

Teachers' Perspectives on Environmental Education for Pre-Primary Children in Private Schools in Dhaka, Bangladesh

By

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A thesis submitted to BRAC Institute of Educational Development in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

BRAC Institute of Educational Development
BRAC University
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: Teachers' perspectives on environmental education for pre-primary children in private schools in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Student name: Md Tanzil Hasan

1. Source of population

Eight teachers from various private English medium schools who are currently teaching pre-primary classes.

2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)

- a. Physical risk to the subjects- no
- b. Social risk- no
- c. Psychological risk to subjects- no
- d. discomfort to subjects- no
- e. Invasion of privacy- no

3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)

- a. Nature and purpose of the study- yes
- b. Procedures to be followed- yes
- c. Physical risk- n/a
- d. Sensitive questions- yes
- e. Benefits to be derived- yes
- f. Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study- yes
- g. Confidential handling of data- yes
- h. Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved-yes

4. Will Signed verbal consent for be required (yes or no)

- a. From study participants- yes
- b. From parents or guardian- yes
- c. Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects? - yes

5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:

- a. Proposal- yes
- b. Consent Form- yes
- c. Questionnaire or interview schedule- yes

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Abstract

This study explores how pre-primary school teachers in Dhaka incorporate environmental education into their classrooms, focusing on the use of existing resources and the challenges they face in addressing curriculum gaps. Drawing on qualitative data from in-depth interviews (IDIs) with eight pre-primary school teachers selected through purposive sampling, the research reveals that while teachers generally acknowledge the importance of environmental education, their ability to integrate it effectively varies widely. Given that environmental education has become one of the most crucial forms of education for humanity, it is essential to understand how the young generation is being prepared to face future environmental challenges.

Key factors influencing this integration include teachers' awareness and understanding of environmental concepts, availability of age-appropriate teaching materials, institutional and policy-level support, and the flexibility of the existing curriculum. The study finds that teachers with a personal passion for environmental issues tend to be more engaged, yet even motivated educators often lack structured training and support. A major barrier is the scarcity of resources specifically tailored to younger learners, along with limited access to outdoor learning spaces and collaboration opportunities with environmental organizations. Despite these challenges, the study highlights several successful strategies, such as interdisciplinary teaching approaches and experiential learning activities, which foster student engagement and deepen their connection with nature.

The research underscores the need for continuous professional development, improved resource allocation, and school-wide sustainability visions to embed environmental education meaningfully within the curriculum. Policy implications include the integration of environmental topics into core subjects, provision of training and teaching aids, and encouragement of partnerships between schools and environmental institutions. The study contributes to the growing literature on environmental education by offering practical recommendations and identifying avenues for further research, particularly on the long-term impact of early exposure to environmental education on children's sustainability behaviors.

Keywords

Environmental education; Pre-primary school; Experiential learning; Curriculum integration; Early childhood education.

Dedication

To all the pre-primary teachers who, despite numerous challenges and limitations, are tirelessly working to build the foundation of our education system.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to the Institute of Educational Development, BRAC University, for providing the opportunity, needed resources, research facilities, and a conducive environment for academic exploration and successful completion of this research.

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List of Acronyms

BRAC	Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency (USA)
IDI	In-depth Interview
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter I: Introduction & Background

1.1. Introduction

In today's world, environmental education plays a crucial role as challenges like climate change, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity continue to pose serious risks to both human societies and natural ecosystems (Frantz & Mayer, 2014). Environmental education is crucial for fostering awareness, understanding, and action to address pressing environmental challenges like climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss (Krasny, Marianne E., n.d.). It equips individuals with the knowledge to understand ecological issues, encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, and builds a sense of responsibility towards the planet (Ismail, 2024). By promoting sustainable behaviors and preparing individuals for global challenges, environmental education nurtures future leaders who can drive positive change. Additionally, it strengthens community engagement through activities like tree planting and clean-up campaigns, while preserving biodiversity and cultural heritage. Ultimately, environmental education empowers individuals to take informed actions, ensuring a sustainable and harmonious future for all (Aada, 2024).

In cities, where children are frequently distanced from nature by their environment, schools have a key responsibility to promote environmental awareness and encourage pro-environmental habits from an early age. Yet, embedding environmental education into the curriculum—especially in urban settings—comes with significant challenges.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Globally, environmental topics are often sidelined and regarded as supplementary rather than integral to core academic subjects. This manner of designing curricula stems from a broader mindset that regards environmental education as peripheral, overlooking

its critical importance in tackling pressing challenges at both community and global levels. (Fraser et al., 2015).

In Bangladesh, this issue is even more pronounced. A significant barrier faced by teachers in urban areas is the scarcity of green spaces and natural resources, which limits opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning. Although urban children regularly encounter environmental problems such as air pollution, waste disposal issues, and traffic congestion, these pressing realities are not consistently incorporated into classroom lessons.

This is particularly concerning because Bangladesh ranks among the most climate-vulnerable countries globally, with millions of children exposed to risks from floods, cyclones, sea level rise, and other climate-induced disasters (Hoque et al., 2019; UNICEF, 2021). UNICEF reports that children are disproportionately affected by climate change, facing heightened risks to their health, education, and overall well-being due to displacement, poverty, and environmental degradation.

Children living in urban environments often have minimal contact with nature, which undermines their ability to understand and value the natural world. Direct interaction with nature is crucial for nurturing environmental stewardship (Ishikawa & Montello, 2006). In Bangladesh—especially within urban contexts—teachers play a pivotal role in shaping both the content and depth of environmental education delivered in classrooms.

While educators recognize the importance of fostering environmental awareness among

students, they confront multiple obstacles, including inadequate training, a shortage of resources, and insufficient institutional backing. Without a comprehensive understanding of environmental issues, children may struggle to develop critical skills such as sustainable thinking, problem-solving, and informed decision-making. This gap limits their ability to grasp the interconnectedness between human actions and ecological systems, ultimately affecting their overall learning experience. Additionally, when environmental education is lacking, students miss valuable opportunities for sensory-rich, experiential learning that could strengthen their connection to the environment around them.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to explore urban private preprimary school teachers' perceptions on integrating environmental education into the classroom. It will also examine how the current setting and values can be leveraged to incorporate environmental education, the capacity of existing textbooks and curricula to address environmental issues, and how teachers perceive gaps in content. Additionally, the study will explore how teachers can use innovation and existing resources outside the formal curriculum to enhance environmental education for children. By understanding the challenges, they face, their attitudes, and the strategies they use, the research will provide valuable insights for improving teaching contents and practices of environment education of Dhaka urban primary schools.

1.4. Justification of the study

The pressing need for environmental education in Bangladesh, particularly within rapidly urbanizing areas where industrial growth and urban sprawl are intensifying ecological problems, provides a clear rationale for this study (Trotter et al., 2017).

Teachers play a pivotal role in nurturing young children's awareness of environmental concerns and in cultivating their commitment to sustainable living (Blanchet-Cohen & Reilly, 2013). This research seeks to bridge a gap in existing scholarship by examining how educators in urban private preprimary schools approach environmental education, shedding light on their current practices, the barriers they encounter, and the potential avenues for enhancing environmental learning within the country's educational context.

Furthermore, early childhood represents a formative stage in which foundational values, mindsets, and understandings related to caring for the environment begin to take shape (Türkoğlu, 2019). While studies have highlighted the importance of environmental education, there is limited research focusing on how teachers in urban private schools navigate the integration of these concepts into their classrooms. This study will generate new knowledge about the practical strategies employed by teachers, the barriers they face, and the resources they require. Such insights will bridge the gap between policy intentions and actual classroom practices, providing a clearer understanding of how environmental education is implemented at the preprimary level.

The insights gained from this study will contribute to shaping more effective instructional strategies and curriculum frameworks that align with both national education objectives and international sustainability efforts. Additionally, the research will provide practical recommendations aimed at enhancing the quality and impact of Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities identified, this study will contribute to fostering an

environmentally conscious future generation. Furthermore, the results will assist policymakers in understanding teachers' perspectives, enabling the design of targeted strategies and support systems that empower educators to implement environmental education effectively. Ultimately, this research will enhance the quality of ECD by equipping children with foundational knowledge and values essential for sustainable living.

1.5. Research Objective

To explore teachers' perspectives on integrating environmental education in urban private English Medium preprimary schools in Bangladesh, highlighting practices and opportunities.

1.6. Research Questions

1. How do urban primary school teachers perceive the integration of environmental education into the classroom, and what challenges do they face in doing so?
2. To what extent do existing textbooks and curricula in urban schools address environmental education, and what content gaps do teachers identify?
3. How can urban school teachers use innovation and available resources outside the formal curriculum to enhance environmental education for students?

1.7. Operational Definitions

Environmental Education

In this study, environmental education refers to age-appropriate teaching practices, materials, and experiences that promote awareness, responsibility, and sustainable habits in pre-primary children.

Teachers' Perspectives

Refers to the beliefs, understandings, and experiences shared by pre-primary teachers regarding the implementation, importance, and challenges of environmental education in their classrooms.

Experiential Learning

Defined as learning through active participation—such as gardening, recycling projects, nature walks, or environmental storytelling—that helps children connect concepts to real-world environmental practices.

Curriculum Support

Indicates the guidance, content, and structure provided by formal curricula and textbooks to help teachers integrate environmental topics effectively in early childhood education.

Chapter II Review of Literature

2.1. Definition of Environmental Education

Environmental education is fundamentally aimed at nurturing a society that is not only knowledgeable about the natural environment and its pressing challenges but also equipped with the understanding, skills, and motivation necessary to actively engage in resolving these issues (Stapp, 1969). It extends far beyond merely delivering facts about environmental problems; rather, it shapes attitudes, builds practical competencies, and fosters a deep sense of responsibility towards sustaining the natural world. As articulated by the Cambridge Dictionary, environmental education involves imparting essential knowledge to both students and the general public, empowering them to safeguard the environment. This reflects the dual focus of environmental education — both awareness and action — recognizing that knowledge alone is insufficient without the capacity and will to apply it meaningfully.

In a similar vein, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) characterizes environmental education as a dynamic process that enables individuals to recognize environmental problems, apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and take purposeful action to enhance environmental quality. Through this approach, learners are encouraged to not only understand the complexities of environmental issues but also to evaluate potential solutions, assess the implications of their actions, and make informed decisions that positively impact their communities and ecosystems.

Moreover, environmental education encourages interdisciplinary learning, connecting scientific knowledge with social, political, economic, and ethical dimensions. By

doing so, it prepares individuals to navigate the interconnectedness of modern environmental challenges, such as climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion. For children especially, early exposure to these concepts can cultivate lifelong habits of environmental stewardship, empathy towards nature, and sustainable living practices. Ultimately, environmental education equips individuals to act as responsible global citizens who can contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the environment, ensuring that both current and future generations can thrive within a balanced and healthy natural world.

2.2. Significance of Environmental Protection and Addressing Climate Change

The escalating crisis of global warming, compounded by human-induced environmental degradation, poses profound risks to human health, ecological systems, and numerous sectors integral to societal well-being — such as energy, agriculture, and tourism (Varela-Candamio et al., 2018). Current research highlights that approximately 3.6 billion people reside in regions acutely susceptible to the repercussions of climate change. Projections indicate that, between 2030 and 2050, climate-related factors—including undernutrition, waterborne diseases like diarrhea, malaria, and heat-related illnesses—will contribute to an estimated 250,000 additional deaths each year (WHO, 2023).

Across the globe, many areas are already grappling with climate-induced extremes such as prolonged heatwaves and intense rainfall events. Bangladesh, in particular, stands out as one of the nations most vulnerable to these adverse climate impacts. Rising temperatures and increased humidity levels are expected to amplify the frequency and severity of extreme weather events in the years ahead (Im et al., 2017).

Notably, regions in the western part of the country—including Ishurdi, Bogra, and Jessore—are projected to experience heightened exposure to extreme heat stress, making them especially susceptible to the detrimental effects of escalating temperatures (Choi et al., 2021).

2.3. Importance of Introducing Environmental Education in Early Childhood

Embedding environmental education during the early years of life leaves a deep and enduring imprint that significantly influences an individual's attitudes, values, and behaviors well into adulthood (Otto & Kaiser, 2014). A growing body of research highlights that early childhood — spanning from birth to approximately eight years of age — represents a critical period for nurturing environmental consciousness and laying the groundwork for lifelong sustainable practices. During these formative years, children rapidly acquire foundational cognitive, emotional, and social skills that shape how they perceive, interact with, and form attachments to the natural world (Ardoin & Bowers, 2020; Samuelsson & Katz, 2008). Exposure to nature-based activities and environmental themes during this sensitive developmental window can foster empathy towards living things, curiosity about ecological systems, and a sense of responsibility for protecting the environment.

Researchers and educators emphasize that early positive experiences in nature not only support children's understanding of ecological relationships but also enhance their overall well-being, resilience, and social competence. For instance, hands-on activities such as gardening, nature walks, and recycling encourage observational skills, problem-solving abilities, and collaborative learning. These experiences help children build a personal connection to nature, making them more likely to adopt pro-

environmental behaviors later in life.

Increasingly, there is global recognition that effective responses to environmental degradation, climate change, and sustainable development challenges are closely tied to education and the proactive role of schools as agents of change (Rickinson, 2001). By integrating environmental education into early childhood settings, educators can play a transformative role in shaping a generation that is environmentally literate, socially responsible, and equipped to make informed decisions for a sustainable future.

As environmental threats such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion intensify, the prominence of environmental education on international agendas has risen substantially (Wahyudin & Malik, 2019). Integrating environmental education within both formal school curricula and informal educational settings is now widely recognized as an essential strategy for building environmental awareness, encouraging sustainable behaviors, and fostering a sense of responsible global citizenship across all age groups.

International frameworks such as UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) have encouraged countries to integrate environmental education into their curricula. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.7 emphasizes the need for education to promote sustainable lifestyles and respect for the environment. Countries like Sweden are leading examples, where sustainability is woven into national education policies and school curricula (Cars & West, 2015). These efforts are complemented by global events like Earth Day, which promote awareness and engagement at a grassroots level.

Many countries around the world have recognized the significance of starting environmental education at an early age and have begun embedding it into their early childhood curricula. Early exposure to environmental concepts is now widely seen as crucial in shaping young learners' attitudes, values, and behaviors towards sustainability. For instance, Sweden's preschools follow a sustainability-oriented curriculum that seamlessly integrates environmental themes into everyday routines and play-based activities. Children actively engage with topics such as recycling, biodiversity, energy conservation, and care for living things through hands-on experiences like sorting waste, exploring nature trails, and participating in outdoor learning (Cars & West, 2015). These practices are designed not only to impart knowledge but also to cultivate a sense of responsibility and connectedness with the natural world from an early age.

Similarly, in Australia, the Early Years Learning Framework explicitly identifies sustainability as a core learning outcome. It encourages preschools and early learning centers to incorporate practices such as composting, gardening, water conservation, and waste reduction into their daily activities (Lasen et al., 2017). Children are invited to take part in maintaining gardens, managing food scraps, and understanding the life cycles of plants and animals. These experiences promote a hands-on understanding of ecological systems and reinforce sustainable habits in practical, age-appropriate ways. Educators are also encouraged to model sustainable practices and foster discussions about environmental care, further embedding these values into classroom culture.

Research indicates that engaging children in such environmental activities not only

enhances their understanding of environmental concepts but also supports broader developmental outcomes. Activities like gardening and recycling projects have been shown to improve children's cognitive abilities, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills (Lasen et al., 2017). By introducing environmental education at the foundational stages of development, these countries demonstrate how early childhood settings can play a pivotal role in nurturing future generations who are knowledgeable, mindful, and proactive about environmental sustainability.

Incorporating local environmental knowledge and practices has proven effective in some regions. For example, in New Zealand, preschools integrate the Maori concept of Kaitiakitanga (guardianship of the environment) to instill a sense of responsibility for nature (Ritchie, 2015). Similarly, in indigenous communities in Latin America, storytelling and traditional practices are used to teach children about environmental harmony and respect for natural resources (Apanovich et al., 2024). These culturally grounded approaches highlight the importance of adapting environmental education to local contexts.

Preschool environmental education often relies on play and exploration as primary methods of engagement. Activities such as nature walks, storytelling, planting seeds, and water play introduce children to environmental concepts in a fun, hands-on manner. Programs like Eco-Schools Early Years in Europe focus on play-based learning to teach sustainability in ways that are developmentally appropriate for young children. Research shows that children exposed to such activities exhibit increased curiosity and a stronger sense of environmental responsibility (Korkmaz & Guler Yildiz, 2017).

Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010 highlights the importance of environmental education in creating awareness and promoting sustainability. However, this emphasis is more pronounced at the primary and secondary levels, with limited direct guidance for preschool programs (Malak et al., 2013). Despite this, some private institutions, particularly English medium schools, are incorporating sustainability and environmental themes into their early childhood curricula. These efforts align with global frameworks like UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) but are yet to become widespread.

In many preschools, environmental education is implemented informally through activities such as storytelling, nature walks, and art-based projects. Teachers introduce concepts like the importance of trees, clean water, and proper waste disposal through songs, rhymes, and visual aids. For example, some urban preschools in Dhaka encourage students to participate in activities like planting saplings and segregating waste. However, these practices are often inconsistent and lack structured frameworks.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a significant role in promoting environmental education in preschools, especially in underserved areas. Programs like BRAC's early childhood development initiatives occasionally incorporate environmental themes, such as raising awareness about clean water, hygiene, and local biodiversity. Similarly, some community-based schools, supported by local NGOs, include practical activities like gardening and cleaning drives to instill basic environmental responsibility among children. These efforts, however, depend on

donor funding and are not standardized across the country.

Educating children about issues such as pollution, recycling, and conservation cultivates early awareness of their environment and encourages the development of habits and values that support a sustainable way of life. A study involving 127 teachers in Bangladesh found that most educators view childhood as a critical period for character formation, highlighting the importance of introducing environmental education at the primary level. However, many teachers incorporate environmental themes into their lessons only when these topics are explicitly included in the curriculum, rather than as an intentional addition (Khan, 2024). By embedding these concepts during the formative years, we prepare children to become environmentally responsible adults who can make informed decisions for a sustainable future (Kavaz et al., 2021).

Chapter III: Methodology

3.1. Research Participants

The research participants in this study comprise eight primary school teachers, both male and female, selected through purposive sampling from four urban areas of Dhaka: Uttara, Banani, Gulshan and Bashundhara. These educators are drawn from various private English medium schools. They are chosen to provide diverse perspectives on integrating environmental education into classroom practices. To ensure meaningful insights, participants are required to have at least one year of teaching experience, equipping them with practical knowledge and a valid understanding of environmental education. The schools are intentionally selected to capture a range of institutional priorities, including those that emphasize extracurricular activities alongside regular curricula and others that primarily focus on the core curriculum.

By involving male and female teachers with differing levels of experience and institutional contexts, of pre-primary and private English medium schools, the study aims to uncover nuanced insights into the motivations, practices, and experience gained by educators when incorporating environmental education. The selection process also considers the researcher's convenience in accessing schools while ensuring a balanced representation of diverse teaching environments. These participants serve as key informants, offering firsthand knowledge and experiences that will inform the understanding of how environmental education can be effectively integrated into primary school settings in Dhaka. Through their perspectives, the study seeks to illuminate the current state of environmental education and highlight areas for future improvement.

3.2. Research Site

The research will be conducted in two urban areas of Dhaka: Uttara and Banani. These locations were chosen to represent a diverse cross-section of English medium educational institutions in the city. The selected schools have been purposefully chosen not only for their emphasis on academic excellence but also for their commitment to fostering creativity and providing children with knowledge about their surroundings through extracurricular activities. These institutions reflect an approach to education that goes beyond traditional academics, focusing on nurturing well-rounded individuals with an awareness of environmental and social issues.

Additionally, these schools are recognized for their dedication to delivering quality education and demonstrating care and attentiveness towards their students. They strive to create a balance between academic rigor and extracurricular initiatives that promote creativity and practical learning. By selecting such schools, the study ensures a focus on institutions that prioritize holistic development and innovative practices, making them ideal sites for exploring how environmental education is integrated into primary school classrooms. These settings offer a rich and meaningful context for understanding how teachers incorporate environmental awareness into their teaching while supporting students' overall growth.

3.3. Research Approach

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate the perspectives, experiences, and motivations of primary school teachers in integrating environmental education into their classroom practices. A qualitative design is well-suited for capturing the complex and nuanced viewpoints of educators operating within diverse

institutional contexts. By emphasizing in-depth, descriptive data, this approach enables a deep exploration of both the personal and professional experiences of participants, revealing insights that might remain hidden through quantitative methods.

The study seeks to understand teachers' subjective experiences, including the challenges they encounter and the strategies they utilize when incorporating environmental education into their instruction. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews will be conducted, offering the flexibility to facilitate open and reflective discussions, and encouraging participants to share detailed narratives and perspectives. Rather than aiming for broad generalization, this approach aspires to generate a rich and comprehensive understanding of teachers' practices and perceptions, thereby contributing valuable insights to the expanding literature on environmental education in urban primary schools.

3.4. Data Collection Methods

Data for this study will be collected through In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with eight primary school teachers from urban areas of Dhaka. IDIs are an effective method for capturing detailed and personal insights into the participants' experiences, motivations, and challenges in integrating environmental education into their classrooms. A semi-structured interview guide will be used to ensure that key topics are covered while allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on their unique perspectives. This approach enables the researcher to gather rich, descriptive data that reflects the complexities of the teachers' viewpoints and practices.

All interviews will be conducted in person, with the participants' consent, and recorded using an audio recorder to ensure accuracy in data collection. The questions will explore

topics such as the teachers' understanding of environmental education, current practices in their classrooms, and the challenges they face in implementing it. The recorded interviews will later be transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and key themes. To ensure credibility and validity, respondent verification will be employed, allowing participants to review and confirm the accuracy of their responses. This method will provide an in-depth understanding of how environmental education is perceived and practiced in primary schools.

3.5. Sampling Procedure

This study uses purposive sampling to select eight pre-primary school teachers from urban areas of Dhaka, including Uttara and Banani. Participants will be drawn exclusively from private English medium schools to ensure diverse perspectives. The selected schools emphasize both academic excellence and extracurricular activities that nurture creativity and raise environmental awareness among children.

Teachers with a minimum of one year of teaching experience will be included to ensure they possess relevant expertise. By focusing on schools renowned for quality education and innovative practices, the study aims to gather valuable insights into how environmental education is integrated into pre-primary teaching contexts.

3.6. Data Analysis

The data collected from the In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights. The recorded interviews will first be transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts will be reviewed thoroughly to ensure accuracy. The researcher will then familiarize herself with the data by reading and re-reading the transcripts to develop an initial understanding of the content.

The analysis will proceed by coding the data systematically, categorizing the responses into themes related to teachers' perceptions, practices, motivations, and challenges in integrating environmental education. Patterns and relationships within the themes will be explored to gain deeper insights. Triangulation will be employed to ensure the validity of the findings, and respondent verification will be sought to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. This process will result in a rich, nuanced understanding of how environmental education is perceived and practiced in urban pre-primary classrooms.

3.7. Ethics

This study will be conducted with a strong commitment to upholding ethical standards, ensuring that all stages of the research process remain transparent and respectful. Before initiating any data collection, formal approval will be courteously requested from the administrations of both participating schools through email correspondence. The school authorities will be provided with comprehensive and clear information outlining the study's background, aims, objectives, selection criteria for faculty participants, and a brief overview of the researcher's professional profile. Once institutional consent is secured, the researcher will politely ask for a list of educators who meet the established inclusion criteria. These potential participants will then be contacted individually, with the same detailed explanation of the study shared to ensure they fully understand its scope and purpose. Participation will be entirely voluntary, and only those teachers who demonstrate sincere interest and provide informed consent will be invited to take part in the study.

All participants will be fully informed about the level of commitment required, ensuring that their participation is entirely voluntary and informed. Their privacy and confidentiality will be treated with the utmost respect, and no personal information will be disclosed at any stage. Participants will be reassured that they are free to skip any question they find uncomfortable, and if they choose to withdraw from the interview at any point, their decision will be honored without any pressure. Additionally, no information relevant to the study will be withheld, and the researcher will refrain from disclosing any prior connections to the schools to avoid unintentionally influencing participants' responses.

3.8. Validity & Reliability

A range of carefully considered strategies will be implemented to enhance the study's credibility, trustworthiness, and rigor. Respondent verification will be implemented, where participants will review their transcribed interviews to confirm the accuracy of their responses. This step ensures that the data reflects the teachers' true perspectives and experiences.

Additionally, the interview questions will be designed in such a way that they guide participants to answer the research question effectively. The semi-structured interview guide will ensure that key topics are covered while allowing for flexibility in responses. This structure provides consistency across interviews while still allowing participants to share their unique insights.

For reliability, the study will maintain a systematic approach in data collection and analysis. The researcher will document all steps carefully, ensuring transparency and consistency in the process. These strategies contribute to the credibility and

trustworthiness of the research findings.

3.9. Limitation

One limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size of eight teachers, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a larger population. Since the study focuses on teachers from only specific urban areas of Dhaka (Uttara, Banani, Gulshan, and Bashundhara), the findings may not fully represent the perspectives of teachers from rural areas or other regions in Bangladesh.

Another limitation of the study is its reliance solely on self-reported data gathered through in-depth interviews, which may introduce bias as participants could offer socially desirable answers or may not fully express their challenges and practices. Although classroom observations were initially planned to complement the interviews, they had to be cancelled at the last moment due to nationwide political unrest and the Ramadan vacation, representing a significant limitation of the study.

Additionally, the study focuses on teachers from private English medium schools, which may not fully reflect the practices or challenges faced by educators in public schools or other educational settings. Despite these limitations, the study aims to provide valuable insights into how environmental education is integrated into teaching at the pre-primary level in urban schools.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

This chapter presents the results and discussion derived from the collected data. The findings have been organized into nine major themes based on the thematic alignment of the interview questions. Each theme is further broken down into relevant sub-themes, reflecting key points or diverse perspectives that emerged during the analysis.

The Discussion section interprets the findings critically, highlighting connections, contradictions, and patterns based on participants' responses. The chapter concludes with key insights and recommendations based on the study.

Demographic Information

A total of eight IDI (in-depth interviews) were conducted with teachers from various English-medium schools in Dhaka, specifically from the areas of Uttara, Banani, Gulshan, and Bashundhara. Among the participants, there were three females and five males, all aged between 27 and 40 years. In terms of professional experience, five teachers had been teaching for more than two years, while the remaining three had over one year of experience. All participants were well-educated, with the majority having completed their education in Dhaka city. Only two had studied outside Dhaka at earlier stages, but all of them pursued their higher education at universities in Dhaka.

Theme 01: Understanding Environmental Education

Sub Theme 1.1 Broad Understanding of Environmental Education

The responses from participants reveal a broad yet interconnected understanding of environmental education, which is seen not only as teaching children about the environment but also about their role and responsibilities toward it. One participant

explained, "Environmental education, to me, it's like the education that I can teach the kids about the environment, how we live, what are the impacts maybe, what actually they would do in the environment, and what would be their responsibilities" (IDI#6, 02.03.2025). This highlights the holistic nature of environmental education, which combines both theoretical knowledge and practical actions.

Sub Theme 1.2 The Role of Action-Based Learning in Environmental Education

Several participants highlighted the significance of action-based learning in environmental education, emphasizing that it should go beyond theoretical knowledge to include real-world experiences. One respondent, for instance, described how their school organized a flood relief program, where students learned about the causes of floods, the role of trees in flood prevention, and the effects of plastic waste on water bodies. These hands-on activities underscore the value of connecting students to nature, their communities, and broader environmental challenges through practical, action-oriented learning.

Sub Theme 1.3 Fostering Awareness, Responsibility, and Sustainability

A common theme that emerged across the responses was the role of environmental education in fostering awareness, responsibility, and action toward sustainability. Participants noted that environmental education enables individuals to recognize environmental issues and take proactive measures to address them. As one participant explained, environmental education is a process that "helps people understand environmental issues and take action to improve these problems" (IDI#1, 24.02.2025). These insights highlight the importance of not only understanding environmental challenges but also actively working toward sustainable solutions.

Theme 02: Importance of Environmental Education

Sub Theme 2.1 Early Exposure Shaping Lifelong Habits

Many participants highlighted the importance of environmental education in pre-primary school children, suggesting that early exposure shapes lifelong habits and attitudes. Children at this stage are highly impressionable and can integrate sustainable practices into their daily lives. One participant noted, "If a nursery kid learns to always use the dustbin and not throw trash anywhere, it will become their habit" (IDI#1, 24.02.2025). The responses indicate that when children are taught environmental responsibility early, these actions become ingrained as lifelong habits.

Sub Theme 2.2 Environmental Education Fosters Curiosity and Responsibility

Participants emphasized that young children are naturally curious about their surroundings, which makes them ideal candidates for environmental education. One respondent shared, "At this age, children are naturally curious about the environment and love exploring the world around them" (IDI#5, 01.03.2025), suggesting that environmental education should harness this curiosity to instill responsible habits. By using hands-on learning and exploration, children become more engaged and aware of their environmental impact.

Sub Theme 2.3 Environmental Education's Impact on Child Development

Participants also linked early environmental education to overall child development. One participant stated, "A learning environment that is positive can lead to greater student achievement" (IDI#3, 28.02.2025), suggesting that environmental education not only benefits the planet but also nurtures well-rounded, informed, and responsible individuals. Through these early experiences, children develop a sense of responsibility and are equipped with the knowledge to make informed decisions about the environment.

Theme 03: Environmental Education in Textbooks

Sub Theme 3.1 Concerns Over Limited Environmental Content in Textbooks

Most participants expressed concerns that textbooks do not adequately cover environmental topics, often presenting the information as superficial. One participant remarked, "The textbooks we use do not cover enough environmental topics, and even the teachers are not always fully aware of them" (IDI#1, 24.02.2025). Similarly, another participant noted that while basic environmental topics like trees and animals are discussed, more complex issues like climate change are often ignored. These responses highlight the gaps in textbook content and the need for deeper exploration of environmental issues.

Sub Theme 3.2 The Need for Real-Life Examples and Practical Approaches

There was a consensus among participants that textbooks need to provide more real-life examples and practical applications. One participant emphasized the need for "real-life examples in lessons" (IDI#4, 28.02.2025) to make the content more relevant and engaging for students. Incorporating examples like local environmental challenges or global phenomena could enhance understanding and make the learning process more impactful.

Sub Theme 3.3 Textbooks' Potential When Paired with Interactive Learning

Despite the gaps in environmental content, some participants recognized that textbooks can still be useful when paired with interactive learning. For instance, one participant mentioned that "children love to read textbooks because they include pictures that help them visualize scenarios" (IDI#3, 28.02.2025). This suggests that, while textbooks may lack depth, they can be effective tools when complemented by practical activities and visual aids to engage students.

Theme 04: Curriculum Guide to Environmental Education

Sub Theme 4.1 Limited Guidance on Teaching Environmental Issues

Several participants shared concerns that the curriculum does not offer adequate guidance on teaching environmental issues. One participant mentioned, “It is limited only about learning the elements of the environment, nothing beyond that” (IDI#2, 27.02.2025), indicating that the curriculum often provides only a basic understanding of natural concepts but fails to address critical environmental topics such as pollution or deforestation.

Sub Theme 4.2 The Need for More Depth and Practical Application

The need for a more innovative, detailed and practical approach to environmental has been emphasized by the participants. education in the curriculum. One respondent suggested that teachers need "clear instruction and resources to teach these important topics" (IDI#4, 28.02.2025). This feedback underscores the importance of developing a curriculum that not only introduces environmental concepts but also supports teachers with tools to explore these topics deeply.

Sub Theme 4.3 The Role of the Cambridge Curriculum in Environmental Education

A few participants pointed to the Cambridge curriculum as offering a more holistic approach to environmental education by incorporating storytelling, phonetics, and the arts. However, one participant also noted that real-world experiences and localized content are essential to make environmental education more relevant and impactful. These responses highlight that while certain curricula integrate environmental education to some extent, they often lack experiential learning opportunities that could inspire students to take real-world action.

Theme 05: School's Effectiveness on Environmental Education

Sub Theme 5.1 Challenges in Effectively Teaching Environmental Education

Many participants expressed concerns that environmental education is not effectively taught due to a lack of resources and institutional support. One participant noted that schools are "really becoming result-oriented," making it difficult to integrate environmental education meaningfully (IDI#1, 24.02.2025). Another participant mentioned that environmental activities, such as special days, are conducted but lack depth and consistency, limiting their impact.

Sub Theme 5.2 Examples of Schools Integrating Environmental Education

On the other hand, a few participants shared positive examples of schools that integrate environmental education through hands-on experiences, such as addressing pollution or involving students in environmental projects. One participant highlighted how their school incorporated environmental action into the curriculum and even tied it to student grades (IDI#5, 01.03.2025). These examples suggest that schools can be effective in teaching environmental education if given the right resources and support.

Sub Theme 5.3 The Role of Institutional Support and Resources

These responses underline the importance of institutional support in ensuring that environmental education is effectively integrated into schools. Without consistent support, resources, and engagement from the school administration, environmental education may remain fragmented and inconsistent.

Theme 06: Challenges of Teaching Environmental Issues

6.1 Insufficient Resources and Support for Teaching Environmental Topics

A significant challenge identified by many participants was the lack of adequate resources for teaching environmental topics. One participant explained that the "lessons

don't cover the environmental topics elaborately" due to "time limitation and limitation on teaching aid resources" (IDI#2, 27.02.2025). This highlights a critical barrier to effective teaching, where resource limitations hinder the depth of environmental education.

6.2 Lack of Hands-On Learning and Outdoor Exposure

Another major issue is the lack of hands-on learning and outdoor exposure. One participant explained that children “are not getting enough exposure to the environment” due to the limitations of urban lifestyles and indoor classrooms (IDI#7, 03.03.2025). The absence of outdoor learning spaces and nature-based projects restricts students' ability to connect with their environment in a meaningful way.

6.3 Difficulty in Teaching Complex Concepts Like Climate Change

Teaching complex topics like climate change is another challenge. One participant noted that "young children struggle to grasp abstract concepts" such as climate change, especially when materials lack visual aids (IDI#4, 28.02.2025). This emphasizes the need for visual and interactive materials to help young learners understand environmental issues better.

Theme 07: Access to Resources

Sub Theme 7.1 Concerns Over Limited Resources for Environmental Education

Several participants expressed concerns about the lack of sufficient resources to teach environmental topics effectively. One participant noted that the environmental content in textbooks is "very brief" and lacks practical examples (IDI#2, 27.02.2025). Despite the availability of information online, many participants stressed the importance of well-structured, contextualized materials for young learners (IDI#6, 02.03.2025).

Sub Theme 7.2 The Need for Structured and Contextualized Educational Materials

To address these concerns, participants suggested improvements in the availability of resources, including more books, posters, and interactive materials like videos and animations. These tools would make environmental education more engaging and accessible for young learners (IDI#4, 28.02.2025).

Sub Theme 7.3 Suggestions for Enhancing Resources in Environmental Education

Many participants recommended specific resources to enhance environmental education, including activity kits, small school gardens, and science kits for experiments. These resources would allow for more hands-on learning and create opportunities for students to engage with environmental concepts directly.

Theme 08: Creative Methods in Classroom to Teach the Environment

Sub Theme 8.1 Hands-On Learning and Interactive Environmental Projects

Several participants shared creative methods they have used to teach environmental topics, such as organizing a “plantation ceremony” where children plant seeds and observe their growth (IDI#2, 27.02.2025). These activities provide tangible, real-world experiences that help children understand the importance of trees and their role in the environment.

Sub Theme 8.2 Utilizing Project-Based and Visual Learning Techniques

In addition to hands-on projects, some participants used visual learning techniques, such as having students create posters about climate change or demonstrating weather changes using interactive maps (IDI#6, 02.03.2025). These methods help students visualize abstract concepts and make the learning process more interactive and engaging.

Sub Theme 8.3 Creative Approaches Using Storytelling and Recycled Materials

One participant also used storytelling and recycled materials to engage students in

understanding plastic pollution. By arranging workshops where students created toys and art from recycled plastic, they learned about the environmental impact of plastic waste (IDI#5, 01.03.2025). These creative approaches enrich the learning experience and make environmental education more meaningful.

Theme 09: Expected Additional Support

Sub Theme 9.1 The Need for Additional Resources and Funding

Participants stressed the importance of additional resources and funding to improve environmental education. One participant pointed out that schools often prioritize exam results over practical learning, leaving little room for environmental education (IDI#1, 24.02.2025). Increased funding would help schools integrate environmental education more effectively and consistently.

Sub Theme 9.2 The Importance of Professional Development and Teacher Training

Another crucial area for improvement is teacher training. Many participants highlighted the need for "professional development programs, seminars, and workshops" to help teachers deepen their knowledge of environmental issues (IDI#5, 01.03.2025). These programs would ensure that teachers are well-equipped to teach environmental topics effectively.

Sub Theme 9.3 Suggestions for Interactive Learning Tools and Field Trips

Several participants suggested incorporating interactive learning tools, such as videos, guest speakers, and field trips, both physical and virtual, to enhance environmental education. These experiences would allow students to experience nature and environmental issues firsthand, making the learning.

4.2. Discussion

From the study valuable insights has been found on how pre-primary school teachers incorporate environmental education into their classrooms, utilizing existing resources and addressing potential gaps. This discussion section interprets these findings in relation to existing literature, highlights key themes that emerged, and offers implications for future practice and research.

4.2.1 Interpretation of Findings

The results indicate that while teachers recognize the importance of environmental education, their ability to effectively integrate it into their curriculum varies. The study highlights several crucial factors influencing this integration, including teachers' knowledge and awareness of environmental concepts, availability of resources, institutional support, and curriculum flexibility. These findings align with previous research indicating that environmental education often remains secondary to traditional subjects due to systemic constraints (Rickinson, 2001).

4.2.2. Teachers' Awareness and Understanding

One of the most significant findings of this study is that teachers' awareness and understanding of environmental education play a crucial role in its successful implementation. Many participants expressed a willingness to integrate environmental concepts but lacked the necessary training and resources. This finding is consistent with the work of Li & Krasny (2019), who suggest that educators often require targeted professional development to feel confident in delivering environmental education effectively (Li & Krasny, 2019).

Furthermore, teachers with a personal passion for environmental issues demonstrated a higher level of engagement in environmental education. This suggests that intrinsic motivation and personal values significantly impact a teacher's ability to incorporate

these concepts into daily lessons. However, without structured support, even highly motivated teachers struggle to sustain their efforts.

4.2.3 Resource Availability and Institutional Support

Another key finding is the role of resources in facilitating or hindering environmental education. Teachers cited a lack of appropriate materials, limited access to outdoor learning spaces, and insufficient administrative support as major obstacles. Similar barriers have been identified in previous studies, where teachers reported difficulties accessing age-appropriate materials that align with the curriculum (Ernst, 2007; McKeown & Hopkins, 2003). In particular, teachers often struggled to find environmental education resources designed specifically for younger learners, such as interactive activities and visual materials that resonate with children's developmental stages.

Interestingly, schools that had established partnerships with environmental organizations or community initiatives were more successful in integrating environmental education. These partnerships provided access to guest speakers, hands-on activities, and real-world learning experiences. This reinforces the argument by Hacking et al. (2010) that collaboration between schools and external organizations strengthens the practical implementation of environmental education. Additionally, local environmental initiatives or nearby nature reserves could serve as invaluable resources to promote learning about local ecosystems and sustainable practices.

4.2.4 Curriculum Constraints and Pedagogical Approaches

Despite a general enthusiasm for environmental education, many teachers faced challenges due to rigid curriculum structures. Some educators noted that their

curriculum did not explicitly include environmental themes, making it difficult to justify spending time on these topics. This finding is in line with Palmer's (1998) assertion that environmental education is often marginalized within mainstream schooling due to a focus on core subjects such as mathematics and literacy. In response, teachers adopted creative approaches, integrating environmental topics into subjects such as social studies, where they could discuss the impact of human activities on the planet, or mathematics, where they could explore data related to waste reduction or resource conservation. This interdisciplinary approach has been widely advocated in environmental education research (Sauvé, 2005; Sterling, 2001), as it allows for more flexible incorporation of environmental themes.

4.2.5. Addressing Gaps in Environmental Education

The study highlights several areas where improvements are needed to enhance the effectiveness of environmental education in primary schools.

4.2.6. Need for Teacher Training and Professional Development

A recurring theme in the findings is the need for more comprehensive training programs for teachers. Many educators expressed uncertainty about how to teach environmental concepts effectively. While some had attended workshops, these were often one-off events that did not provide ongoing support. This finding is supported by Glackin & King (2018), who argue that professional development in environmental education should be continuous and include opportunities for peer learning, mentorship, and classroom-based experimentation. Teachers need access to a range of teaching strategies that are adaptable to different learning environments, especially for younger children who may struggle to understand abstract environmental concepts without hands-on experiences. Continuous training could also include collaborations with local environmental educators or experts to develop richer curricula.

To address this gap, education policymakers should consider implementing structured training programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills and confidence. Online courses, hands-on workshops, and peer-led communities of practice could be valuable tools for professional development.

4.2.6 Enhancing School-Wide and Policy Support

While individual teachers play a vital role in implementing environmental education, the study underscores the importance of school-wide and policy-level support. Schools that had a clear sustainability vision and integrated environmental education across multiple subjects saw higher engagement from both teachers and students. This aligns with findings by Monroe et al. (2019), who emphasize that institutional commitment significantly influences the success of environmental education initiatives. Institutional policies that support the integration of environmental education into school systems can provide a foundation for teachers to implement innovative practices. Policy recommendations could include mandating environmental education as part of the core curriculum, allocating funding for school-based sustainability projects, and encouraging collaboration between schools and environmental organizations. Additionally, providing teachers with structured lesson plans, activity guides, and assessment tools would facilitate more effective implementation.

4.2.7 Engaging Students Through Hands-On Learning

A particularly compelling finding from this study is that students responded more positively to hands-on, experiential learning activities compared to traditional lecture-based methods. Teachers who incorporated outdoor learning experiences, nature walks, and interactive projects reported higher levels of student engagement. This aligns with the work of Sobel (2004), who advocates for place-based education as a means of fostering deeper connections between children and their environment. By embedding

environmental education within real-world experiences, students develop a more profound appreciation for environmental issues. Schools should therefore prioritize experiential learning opportunities, such as school gardens, recycling initiatives, and environmental storytelling, to make environmental education more impactful and engaging.

4.2.8 Implications for Future Research

The study findings opened several avenues for more research. Future studies could explore:

- The long-term impact of environmental education on students' environmental behaviors and attitudes.
- The effectiveness of different pedagogical approaches in teaching environmental concepts.
- The role of digital tools and technology in enhancing environmental learning experiences.
- Comparative studies between schools with strong environmental education programs and those with limited integration to identify best practices.

4.3. Conclusion

This study contributes meaningfully to the growing body of literature on environmental education by shedding light on the specific challenges and opportunities encountered by pre-primary school teachers as they strive to integrate environmental concepts into their teaching practices. The findings underscore the urgent need for enhanced and ongoing teacher training, better allocation and accessibility of teaching resources, stronger institutional and policy-level support, and the adoption of experiential, hands-on learning strategies tailored to young learners. These elements are crucial for making

environmental education more relevant, engaging, and impactful at the foundational level of schooling.

By addressing these gaps, education systems can empower teachers and create learning environments that nurture a generation of environmentally conscious, responsible, and proactive individuals. Collaboration among policymakers, educators, school administrators, and community stakeholders is essential to ensure that environmental education is not only implemented effectively but also sustained over time.

Moreover, future research should continue to explore innovative, context-sensitive strategies to strengthen the integration of environmental education across diverse educational settings. In particular, further investigation into how early exposure to environmental concepts shapes children's long-term values, attitudes, and behaviors toward sustainability could provide valuable insights. Such research could inform the development of more effective educational practices and policies aimed at fostering lifelong environmental stewardship, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and resilient society.

4.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several key recommendations are proposed to strengthen the integration of environmental education in pre-primary classrooms.

4.4.1. Develop Continuous Professional Development Programs:

Education authorities should prioritize structured and ongoing professional development for teachers, focusing on environmental education. These programs should include hands-on workshops, peer learning opportunities, mentorship, and collaborations with local environmental experts. Such initiatives will help build

teachers' confidence and competence in delivering age-appropriate, engaging environmental content.

4.4.2. Integrate Environmental Education into the Core Curriculum:

To overcome curriculum-related constraints, environmental education should be formally embedded into the national curriculum. Policy-level support is essential to ensure environmental concepts are not treated as optional but are recognized as integral to early childhood education. Curriculum guidelines should offer flexible, interdisciplinary frameworks to allow integration across subjects like language, math, and social studies.

4.4.3. Enhance Resource Availability and Access:

Schools should be equipped with age-appropriate teaching materials, visual aids, and access to outdoor learning spaces. Partnerships with environmental organizations, community groups, and nature reserves should be encouraged to provide real-world learning experiences and supplement classroom teaching.

4.4.4. Promote Experiential and Place-Based Learning

Environmental education at the pre-primary level should emphasize hands-on, experiential approaches such as school gardens, storytelling, nature walks, and recycling projects. These methods foster deeper environmental awareness and make learning more meaningful for young children.

4.4.5. Encourage Whole-School Sustainability Practices

Schools should adopt a whole-school approach to sustainability, embedding environmental values in school culture, routines, and practices. Administrators should provide institutional support through clear policies, dedicated time for environmental activities, and encouragement for teacher-led initiatives.

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Appendix

I. Research Tool (English)

IDI Guideline for Teachers

1. What does environmental education mean to you?
2. Do you think environmental education is important for pre-primary school children? Why or why not?
3. Do the textbooks you use cover enough environmental topics?
4. Does the curriculum provide adequate guidance for teaching environmental issues?
5. Do you think your school effectively teaches environmental education to children?
6. What challenges do you face when teaching environmental topics in your classroom?
7. Do you have access to enough resources or support to teach environmental education effectively?
8. Have you used any creative methods to teach environmental topics? Can you share an example?
9. What additional support or resources would help you teach environmental topics more effectively?

II. Translated Research Tools (Bengali)

IDI Guideline for Teachers (Bengali)

- ১। আপনার মতে পরিবেশ শিক্ষা বলতে কী বোঝায়?
- ২। আপনি কি মনে করেন প্রাক-প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য পরিবেশ শিক্ষা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ? কেন বা কেন নয়?
- ৩। আপনি যে পাঠ্যপুস্তকগুলো ব্যবহার করেন, সেগুলো কি যথেষ্ট পরিমাণ পরিবেশ বিষয়ক বিষয় অন্তর্ভুক্ত করা আছে?
- ৪। আপনার ব্যবহৃত পাঠ্যক্রম কি পরিবেশ এর বিষয়গুলো পড়ানোর জন্য যথেষ্ট দিকনির্দেশনা প্রদান করে?
- ৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন, আপনার বিদ্যালয় শিশুদের পরিবেশ শিক্ষা যথাযথ ভাবে প্রদান করে?
- ৬। আপনার শ্রেণিকক্ষে পরিবেশ বিষয়ক বিষয় পড়ানোর ক্ষেত্রে আপনি কী ধরনের চ্যালেঞ্জের মুখোমুখি হন?
- ৭। পরিবেশ শিক্ষা কার্যকর ভাবে পড়ানোর জন্য আপনার কাছে কি পর্যাপ্ত সম্পদ বা প্রাতিষ্ঠানিক সহায়তা রয়েছে?
- ৮। আপনি কি কখনও পরিবেশ বিষয়ক পাঠদানে সৃজনশীল কোনো পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করেছেন? কোন উদাহরণ দিতে পারবেন?
- ৯। পরিবেশ বিষয়ক বিষয়গুলো আরও কার্যকরভাবে পড়ানোর জন্য আপনার কী ধরনের অতিরিক্ত সহায়তা বা সম্পদ প্রয়োজন বলে মনে করেন?

III. Consent Form

Consent Form for Participation in Research Interviews

Title of the Research Study:

The Perspective of Teachers on Integrating Environmental Education in Urban
Primary Schools in Bangladesh

Researcher:

Md Tanzil Hasan

Master's Student, Early Childhood Development (ECD)

BRAC University, Bangladesh

Purpose of the Study:

This research aims to understand how urban primary school teachers perceive the integration of environmental education in classrooms, the challenges they face, and the opportunities available for enhancing environmental education.

Participation Details:

- You are being invited to participate in an interview for this study.
- The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes and will focus on your views and experiences related to environmental education.

Your Rights as a Participant:

- Participation is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.
- You may choose not to answer any specific question during the interview.

- Your responses will remain confidential, and your identity will not be revealed in any reports or publications resulting from this study.

Data Use:

- The interview will be audio-recorded (if you agree) to ensure the accuracy of the information collected.
- The recorded data will be securely stored and used solely for research purposes.
- Data will be anonymized, and no identifying information will be shared.

Consent Statement:

I have read and understood the purpose and details of this study. I voluntarily agree to participate in the interview and give my consent for the information I provide to be used for research purposes.

Audio Recording:

(Please check one)

- ☐ I agree to have the interview audio-recorded.
- ☐ I do not agree to have the interview audio-recorded.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

Md Tanzil Hasan

Email: tanzil@iamsuperkid.com

Phone: 01324249680

Thank you for your time and participation!

IV. Sample Transcript of Conversation

The following in-depth interview was conducted in Uttara on 28th February 2025. The participant is a female teacher with over two years of experience in teaching pre-primary classes. She completed her schooling in an English-medium background and later pursued a Master's in Business Administration from a well-known private university located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Q1. What does environmental education mean to you?

Ans

Environmental education is all about understanding nature, animals and plants. It teaches us how to keep the earth clean and safe. We can learn why trees, water and air are important for all the living things. Through environmental education. It helps us realize the dangers of pollution and how it harms our planet. Through this, we actually discover simple ways to save energy and reduce waste. It also teaches us to be kind to animals and respect nature. So we understand how climate change is affecting our world. Most importantly, it encourages us to take small steps to protect the environment. It is not just about learning, it is about caring also, taking action and making a difference. If we truly care about our future, we must care for our planet today.

Q 2. Do you think environmental education is important for primary school children? Why or why not?

Ans

Absolutely, young children learn quickly and remember things for life. Teaching them about nature from an early age makes them love and respect it. So if they learn about trees, animals and water now, they will grow up to protect them.

Simple lessons like planting trees, saving water and not littering become lifelong habits for them. So they start to understand that every small action counts. So if we teach them now, they will be more responsible as they grow. Fun activities, make environmental education exciting and enjoyable. So whenever children see the beauty of nature, they naturally want to protect it. So yes, starting early is the key to building a generation that truly cares of the nature.

Q3. Do the textbooks you use cover enough environmental topics?

Ans

According to my perception, some textbooks do include environmental topics, but they are not enough actually. They most talk about trees, animals and recycling. However, they do not explain pollution in detail, which is very important actually. So many books do not even mention climate change. Our children need to see real life examples in their lessons. So fun activities and stories about nature would make learning more engaging, I think. So we need books that show both the beauty of nature and the dangers of harming it.

A strong foundation in environmental education starts with the right materials. I think so. We must ensure that our textbooks teach children not just facts but also how to take care of our planet.

Q4. Does the curriculum provide adequate guidance for teaching environmental issues?

Ans

The curriculum does include some environmental lessons, but it lacks depth. It mainly focuses on nature, seasons and weather. However, serious topics like pollution, global warming, also deforestation are often missing. So teachers need clear instruction and resources to teach these important topics.

More outdoor activities should be included so the children can experience nature. The curriculum should encourage projects like planting trees and recycling.

Experiments and hands-on learning can make lessons more interesting. We need a curriculum that not only informs but also inspires children to take action. So a better curriculum will create students who love and care for the environment.

Q5. Do you think your school effectively teaches environmental education to children?

Ans

My school tries its best, but there is room for improvement. Some teachers include fun activities, but not all do. So outdoor learning would make lessons more exciting and practical. We all know that. But sometimes environmental topics are rushed or not taken seriously enough. So we actually need real life examples and hand-on activities to strengthen these lessons.

Small initiatives can be taken, some small initiatives like placing recycling bins in classrooms can make a very big difference. Watching videos, doing experiments and visiting nature spots would help children better understand.

Maybe a school can plan a field trip where they can take the students to a nature-based place where students can learn about nature more. So schools should plan more nature-based projects to create awareness. If children see and experience nature, they will grow up to protect it. We must find more creative ways to make environmental education effective.

Q6. What challenges do you face when teaching environmental topics in your classroom?

Ans

I think one challenge is that children find it hard to understand pollution and climate

change. So they are very young actually. So we must teach them in simple ways. The geography book we use,

There are not enough pictures and videos to show real life problem. So what we do is we gave them projects, scrapbook projects, where they collect information about the nature, rivers, whatever the topic is. They write the data and information. Also, they attach different collected materials about the natures, maybe some grains, crops, trees like this. So it helps them to learn and understand more about nature. Another challenge is that some children forget what they learn. Very quickly they forget it. Parents do not always help children practice these lessons at home. So there is not enough time in the school schedule to focus on nature. So outdoor learning would help but

We also need more materials like posters and models. If teaching is more fun, children will enjoy learning about the art.

Q7. Do you have access to enough resources or support to teach environmental education effectively?

Ans

At (She mentioned the name of her school), we have some resources for teaching environmental education, but more are needed. We could use more books, posters, charts to help students understand environmental topics better.

Videos and animations would make learning more engaging, especially for young children. Also, some hand-on activity kits with tools for experiments and projects would be helpful. A small school garden would allow students to experience nature directly.

I think training for teachers would also improve how we teach environmental topics.

So with these resources, we could teach environmental education more effectively and

make learning more exciting for students.

Q8. Have you used any creative methods to teach environmental topics? Can you share an example?

Ans

Yes, I try to make environmental lessons fun and interactive for my students. One creative activity we did was making a small garden using plastic bottles. The children planted seeds, watered them, and observed their growth over time, which helped them understand how plants need sunlight, water, and soil.

We also made posters about saving water and keeping the environment clean, which we hanged on the walls of school. Then I also used storytelling to explain environmental issues in a

way young children can understand. These creative methods make learning fun, engaging and easy for the students. We also played games about pollution and recycling that helped students learn in an exciting way.

We took a nature walk around the school that helped children notice trees, birds, and insects. We used recycled materials to make animals and talked about why recycle is important. So yes, these are the creative methods that I use to teach environmental topics.

Q9. What additional support or resources would help you teach environmental topics more effectively?

Ans

I think we need more colorful books with pictures to make lesson more interesting for young learners, which will make the topic more effective. Videos and animation would also help children understand complex topics easily, which I mentioned earlier.

I display, I show so many different types of videos, which makes the topic clear, actually.

We can use more posters and charts in classroom that would make it easier to explain environmental concepts. A guest speaker session can also help, such as farmers or environmental experts could visit and share their knowledge, which will be a great experience for the students.

Field trip. Field trip is a very good resource. Field trip to parks or farms would give students real world experience with nature. More involvement from parents would also help reinforce environmental learning at home.

we can do is we can play fun games and songs related to environmental topics that would make lesson more engaging for young students.