need for practical learning that is relevant to daily events. She states, *“I’m looking for children’s books that teach practical*

environmental lessons, like- understanding how throwing litter in the street leads to blocked drains, which causes waterlogging, and how that, in turn, can contribute to the spread of dengue" The urge for practical learning is echoed by another parent, who articulates a preference for simple narratives that effectively communicate environmental themes in a captivating manner.

Another parent shared a similar view, stressing the significance of teaching children to appreciate and respect the natural world. A long-term perspective on environmental protection holds that teaching children to be kind to the natural world will produce environmentally conscious adults. According to him, *"Children should know, understand, and love nature. When that love for nature takes root within them, it nurtures a gentle heart—teaching them how to care for birds, animals, trees, and water"* (IDI:8, August 26, 2024).

A major obstacle encountered by parents in finding environmentally oriented storybooks is the scarcity of resources, as well as the absence of publishers and authors specializing in these topics. A parent noted that, *"there are no dedicated publishers focusing on cleanliness or environmental themes. There is also a need for more writers to create stories on these important topics"* (IDI:5, August 24, 2024).

Some parents expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of existing children's literature, observing that certain books feature content that is more appropriate for adults, thereby failing to effectively engage young readers. According to one parent, *"I have concerns about some children's books that present content more suited to adults. Personally, I prefer stories that are simple yet meaningful, like "City Rat, Village Rat"* (IDI:4, August 24, 2024).

Another great difficulty is children's overall lack of interest in reading. A few parents said that their children exhibit little interest in storybooks, therefore impeding efforts to teach environmental values through books. Children are more likely to interact with screens than

with books due to the rise of digital media and sedentary lifestyles; so, it is crucial to come up with creative ideas to grab their interest. He elaborates, *“Neither of my kids show much interest in storybooks. They read very little. They are more prone to watch cartoons on mobile or tablet”* (IDI:8, August 26, 2024).

Parents articulated distinct preferences for the content and format of children's storybooks. One parent exclusively employs classics from her childhood, including the "Shishumahl" series and "Ishoper Golpo," to impart valuable lessons to her child. She advocates for the significance of introducing children to literature that has historically been significant, indicating a combination of relevance and nostalgia in her approach. She says, *“I try to pass on the books I read during my childhood to my children”* (IDI:4, August 24, 2024).

Few parents highlight the importance of the publisher. By investigating publishers' key areas, they hope to verify that the books chosen are consistent with their environmental values. One parent asserts, *“When buying children's books, my top priority is the publisher. I find that some children's books on the market contain controversial content, and only a few publishers are responsible for such releases. Therefore, I place great importance on the publisher”* (IDI:5, August 24, 2024). They also appreciate the use of simple language and colorful illustrations in storybooks, knowing that attractive visuals may effectively hold children's attention.

Few parents, despite their children's little interest in reading, stay dedicated to provide opportunities for exploration. A parent observes that although his children do not actively pursue storybooks, he promotes visits to bookstores and book fairs, allowing them to select their reading material. He clarified, *“I never push them to buy or read specific books; they choose what they want on their own”* (IDI:8, August 26, 2024).

Sub theme-2: The Motivations and Challenges of Writing Environmental Stories for Children

The very personal reasons behind writers integrating environmental topics in children's books are based on their belief that stories have the transforming potential to influence young minds. Although the methods and inspirations of the Writers differ slightly, they all regard children as a crucial audience for environmental messages. One writer, in particular, highlights the necessity of teaching children about nature at a young age, as this knowledge will serve as the foundation for a sustainable future. She claims that without a childhood understanding and regard for the environment, future generations will be unable to nurture and safeguard it. In her words, *“Children need to understand the environment because, without that awareness, they won't be able to care for it in the future. Without this connection, our world may lose the chance to sustain a nature-friendly environment”* (IDI:6, August 25, 2024). Her primary motivation is to build a deep bond between children and nature, ensuring that they develop an innate regard for the environment.

Similar feelings are expressed by another writer, who emphasizes the seriousness of the situation since she thinks that children are the only remaining group that is receptive to change and learning. Children are still in a developmental period where they can take in new information and act upon it, while adults, in her opinion, *“are neither open to learning nor willing to change”* (IDI:1, August 22, 2024). This author regards children as “infinite possibilities,” with the potential to alter not only their own lives but also the lives of their entire families. Her motivation for composing stories that are environmentally themed is rooted in the notion that children have the potential to be agents of change, capable of influencing family habits and mindsets. She explains, *“When I write, I don't see it as just telling a story; I view it*

as sharing my feelings with that child, forming a genuine connection” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024) hoping that they will, in turn, adopt a similar connection.

Both writers employ a flexible approach when it comes to selecting specific environmental issues to focus on. According to one writer, *“I do not concentrate on any particular one. I believe that each of them is equally significant” (IDI:6, August 25, 2024)*. Her primary objective is to incorporate themes that are relevant to her current circumstances, such as the significance of preserving a harmonious natural environment or the effects of climate change. In contrast, the other writer allows her stories to develop naturally, as she asserts, *“Sometimes even a word inspires me to write” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024)* rather than a premeditated theme. For both authors, the integration of environmental themes is mostly a reaction to their surroundings rather than a conscious effort to advocate for certain issues, as they translate their observations and emotions into their stories.

When it comes to research, both writers believe that certain stories develop organically from their imagination and that not every story requires extensive research. They do admit, though, that *“there are times when I need to fact-check certain details. In those cases, I may turn to the internet for basic information, consult an expert, or read a relevant book” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024)*.

The challenges encountered by the writers in the process of publishing their work are different. Publishers are frequently reluctant to accept stories that are environmentally themed, as they may not recognize the commercial potential, according to one writer. She also notes that, *“In general, with children’s books, publishers tend to focus on authors who are already popular. Writers who are less famous but have invested a lot of time and research into their work often struggle to get noticed” (IDI:6, August 25, 2024)*. The other author spoke about a more positive experience, stating, *“The publishers who have released my book have done so with great*

enthusiasm, and for that, I am truly grateful. The vision I had while writing the book and the vision the publishers had while bringing it to life aligned perfectly” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024).

Although she recognizes the difficulties posed by outside forces such as the COVID-19 outbreak, she is still hopeful about the direction environmental-themed children's books may take.

Sub theme-3: From Manuscript to Market: The Publisher's Journey with Environmental Themes

Publishers are motivated by a profound sense of responsibility to cultivate environmentally conscious future generations by incorporating environmental themes into children's storybooks. Although their approaches and perspectives differ, both Publishers demonstrate motivations that are rooted in societal well-being. One publisher underscores the significance of cultivating children who are environmentally conscious, socially aware, and empathetic. The primary objective is to cultivate a mindset in which children develop a sense of connection to the world around them, rather than living in isolation. One publisher claims that, *“when someone is focused solely on their own happiness, they may be inclined to act solely for their own pleasure, without considering the impact on others. But if they grow up being mindful of everything and everyone around them, they will consider the well-being of others before making decisions” (IDI:2, August 23, 2024).* The publisher anticipates a society in which children cultivate a harmony between individual happiness and communal welfare, with environmental issues regarded as essential instruments in fostering this perspective.

Another publisher is committed to cultivating a reading culture among children by providing high-quality, locally produced books that may compete with the prevalence of global imports. Although environmental topics are not the primary emphasis, they are thoughtfully included into the overarching objective of producing "complete" books—those that are visually striking,

well-crafted, and accessible through simple, child-friendly language. Nonetheless, obstacles remain, such as a poor reading culture and intense competition from foreign, cartoon-oriented literature. Despite these challenges, the publisher emphasizes the significance of introducing children to environmental concerns via captivating native content. They acknowledge, *"Unfortunately, we lack a conducive environment for nurturing young readers. From the production stage itself, we struggle to provide quality books for children. The market is saturated with foreign books, which come at a high cost"* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

Promoting and producing books with an environmental theme presents great difficulties for both the publishers. The difficulty of developing a reading habit among children is one of the main problems, which gets worse by the modern family's excessive emphasis on academic performance and fierce rivalry from foreign, cartoon-based publications. One publisher notes, *"Today's parents are not particularly interested in buying books for their children, as they prioritize academic success above all else. This makes it a significant challenge to foster a reading habit"* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). He adds, *"We do have some books that focus on environmental themes. However, these books do not sell well. Instead, books featuring characters like Spiderman, or those based on foreign cartoons and movies, tend to be more popular because children are exposed to them from a young age"* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024).

Environmental or not, another publisher sees a distinct set of problems, the most pressing of which is the lack of skilled writers and illustrators who can create high-quality children's books. He points out, *"In Bengali children's literature, many authors believe that stories for children must meet traditional literary standards. While juvenile literature can focus on literary merit, stories aimed at children under the age of eight must use simple and fluent language to encourage imaginative thinking. As writers, we must ensure that our stories allow children to expand their imagination after reading"* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

Both publishers are committed to their goal of incorporating environmental themes into children's storybooks, despite the obstacles they face. A publisher has taken their efforts a step further and started a monthly magazine where children can participate in environmental activities like drawing for Environment Day. Furthermore, they have implemented reading programs in approximately 120 schools and contributed books to various libraries.

Theme 3: Market Trends and Digital Platforms: Shaping the Future of Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks

Sub Theme-1: The Narrative Challenge: Crafting Environmental Tales for Diverse Audiences

Publishers in Bangladesh possess a distinctive viewpoint about the incorporation of environmental themes into children's literature, influenced by their experiences within the local market. A notable aspect is the difficulty of genre-specific storytelling. Both publishers recognized the challenges associated with producing books across different genres, particularly those focused on environmental issues. A publisher said that despite a desire to explore many genres and storytelling approaches, financial limitations frequently hinder such endeavors. The company's limited size constrains its capacity for experimentation, despite its ambitious intentions to create age-appropriate stories for children that presents comprehensive concepts across diverse topics, including environmental issues. He highlighted a significant gap in Bangladesh's educational system regarding age-appropriate literature. He states, *"I don't believe the education system in Bangladesh is conducive to producing age-specific books. A Class III student in a government school and one in a private school, despite being the same age, have vastly different vocabularies. As a result, their reading speeds also differ"* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). Additionally, he mentioned that many writers are resistant to receive comments on their writing abilities and lack the technical expertise necessary to write for

various age groups. To quote him, *"There are many talented authors, but they might not know the nuances of writing for children. Being a good storyteller with a strong vocabulary is one thing, but writing for children requires a clear understanding of the appropriate age group"* (IDI:2, August 23, 2024). As a result, only a few books have been developed that could align with children's developmental stages in terms of learning and imagination.

Conversely, another publisher sees the necessity for systemic change—especially in the field of education—which he considers as the "biggest obstacle". As he says, *"Our schooling system consists of about six or seven different types of education. Some children attend madrasas, others are in English medium schools, while some study in English or Bengali versions. This multitude of schooling systems reflects the fragmentation of our nation, making it difficult to fully understand the problems we face"* He believes, *"If we cannot move past this tendency toward exclusion and unite all children, we will not be able to solve these pressing problems"* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024). In order to resolve these concerns, they are endeavoring to bring back and reintroduce old literature in a modern setting that is relevant to the children of today. Nevertheless, he underscores the state's critical role, asserting, *"The division within our state hampers our progress, and without the state's involvement, overcoming these challenges will be difficult"* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

Sub Theme-2: Screen Time VS Story Time: Understanding the Impact of Digital Media on Children's Reading Habits and Strategies to Overcome It

Both the publishers emphasized the shift in children's interaction with digital media. Children today have greater access to interactive games and virtual worlds where they can build their own stories and plotlines. One publisher proposes that, "the imaginative worlds children explore in games should be reflected in literature." He additionally asserts, *"As a publisher and writer, I believe that we have inadvertently distanced ourselves from children. To bridge this*

gap, we must first understand them, get to know their thoughts, and become familiar with the things that fill their daily lives. Only then can we create literature that truly speaks to them. There is no alternative to this approach” (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

The publishers additionally addressed how children and their parents respond to environmental issues. A publisher made the observation that some parents take a strong interest in encouraging their children to read and are passionate about books that include environmental themes. He states, *“They own the complete collection of our publications and consistently keep up with our latest releases. They even recommend our books to family and friends, encouraging them to purchase as well” (IDI:2, August 23, 2024).* However, another publisher emphasized that the responsibility should not be limited to government plans or incentives, but should also be shared by parents. He suggests, *“Parents need to take responsibility for integrating books into the home environment. They should ensure that books are a part of everyday life” (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).* Then again he believes *“children should be the ones to select their own books, rather than parents making the choice for them. When children have the opportunity to choose, they are more likely to engage with and enjoy the books” (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).*

Sub Theme-3: Measuring Success and the Rising Demand for Environmental-Themed Children's Story Books

One area where the publishers differ is in how they measure success. One publisher defines success by examining the influence of a book on a child's emotions and thoughts. He makes an explanation *“if a child reads a story about birds suffering because trees are being cut down and this story leaves a lasting impression on them, I consider that a financial success” (IDI:2, August 23, 2024).* Meanwhile, another publisher focuses more on brand image and long-term responsibility, viewing their involvement in children's literature as part of a bigger strategy, not merely motivated by quick sales, as he explains. *“Having been in the publishing industry for a*

long time, we approach children's literature with a sense of responsibility and a commitment to our brand image” (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

The writers provide a nuanced view of integrating environmental themes into children's literature. One writer noted a significant increase in demand for children's books with environmental themes in recent years. She states *“The demand for such books seems to be increasing nowadays, as parents are generally more educated. This may not have been the case five years ago, but today, many parents actively seek out these kinds of books for their children” (IDI:6, August 25, 2024).* She emphasizes that this transition has caused publishers to reevaluate their approach to these issues and underscores that writers have responsibility for crafting compelling, impactful stories that resonate with both children and adults.

Furthermore, both writers talked about the contemporary cultural environment of reading in Bangladesh. They noted that the market need for environmental stories is still in its early phases, with just a small group of people, primarily those who are already environmentally conscious, seeing the need for such stories. A writer expressed the concern that the familial and educational systems in Bangladesh do not prioritize reading or environmental awareness, which makes it challenging to cultivate a more extensive market for these stories. Just as she states, *“Not even 1 percent of schools can be found now who are promoting story books. There is no story book in the syllabus” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024).* She believes that without this cultural transformation, demand for such books may remain static.

Regarding future trends, both writers expressed optimism while displaying caution. One writer thinks the market for these books will expand as more parents realize how important it is to expose their children to environmental issues. They also underlined the need for careful and deliberate consideration when including environmental topics. Writers should be committed to these themes and write from a place of sincere conviction and passion. According to one writer,

“What I am writing is what I believe in my heart, live it myself, and hold it within myself. When one writes from this position, one's writing will touch others” (IDI:1, August 22, 2024). She feels that children's literature in Bangladesh will only progress by incorporating more environmental narratives that can motivate the next generation through this level of commitment.

Theme 4: Promoting Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks

Sub Theme-1: Effectiveness of incorporating environmental themes in Children's Storybook

One publisher underscores the significance of narrative techniques in evaluating the efficacy of books that promote environmental awareness. He is of the opinion that the manner in which a story is presented, particularly its alignment with the cognitive and emotional development of the child, is crucial for ensuring that young readers can comprehend the environmental concepts being discussed. He asserts, *“A story can be told in many ways, but its effectiveness depends on how it is conveyed. The simplicity of the storytelling, tailored to the child's age and other relevant factors, can significantly impact its effectiveness” (IDI:2, August 23, 2024).* He stresses the need of making complicated environmental issues understandable to children by making them simple, clear, and relevant.

On the other hand, aside from the obvious issue of efficacy, another publisher draws attention to a deeper structural and cultural component of book publication. To quote him, *“More important than the effectiveness of such books is the fact that there are currently no viable alternatives” (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).* He emphasizes that children's books should be companions for the child, incorporated into daily life, rather than simply educational instruments. Children are more likely to receive environmental messages if they are raised in a reading culture in which books are treasured and frequently interacted with. The publisher

speaks of personal experiences, *“My baby adores books with cute toy elements, often keeping a favorite book close even while sleeping. He enjoys waking up and turning the pages again, despite the book not being age-appropriate. I believe a book is an entity, an independent character, and this feeling must be nurtured in the child”* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024). Furthermore, he contends that publishers and government incentives alone cannot drive cultural change in book reading; rather, it is the responsibility of parents to foster a home atmosphere that is favorable to reading.

Sub Theme-2: Empowering Writers to Produce Effective Environmental-themed Children’s Books

One writer emphasizes the pivotal role of publishers in supporting writers. She acknowledges that *“A writer may struggle to complete their work, only to face the challenge of finding a publisher. If no publisher is willing to take on the book, the writer might be forced to self-publish. After self-publishing, they may find it difficult to navigate promotion and sales, which underscores how much writers depend on the support of publishers”* (IDI:6, August 25, 2024). Therefore, this writer calls for more encouragement and financial investment from publishers. The implication is clear: for environmental themes to be integrated effectively into children’s literature, publishers need to provide not only the platform for these works but also the resources for promotion and distribution. Without this support, even the best-written books may languish in obscurity.

Another publisher provided a different perspective, focusing more on the broader challenges facing the publishing industry in Bangladesh. He explained, *“Currently, there is not a strong culture of reading books, and guardians often do not purchase books with much consideration”* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024). Additionally, children are increasingly drawn toward digital devices, and there is a noticeable preference for books featuring familiar cartoon characters. These

trends make it hard for books with an environment theme to compete for attention. According to him, *“Commercial success also heavily relies on hype; for instance, there is a growing demand for religious books, while also some foreign comic books and cartoon-themed books have achieved significant popularity”* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024). Environmental themes, by contrast, struggle to capture the same level of interest. He emphasized that for children's books to thrive, particularly those with important educational content, a culture of reading must first be cultivated. Furthermore, he highlighted the financial constraints that local publishers face. He states, *“Another major obstacle is the lack of funds, as substantial investment is required to compete with foreign publications”* (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

Discussion

This section presents an in-depth analysis of the findings from the research, structured under the themes and sub-themes identified during data collection. It integrates the insights drawn from the literature review with the responses from parents, writers, and publishers to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in promoting environmental awareness through children's literature in Bangladesh.

Theme 1: Understanding of Environmental Themes Among Parents, Writers, and Publishers and Their Relevance to Children

The diverse perceptions of environmental themes among parents, writers, and publishers in this study reveal the complexity of integrating such themes into children's story books. Parents, in particular, offer a wide array of perspectives, linking environmental themes to everyday life, health, sustainability, and personal well-being. This indicates that environmental consciousness is deeply personal and often based on one's lived experiences. For example, the parent who associates environmental awareness with simple, everyday acts such as pet care and cleanliness (IDI:4, August 24, 2024) underscores how these small, observable actions can profoundly shape children's understanding of the environment. This practical approach supports Gonen and Guler's (2008) view that children develop environmental behaviors from a young age through simple, observable actions. By involving children in activities like tending to plants or cleaning their environment, parents help cultivate a sense of responsibility toward nature.

Writers and publishers, on the other hand, offer more structured views on the presentation of environmental themes in children's story books. The necessity to introduce environmental themes subtly, avoiding a didactic approach, is a key insight. Writers argue that children should not feel they are being taught, but rather be guided naturally through engaging stories (IDI:1,

August 22, 2024). This perspective aligns with pedagogical theories of constructivism, which emphasize that children learn best through experiences that allow them to actively construct meaning, rather than being passive recipients of information (Piaget, 1973).

Publishers echo these sentiments, but their concerns extend to broader, systemic issues within the publishing industry, such as the materials used in book production. The criticism of using harmful ink and paper (IDI:3, August 24, 2024) reveals a disconnect between the ideals of environmental consciousness and the realities of publishing, highlighting a critical area where industry practices need to align with the environmental values promoted in children's books. This demonstrates that environmental themes in children's storybooks are not merely about content but also about the ethical standards of the industry itself.

The unanimous agreement among parents, writers, and publishers on the importance of environmental themes in children's storybooks reinforces the value of early education in shaping environmental attitudes. Parents particularly view storybooks as powerful tools to embed values like cleanliness, responsibility, and community participation in children's everyday lives. The suggested narrative of a child cleaning a beach with his father (IDI:5, August 24, 2024) is an excellent example of how such themes can be made relatable and enjoyable for children. This approach supports the findings of Gonen and Guler (2008), who found that children begin to develop protective attitudes towards the environment as early as four years old.

The writers, too, emphasize the long-lasting impact of stories on children's memories and attitudes. By integrating environmental themes into engaging narratives, writers can motivate children to care for the environment in a way that feels natural and instinctive. This aligns with Saxby's (1989) argument that humor and emotion in storytelling can make challenging topics, such as climate change or pollution, more approachable for young readers. However, they also

stress the importance of not overwhelming children with direct instruction, warning against the development of 'eco-phobia'—a fear of environmental crises that may arise from overly alarming or prescriptive messages. Instead, they advocate for fostering a sense of wonder and connection with nature through storytelling that inspires children to dream of a better world (IDI:1, August 22, 2024).

Publishers' contributions to the discussion further underscore the long-term impact of early exposure to environmental themes. The emphasis on hands-on learning and experiential engagement with nature (IDI:2, August 23, 2024) highlights the importance of not just reading about the environment but experiencing it. This reflects the findings of Medress (2008), who stressed the importance of teaching children to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors through practical, real-world applications. One publisher's nostalgic reference to observing grasshoppers as a child (IDI:2, August 23, 2024) serves as a powerful reminder that direct interaction with nature can leave lasting impressions on children, fostering empathy and respect for the natural world. This concern is particularly relevant in urban contexts where children are increasingly disconnected from nature, as pointed out by another publisher who laments the lack of green spaces in modern cities (IDI:3, August 24, 2024).

Theme 2: Integrating Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks: Motivations, Challenges, and Approaches

The findings reveal that parents recognize the importance of teaching their children about environmental protection, and many emphasize practical learning that is applicable to daily life. For instance, parents want books to demonstrate real-life consequences, such as how littering contributes to waterlogging and health hazards. This reflects a parental preference for storybooks that not only engage but also equip children with knowledge they can apply in their everyday surroundings.

However, a significant challenge for parents is the scarcity of resources that focus on environmental topics (*IDI:5, August 24, 2024*). This shortage highlights the gap in the availability of storybooks with environmental themes in the market. Additionally, some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality and age-appropriateness of available materials, indicating a preference for simple, meaningful narratives—suggesting a potential disconnect between what publishers are producing and what parents desire for their children.

Another recurring theme is the difficulty of engaging children with storybooks, as many children are more attracted to screens than to reading (*IDI:8, August 26, 2024*), which limits parents' ability to teach environmental values through story books. This challenge calls for creative solutions, such as combining digital media with books, to captivate children's interest in reading.

For writers, the motivation to include environmental themes in children's stories stems from a deep belief in the transformative power of storybooks. Writers view children as key to shaping future generations, as they are open to learning and change, unlike many adults (*IDI:1, August 22, 2024*). This perspective aligns with the general understanding that children can act as catalysts for behavioral change in families, particularly when they form early bonds with nature.

However, writers face several challenges, including publishers' reluctance to embrace environmental stories due to perceived limited commercial appeal. This is compounded by the tendency of publishers to favor well-known authors, making it difficult for less established writers to gain visibility, even when they have invested significant time and effort into crafting meaningful, research-based content (*IDI:6, August 25, 2024*).

The writers' approach to environmental themes is often fluid, with some responding to current events and others drawing inspiration from everyday observations. While they do conduct

research when necessary, they rely heavily on their personal experiences and surroundings to shape their stories. This indicates that while environmental themes are important, they are often approached from a personal, emotional connection to nature rather than a purely academic perspective.

Publishers, while motivated by a sense of responsibility to raise environmentally conscious future generations, face numerous obstacles. One major challenge is the lack of a strong reading culture, as families tend to prioritize academic achievements over leisure reading. This reduces demand for children's storybooks, particularly those with environmental themes, as parents often opt for more academically focused content or popular foreign cartoons and superhero characters.

Moreover, publishers struggle to compete with global imports, which dominate the market due to their visual appeal and familiarity through digital media. Despite these hurdles, some publishers have taken innovative steps, such as launching environmental-themed magazines or implementing reading programs in schools, to foster a love for reading and environmental awareness.

The scarcity of skilled writers and illustrators capable of producing high-quality, imaginative children's story books further compounds the challenges publishers face. The findings suggest that improving the quality of environmental-themed children's story books requires not just more writers but also a shift toward simpler, more engaging language and illustrations that capture children's imaginations.

Theme 3: Market Trends and Digital Platforms: Shaping the Future of Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks

The findings reveal a multifaceted challenge faced by publishers in Bangladesh when crafting children's stories, particularly those centered on environmental themes. Financial limitations are a significant barrier to exploring a wide range of genres and storytelling approaches. This reflects the global struggle faced by small publishers, who are often limited in resources but eager to deliver impactful content. The inability to produce age-appropriate, genre-specific story books poses a broader issue, as there is no consistent benchmark for what constitutes age-appropriate material across various educational systems in Bangladesh. This challenge emphasizes the need for systemic reform in education to establish clearer developmental milestones for students.

The observation about differences in vocabulary and reading levels between students from various types of schools in Bangladesh highlights an issue that is not just educational but also cultural. With such a fragmented educational system, publishers face difficulty in creating stories that cater to a wide range of abilities and interests. This complexity makes it hard to reach all children through uniform narratives, further hindering the growth of environmentally-themed children's books. The writers' lack of understanding of age-specific storytelling exacerbates this problem, demonstrating the need for training programs that teach the technical skills required for writing for children.

This is a challenge that could be addressed through greater collaboration between educators, publishers, and writers. Workshops and training programs could help writers gain the expertise needed to create story books that not only addresses environmental issues but also aligns with children's cognitive development and reading capabilities. In this context, there is potential for institutions, perhaps backed by state involvement, to address the disparity in age-appropriate materials through joint efforts between education reformers and the publishing industry.

The growing influence of digital media on children's engagement with stories is a global phenomenon. Children are increasingly drawn to the interactive and immersive experiences offered by games and virtual worlds, which offer an alternative to traditional reading experiences. The publishers' call to reflect these imaginative worlds in children's story books highlights an important opportunity. Integrating elements of interactivity and imagination, commonly found in digital environments, into books could bridge the gap between digital and literary worlds.

Moreover, the publishers' emphasis on understanding children's daily lives and interests is critical in making stories more relatable. While the shift toward digital platforms may pose a challenge, it also offers a space for innovation in storytelling. Digital platforms could be leveraged to create hybrid forms of engagement, such as interactive e-books or apps that combine storytelling with game-like elements, encouraging children to engage with story books in a format that feels familiar to them.

On the parental front, the findings reveal that some parents are strong advocates for environmentally-themed books, which presents a positive sign for future trends. However, the role of parents in cultivating a reading culture remains uneven, with some allowing children to choose their own books while others may not prioritize integrating story books into their children's lives. Digital media, in this regard, offers an avenue to reach children directly and foster a self-driven interest in reading. This suggests the potential for digital platforms that merge environmental storytelling with elements of interactive play, engaging both the child's imagination and their curiosity about nature.

The differences in how publishers measure success—whether by emotional impact or brand responsibility—are noteworthy. One publisher's focus on the emotional influence of a story on children's thoughts underscores the deeper mission of story books, particularly environmentally-themed stories. These stories can shape children's understanding of the world

and instill values that last a lifetime. This focus aligns with the larger goal of using story books to build empathy and awareness about environmental issues from an early age. Such metrics of success resonate with the emotional and psychological impact that good storytelling can have on children.

Meanwhile, the other publisher's emphasis on long-term brand responsibility reflects a more business-oriented approach, which is also necessary for the sustainability of the publishing industry. While emotional impact is crucial, it must be balanced with the long-term viability of publishing houses, which need to remain competitive and profitable. Thus, integrating environmental themes into children's story books can serve a dual purpose: raising awareness while also ensuring the longevity and relevance of the brand.

The increasing demand for children's books with environmental themes is promising. As more parents become aware of the importance of exposing their children to environmental issues, writers and publishers are likely to respond by producing more content that aligns with these concerns. However, the challenge lies in the fact that this demand is still relatively niche, driven by environmentally conscious parents. Expanding this market requires a broader cultural shift, one that prioritizes reading and environmental awareness in the educational system and beyond. The writers' reflections on writing from a place of conviction and passion also speak to the need for authenticity in storytelling. Environmental themes should not be treated as a passing trend but rather as a genuine commitment by writers to inspire change. Stories written with sincerity and personal investment are more likely to resonate with readers and leave a lasting impact. For the Bangladeshi market to develop in this direction, both publishers and writers must collaborate to ensure that these themes are integrated meaningfully into children's story books, creating a sustainable future for both the environment and the publishing industry.

Theme 4: Promoting Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks

The effectiveness of environmental themes in children's storybooks appears to hinge significantly on how well the story aligns with a child's cognitive and emotional development. As one publisher points out, the simplicity and clarity of the narrative are critical. Environmental issues are inherently complex, but when they are simplified and made relatable to children, they become more digestible. This underscores the importance of tailoring content to a child's developmental stage, ensuring that the stories resonate with them emotionally and cognitively. This approach can foster both understanding and engagement with environmental concepts.

In contrast to this focus on narrative techniques, another publisher offers a broader cultural perspective, suggesting that beyond effectiveness, the lack of viable alternatives makes these environmental-themed books essential. He highlights the importance of fostering a reading culture in homes where books are seen as companions rather than mere educational tools. This sentiment underscores a cultural shift needed to normalize reading and, consequently, environmental awareness among children. His perspective implies that the efficacy of environmental storybooks is not just about narrative quality but also about the child's overall relationship with books. Thus, building a reading culture within families might be a more foundational challenge than simply creating effective stories.

This dual focus—on narrative techniques and cultural context—reveals a deeper layer of complexity in the effectiveness of environmental-themed books. While well-crafted narratives are essential, they must also exist within a framework where children are habituated to reading and engaging with books as part of their daily lives. The findings suggest that efficacy may depend as much on cultural conditions as on narrative quality.

The role of publishers in empowering writers is another critical element discussed in the findings. Writers, while possessing creative talent and the drive to integrate environmental themes into children's story books, often face significant challenges without adequate publisher support. One writer highlights the dependency on publishers for not only printing but also promoting and distributing their work. Without this backing, many well-written books may go unnoticed, limiting their impact. This indicates a pressing need for publishers to invest more in both emerging and established writers focused on environmental themes.

On the flip side, the publishing industry itself is grappling with its own set of challenges. As another publisher notes, Bangladesh lacks a robust reading culture, which affects the demand for books, particularly those with environmental content. In a market driven by commercial success, children's books featuring religious themes or well-known cartoon characters dominate, while environmental books struggle to gain a foothold. This is compounded by the fact that digital devices are becoming a more prominent source of entertainment for children, making it difficult for traditional books to compete. The result is a dual challenge for both writers and publishers: producing engaging, high-quality environmental books and navigating an industry that does not always prioritize or invest in such themes.

Moreover, financial constraints are a significant hurdle. Competing with foreign publications that come with high production values and global recognition is a daunting task for local publishers. The lack of funds to invest in environmental-themed children's books means that even if the demand for such books exists, the resources to meet that demand are often lacking.

Recommendations:

- Develop stories that are tailored to the developmental stages of children. Use simple language, relatable characters, and engaging plots to capture their attention.
- Make environmental themes a central focus of publishing efforts and actively seek out authors and illustrators who specialize in this area.
- Provide training and support to writers and illustrators to enhance their skills in creating age-appropriate and engaging content.
- Seek feedback from parents and caregivers to understand their preferences and needs.
- Parents and caregivers should establish a reading-friendly environment at home. Making storybooks easily accessible, setting aside reading time, and encouraging exploration of books can foster a child's love for reading, including environmental stories.
- After reading, engage in discussions about the themes and characters. Encouraging children to express their thoughts and feelings helps deepen their understanding of environmental topics and builds their connection to the natural world.
- Foster reading habits among children by organizing reading clubs, book fairs, and author visits. These initiatives will not only promote literacy but also expose children to more environmental-themed content in engaging ways.
- Invest in education reform to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, engaging, and inclusive.
- Writers should create stories that portray familiar, everyday situations where children can directly observe environmental actions. Stories should connect environmental care with practical activities that children can do with their families, such as cleaning public spaces, planting trees, or recycling.

- Writers should balance urgency with hope, avoiding stories that might instill fear (ecophobia) in children. Stories should empower children to believe that their small actions can lead to positive environmental change.
- Environmental-themed storybooks should strike a balance between education and entertainment. Creating characters or settings that are both educational and playful can make environmental lessons more attractive. For instance, stories with characters like talking animals or imaginative scenarios about nature can inspire curiosity and make learning enjoyable.
- Provide financial support and incentives to the publishing industry to encourage the production of high-quality children's books. Governments and NGO could take initiatives like launching campaigns to distribute books in schools, and libraries, ensuring that children from diverse backgrounds have access to environmentally focused literature.
- Environmental-themed children's books should be incorporated into school curricula and extracurricular activities. Collaboration between publishers, schools, and environmental organizations can make these books a part of formal and informal education. Educational institutions can organize environment-themed reading weeks, book clubs, or storytelling sessions that introduce children to these books.

Chapter V

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Appendices A.

Research Tools: IDI Guideline for Parents

- 1.** How do you define environmental themes?
- 2.** How important do you think it is for children to learn about environmental themes?
- 3.** What are your thoughts on the integration of environmental themes in children's storybooks?
- 4.** How do you select storybooks for your children? What factors do you consider?
- 5.** How do your children usually respond to storybooks with environmental themes?
- 6.** What motivates you to choose books with environmental themes for your children?
- 7.** What are the challenges you faced in finding these books? How do you overcome those challenges?
- 8.** Do you think these books have influenced your children's understanding and behavior towards the environment? If so, how?
- 9.** Can you share any specific incidents where a storybook impacted your child's views or actions regarding the environment?
- 10.** How do you discuss the environmental themes in the storybooks with your children?

Appendices B.

IDI Guideline for Writers

- 1.** In your opinion, how important is it for children's storybooks to address environmental themes?
- 2.** Have you written story books that include environmental themes? If yes, can you describe some of them?
- 3.** What motivated you to include environmental themes in your storybooks?
- 4.** How do you decide which environmental issues to focus on in your stories?
- 5.** Can you describe your process for researching and incorporating environmental themes into your stories?
- 6.** What challenges have you faced in writing and publishing storybooks with environmental themes?
- 7.** How have publishers responded to your storybooks with environmental themes?
- 8.** How do you perceive the market demand for children's storybooks with environmental themes?
- 9.** What kind of support do you think writers need to effectively integrate environmental themes in their work?
- 10.** How do you see the trend of integrating environmental themes in children's literature evolving in the future?

Appendices C.

IDI Guideline for Publishers

- 1.** How do you define environmental themes within the context of children’s literature?
- 2.** How important do you think it is for children’s storybooks to address environmental themes?
- 3.** Are there any particular genres or styles that you find more effective for conveying environmental messages?
- 4.** What motivates your publishing house to include environmental themes in children’s storybooks?
- 5.** What challenges do you face in producing and promoting these books?
- 6.** How do you balance the inclusion of environmental themes with commercial success?
- 7.** What strategies do you use to overcome the challenges of producing environmentally themed books?
- 8.** How have parents and children responded to storybooks with environmental themes?
- 9.** Do you think these books are effective in raising environmental awareness among young readers? Why or why not?
- 10.** How do you measure the success and impact of these books in terms of sales and educational value?

Appendices D.

Consent Form

Study Title: Perception of Parents, Writers, and Publishers on Integrating Environmental Themes in Children's Storybooks.

Researcher: Farhana Tasnim

Purpose of the Study: I am inviting you to participate in a research study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree requirements at BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BRAC IED), BRAC University. This study aims to explore the views of parents, writers, and publishers on the integration of environmental themes in children's storybooks.

Procedures: If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete:

Parents: An interview that will ask questions about your understanding/ viewpoint of environmental themes, your reading habits with children, your opinions on the role of environmental themes in children's books, and your preferred ways of encountering these themes.

Writers: The interview will explore your creative approach to environmental themes in children's literature. Will delve into your understanding and integration of environmental messages, your sources of inspiration and any challenges you encounter, and the techniques you use to weave these themes into engaging and age-appropriate children's stories.

Publishers: An interview that will explore your understanding/ viewpoint of environmental themes, your publishing house's approach to environmental content in children's books, including selection criteria, author considerations, and potential marketing strategies.

The interview/survey is expected to take approximately 60-80 minutes to complete. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty.

Confidentiality: All information you provide will be kept confidential. Your name will not be associated with your responses in any reports or publications resulting from this research. We

will use pseudonyms or codes to identify participants. Your data will be stored securely after the study concludes.

Risks and Benefits: There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this study. The potential benefits include contributing to a better understanding of how parents, writers, and publishers view environmental themes in children's literature, which could inform future publishing practices and parental choices in promoting environmental awareness.

Contact: Thank you very much for your cooperation. If you have any questions about this study, please contact the researcher at rakafarhana7@gmail.com or 01743160297.

Your Consent: Your participation in this study is voluntary. By signing below, you indicate that you have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate in this study.

Name of the Participant: _____

Signature of the Participant: _____

Date: _____