

**PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR TRANSGENDER
CHILDREN: AVAILABLE SUPPORTS AND FACILITIES
FOR TRANSGENDER CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM
OF GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

By

Jannatul Ferdous Tithi
18357041

A thesis submitted to the BRAC Institute of Educational Development
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master
of Education in Educational Leadership and School Improvement

BRAC Institute of Educational Development
BRAC University
May, 2025

© 2025. Jannatul Ferdous Tithi
All rights reserved.

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my 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 have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Jannatul Ferdous Tithi

18357041

Approval

The thesis/project titled “PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR TRANSGENDER CHILDREN: AVAILABLE SUPPORTS AND FACILITIES FOR TRANSGENDER CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM OF GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS ” submitted by

1. Jannatul Ferdous Tithi (18357041)]

Of May, 2025 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Leadership and School Improvement on [29-05-2025].

Examining Committee:

Supervisor:

(Member)

Dr. Dilruba Sultana

Senior Lecturer, BRAC Institute of Educational Development,
BRAC University

Program Coordinator:

(Member)

Dr. Somnath Saha

Assistant Professor, BRAC Institute of Educational
Department

External Expert Examiner:

(Member)

Saraf Afra Salsabil

Senior Curriculum Developer, BRAC Institute of Educational
Department

Departmental Head:

(Chair)

Erum Mariam, Ph.D.

Executive Director, BRAC Institute of Educational
Department

Ethics Statement

I, Jannatul Ferdous Tithi, solemnly affirm that the research study entitled "**Primary Education for Transgender Children: Available Supports and Facilities for Transgender children in the classroom of Government Primary Schools**" was conducted in full adherence to the ethical standards set forth by the BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BIED), BRAC University.

All research participants provided informed consent prior to their involvement, ensuring their voluntary and understanding participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the study no identifying information was disclosed in data collection, analysis, or reporting.

This research upholds the principles of integrity, respect, and fairness in educational research, aligning with BIED's ethical guidelines.

Abstract:

This study explores the challenges transgender (TG) students face in primary education, focusing on societal attitudes, institutional barriers, and inclusion efforts. Interviews with two TG students, four teachers, and four parents, along with classroom observations, reveal deep-rooted stigma, with many associating transgender identities with sin or moral corruption. TG students experience bullying, exclusion, and familial rejection, while teachers often lack awareness, reinforcing binary gender norms. Some schools provide support through fee waivers, counseling, and inclusive programs, improving TG students' well-being. However, resistance from parents and staff hinders progress, with some advocating for segregated schooling. While a few teachers foster inclusivity through respectful language and individualized support, systemic discrimination persists. The findings underscore the need for policy reforms, teacher training, gender-neutral facilities, and curriculum integration of gender diversity. Recommendations include sensitization programs, mental health support, and stronger anti-discrimination measures to ensure equitable education for TG students in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Transgender students; Primary education; Discrimination; Inclusion; Bangladesh; Gender identity.

Dedication

This Thesis is dedicated to my beloved colleague Late Sagorika Das, Co- Founder of SHOHAG SWAPNADHARA PATHSHALA. A relentless advocate for education, she devoted her life to ensuring quality learning for underprivileged children in the slums of Bangladesh. In a society where women's voices were often stifled, she persevered with unwavering courage and determination. Her tireless efforts, against all odds, illuminated the path for countless young minds. Though she is no longer with us, her legacy lives on in every child she empowered. This thesis stands as a humble tribute to her indomitable spirit and lifelong commitment to education.

Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to all those who contributed to the successful completion of this research. Their unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement made this journey possible. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my thesis supervisor, Dr. Dilruba Sultana, for her invaluable advice, insightful feedback, and constant encouragement throughout this study. Her expertise and patience greatly enriched my work. I am sincerely thankful to all the participants who generously shared their time, experiences, and perspectives, making this research meaningful. Without their cooperation, this study would not have been possible.

A special note of gratitude goes to my beloved husband, whose endless support, patience, and inspiration kept me going. His unwavering belief in me, even during moments of uncertainty, gave me the strength to persevere.

Lastly, I extend my sincere thanks to all my well-wishers, friends, and family members who stood by me in ways big and small. Though I may not name each one individually, their kindness and encouragement have left an indelible mark on this journey.

Thank you.

Jannatul Ferdous Tithi

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Approval	iii
Ethics Statement.....	v
Abstract:	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgement	viii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Acronyms.....	xiii
Chapter 1 Introduction and Background	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Topic.....	2
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.4 Research Questions	4
1.5 Purpose of the Study	4
1.6 Significance of the Study	5
Chapter 2 Literature Review and Conceptual Framework.....	7
2.1 Concept of Transgender.....	7
2.2 Status of primary education of the transgender student in Bangladesh.....	8

2.3 Context and Background of transgender children in Bangladesh.....	9
2.4 Challenges faced by transgender students in primary education.....	11
2.5 Acceptance of transgender children in primary school environment.....	13
2.6 Acceptance of the transgender children in the classroom practices.....	14
2.7 Supports and Facilities required for Transgender students in school.....	16
Conceptual Framework.....	18
Chapter 3 Methodology	19
3.1 Research Approach	19
3.2 Research Site.....	20
3.3 Research Participantas	20
3.4 Data Collection Methods	22
3.5 Role of the Researcher	25
3.6 Data Analysis	25
3.7 Ethical Issues and Concerns.....	25
3.8 Credibility and Rigor	26
3.9 Limitations of the study.....	26
Chapter 4 Results of the Study	27
4.1 Introduction.....	27
4.2 Concept of Transgender.....	27
4.3 Context and Background of TG Children.....	28
4.4 Status of Primary Education of the TG Children.....	30

4.5 Challenges faced by TG Students in Primary Education.....	31
4.6 Acceptance of TG Children in Primary School Environment.....	33
4.7 Acceptance of TG Children in Classroom Practices.....	34
4.8 Supports and Facilities required for TG Students.....	35
Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusion of the Study	39
5.1 Lack of Awareness and Misconceptions about Transgender identity.....	39
5.1.1 Social and Religious Stigma.....	39
5.1.2 Reluctant Acceptance and Family Rejection.....	40
5.2 Discrimination and Exclusion in School Environment.....	40
5.2.1 Bullying and Peer Harassment.....	40
5.2.2 Teachers Biases and Misgendering	41
5.2.3 Exclusion from Social Activities.....	41
5.3 Limited Institutional Support and Facilities.....	41
5.3.1 Lack of Gender- Neutral Infrastructure.....	41
5.3.2 Financial Barriers and Dropout Rates.....	42
5.3.3 Mental Health Support is lacking.....	42
5.4 Efforts towards Inclusion and Policy Gaps.....	42
5.4.1 Some School show Progress.....	42
5.4.2 Government Policies Lack Enforcement.....	43
5.4.3 NGOs play a Critical Role.....	43

5.5 Conclusion	44
5.6 Recommendations.....	44
References	46
Appendices.....	52
Appendix A. Consent Letter	52
Appendix B. Interview Guideline for Transgender Students	53
Appendix C. Interview Guideline for Teachers	55
Appendix D. Interview Guideline for Teachers.....	58
Appendix E. Interview Guideline for Teachers.....	59
Appendix F. Interview Guideline for Teachers	60

List of Acronyms

ATEO	Assistant Thana Education Officer
BANBEIS	Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BIED	BRAC Institute of Educational Development
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BLAST	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
GPS	Government Primary School
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IEF	Inclusive Education Framework
JMBD	Justice Makers Bangladesh
M.Ed.	Master of Education
MPO	Monthly Pay Order
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization

TG	Transgender
UNISEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
WSUP	Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background of the Study

1.1 Introduction

In recent years, Bangladesh has made notable progress in its education sector, marked by rising enrolment rates and initiatives to promote inclusivity for disadvantaged groups. However, transgender students commonly identified as *hijra* or *third gender* in Bangladesh (Hossain, 2017) continue to encounter severe obstacles in receiving adequate support and accommodations in schools. Despite the government's formal recognition of the third gender in 2013 and subsequent policies aimed at fostering inclusion, transgender children remain among the most excluded populations in the education system (Khan *et al.*, 2019). The *hijra* community in Bangladesh experiences widespread social and economic marginalization, including limited access to education, property ownership, and marriage rights, largely due to the deep-rooted stigma attached to their identity (Snigdha, 2021). Educational barriers such as systemic discrimination, lack of enrolment opportunities, and high dropout rates further hinder their academic progress (Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2022). These challenges negatively impact their learning outcomes and long-term educational goals, often forcing them to abandon their studies prematurely (Khan, 2022). Within Government Primary Schools (GPS), transgender students endure persistent discrimination from both teachers and peers, who often refuse to treat them with basic dignity (Kalam *et al.*, 2024). Once their gender identity is revealed, they face various forms of mistreatment, including social ostracization, bullying, and verbal abuse. Many view them as outcasts, attributing their existence to parental wrongdoing or societal misfortune (Islam *et al.*, 2024). Such hostile attitudes reinforce feelings of alienation, leading many transgender students to perceive themselves as abnormal. Additionally, schools lack essential facilities to support transgender students. Safe and accessible restrooms, common rooms, and seating arrangements are virtually non-existent. They are frequently excluded from recreational activities, subjected to ridicule in classrooms, and denied emotional support or guidance from school authorities (Islam *et al.*, 2024). This absence of an inclusive and supportive learning environment further exacerbates their struggles. As a signatory to the Education for All initiative under the United Nations (2015),

Bangladesh is obligated to provide equitable education without discrimination a principle also enshrined in Articles 17 and 27 of its constitution (Ministry of Education, 2010). Given that the hijra community has been legally recognized as a distinct gender, they are entitled to the same educational rights as other citizens. Nevertheless, transgender individuals continue to be systematically excluded from education simply because they differ from the majority. Persistent bullying by classmates and even teachers creates an unwelcoming atmosphere, discouraging many from attending school (Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, a significant number drop out early due to social rejection, depriving them of a fundamental right and contributing to unutilized human potential (Islam, 2016). This study aims to examine the existing support systems and facilities for transgender students in primary education, as well as their level of acceptance within Government Primary School classrooms.

1.2 Research Topic

Primary Education for Transgender Children: Available Supports and Facilities for Transgender Children in the Classroom of Government Primary School

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The latest ‘Population & Housing Census report’ confirms that the estimated number of Hijra population is 12,629. Of this, 50.25% reside in urban areas, with the highest concentration (4577 individuals, approximately 36.24%) found in the Dhaka Division (BBS, 2022). However, other estimates suggest that the number may exceed 50,000 (Chowdhury, 2020).

But due to lack of education, this huge amount manpower are lagging behind the main stream. It is a matter of regret that our society almost ignores the transgender rights of education (subhrajit, 2014). And behind this issue, one of the main factors is their acceptance. Transgender people are not accepted cordially to anyone and even if in education sector (Alam *et al.*, 2023). In Bangladesh, every citizen regardless of gender identity or socioeconomic status is entitled to education. However, systemic neglect has left this right unfulfilled, particularly for transgender individuals. Social indifference and institutional barriers continue to hinder their access to schools and universities, depriving them of equal opportunities. And even of some of them hardly got the opportunity to attend school, they are not accepted cordially by their class teachers and classmates in the classroom (Lubna, 2019). Most of the classroom environment is not convivial and comfortable for them. Even if they did not have any particular toilet for use. Their physical structure is not similar to women, and this creates an uncomfortable

situation when they enter the one dedicated for women. They also feel uncomfortable using the one for men. They have also reported the discriminatory environments in their schools due to feminine behaviour by the classmates, teachers, and the other school staffs. Most of the respondents didn't find the school environment supportive to continue their studies as they had to face sexual harassment and physical assault by the teachers due to their feminine attitude where they were termed as "effeminate boys" by the teachers or friends. Eventually they had to end up with a discontinued study, which finally lessened their prospect in future employments (Islam *et al.*, 2024). All of those issues revealed that the transgender children are the most deprived one in our society and they are depriving from their most important basic human right that is Education. From the above stated study example, it is clear that Transgender students are not warmly accepted not only by the teachers but also by their classmates. They are victims of bullying and other mental tortures in their classroom. Along with this, they don't get any kind of mental support from the teachers nor from the school. The school authority are not willing to provide any special facilities for them such as Separate Toilet. Hijras continue to face discrimination and are deprived of educational and equitable chances (Islam, 2016). Hijra children discontinue their education because of several factors, including physical and psychological mistreatment, insufficient financial and emotional assistance, familial constraints that hinder the educational opportunities available to Hijra individuals, bias inside the classroom and institutional (Pandey, 2018; Biswas & Soora, 2021). The state must, therefore, safeguard Hijras against violence and discrimination and support their citizenship rights (Jebin, 2018).

This study probes to address the gap in understanding the available supports and facilities for transgender children in the classroom of GPS. It aims to explore the extent to which these students are included in the education system, the challenges they face in the classroom, and the treatment they get from their peers and teachers. By examining these challenges, this research aims to formulate data-driven policy suggestions that can foster a more welcoming and equitable learning atmosphere for transgender students in the classroom of govt. primary school of Bangladesh.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What types of supports and facilities are available to ensure primary education for the transgender children in the classroom of Government Primary School?
2. How do the transgender children are treated in the Government primary school environment including the classroom?
3. What type of support systems are available for transgender children in government primary school classrooms?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

This research aimed to investigate the available support structures, infrastructural provisions, and societal attitudes toward transgender children within government primary school classrooms in Bangladesh. Specifically, the study examined the extent of inclusivity and accessibility for transgender students in GPS settings by addressing three core research questions:

The first objective of this study identified the types of institutional supports and facilities provided to ensure primary education for transgender children in the classroom of GPS. This included examining whether schools have gender-sensitive infrastructure (such as inclusive restrooms), anti-discrimination policies, specialized learning materials, and trained educators who can address the unique needs of transgender students. By assessing these factors, I would try to determine whether the existing framework is sufficient to facilitate an inclusive learning environment for transgender children. Additionally, I believed by identifying existing facilities and gaps, this research would contribute to policy discussions on how to better support transgender students in the classroom of GPS. In case of second objective, I would focus on understanding how transgender children are treated within the school environment, including interactions with teachers, peers. Discrimination, bullying, and social ostracization were significant barriers that transgender students often face, which could hinder their academic performance and emotional well-being. I would explore the attitudes and behaviors of school stakeholders toward transgender students to assess whether the school environment is welcoming or hostile. Additionally, I would find out whether any awareness programs or sensitization training are in place to foster an inclusive atmosphere. Furthermore, I would explore the social dynamics within schools to determine whether transgender children

experience equal participation in classroom activities, sports, and other school functions. By shedding light on these experiences, I had aim to highlight areas where institutional changes are needed to advance educational institutions where inclusivity and consideration are foundational.

The third objective explored the formal and informal support systems available for transgender children in government primary school classrooms. This included assessing whether counseling services, peer support groups, or community-based interventions are accessible to transgender students. Furthermore, I revealed whether schools have established any formal or informal mechanisms to assist transgender students in their academic and social development. Additionally, I explored the role of parents, community leaders, and local government bodies in supporting transgender children's education. Through an evaluation of existing support mechanisms, this research assessed their efficacy in addressing the needs of transgender students, while proposing enhancements to guarantee equitable access to educational opportunities and resources. The study's primary objective was to examine the quality of primary education provided to transgender children in government primary schools (GPS), with particular attention to classroom experiences. By exploring three key research questions, the investigation identified available support systems, systemic obstacles, and prevailing attitudes toward transgender learners. The resulting insights not only illuminate the challenges confronting this marginalized group but also offer data-informed strategies for educational policymakers, school administrators, and rights organizations to foster meaningful inclusion. Ultimately, this research aimed to promote inclusive education policies that ensure equal opportunities and dignity for transgender children in the classroom of GPS.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant importance as it explores the availability of supports and facilities for transgender children in the classroom of GPS, addressing a critically underrepresented issue in the primary education system. Transgender children often face discrimination, exclusion, and a lack of tailored resources, which hinders their access to quality primary education. By examining the types of support available such as inclusive policies, teacher training, gender-sensitive infrastructure, and psychosocial assistance this research would highlight gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Additionally, the study investigates how transgender children are treated within the school environment, shedding light on societal attitudes, bullying, and institutional biases that may

affect their learning experiences. Understanding these dynamics is essential for fostering inclusive education policies that ensure equal opportunities for all children, regardless of gender identity.

Finally, by identifying existing support systems, this research can guide policymakers, educators, and NGOs in developing targeted interventions. The findings will contribute to creating safer, more inclusive classrooms. Ultimately, this study advocates for systemic changes that uphold the rights and dignity of transgender children in the classroom of GPS.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework of the Study

In this chapter, I have synthesized insights gathered from a variety of scholarly and non-scholarly sources, including books, journal articles, news reports, online publications, and official documents. These materials were critically examined to develop a deeper understanding of the research topic. To ensure clarity and coherence, the literature review has been systematically structured into the following thematic sections: 1) Concept of Transgender, 2) Status of primary education of the transgender student in Bangladesh, 3) Context and Background of Transgender Students in Bangladesh, 4) Challenges Faced by Transgender Children in Primary Education, 5) Acceptance of transgender children in primary school environment, 6) Acceptance of Transgender Students in classroom practices, 7) Supports and Facilities Required for Transgender Students,

2.1 Concept of Transgender:

The concept of transgender is still relatively new and not well understood by many people. The term “hijra” is commonly used to refer to transgender people in Bangladesh, this term often associated with a specific cultural and social role that existed in south Asia for centuries. In Bangladesh the Trans people are pronounce the term as “HEEJLA or HIJRA” (Islam, 2020). The term Hijra has its roots in the Indian subcontinent, originating from the Hindustani language, an Indo-Aryan vernacular (Kachru, 2008, p. 81). Historically, Hijra has been employed across South Asia to refer to individuals who may be identified as transvestites, intersex, eunuchs, or transsexual men (Chakrapani, 2010; Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2022).

The term Trans (sometimes written as Trans with an asterisk) serves as an inclusive shorthand encompassing a diverse range of gender identities. This includes, but is not limited to, transgender, transfeminine, transmasculine, transsexual, transvestite, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, genderfuck, genderless, agender, non-gendered, third gender, two-

spirit, bigender, androgynous, and gender-nonconforming individuals. Scholars and activists recognize the nuanced and evolving nature of these terms, highlighting the challenges in navigating such a broad and complex lexicon (Beemyn, 2003, 2005; Beemyn & Rankin, 2011; Butler, 1988; Feinberg, 1999; Valentine, 2007).

Transgender individuals are those whose gender identity or expression does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth (Altilio & Otis-Green, 2011). The term transgender often abbreviated as Trans functions as an umbrella category. It encompasses not only those whose gender identity contrasts with their assigned sex (such as Trans men and Trans women) but also those who do not fit strictly within binary male/female classifications. This includes non-binary, genderqueer, bigender, pangender, genderfluid, and agender individuals (Forsyth & Copes, 2014).

2.2 Status of primary education of the transgender student in Bangladesh:

In 2013, Bangladesh formally acknowledged Hijras transgender individuals as a distinct third gender in official records (UNICEF Annual Report-Bangladesh, 2013). The National Education Policy 2010 (revised in 2021) emphasizes inclusive education for marginalized groups, including transgender students (Ministry of Education, Bangladesh). The first and most essential measure is providing transgender individuals with proper education. Usually during the admission period, transgender students did not face any trouble. But the main challenge is that “Social Acceptance” which becoming a threat for their day to day life and also their presence in mainstream. The hijra population in Bangladesh faced significant deprivation in terms of education, land ownership, marriage, and other rights due to the pejorative connotation associated with the term “Hijra” in Bangladeshi society (Snigdha, 2021). The educational environment in the classroom of GPS usually unfavorable for the transgender students. Most of the teachers, parents and peer groups treated them as other gender rather than their actual gender. Many parents become aware of their child’s true gender identity but deliberately conceal it due to fears of social ostracization. This reluctance often extends to denying their children access to formal education, as schools frequently become spaces of discrimination once their gender identity is disclosed (Chowdhury, 2020). Transgender individuals face systemic marginalization, with societal norms rooted in rigid cultural traditions denying them basic dignity and acceptance. Chandra (2017) highlights how deeply entrenched patriarchal values prevent transgender people from being seen as equal members of society, further excluding them from educational opportunities. Within educational institutions, transgender

students endure relentless bullying, verbal abuse, and social isolation due to their non-conforming gender expression. Such hostile treatment not only demoralizes them but also diminishes their academic motivation (Islam, 2024). Teachers often contribute to this toxic environment by ridiculing or mistreating transgender students, making schools unsafe and unwelcoming (Ullman, 2017). For instance, feminine-presenting boys face severe intolerance, as schools enforce strict gender norms, leaving transgender children vulnerable to harassment and exclusion even in communal spaces like playgrounds (Khan *et al.*, 2009). Additionally, Bangladesh's educational infrastructure fails to accommodate transgender students, particularly in providing gender-inclusive facilities such as sanitation, further exacerbating their marginalization

Even if for the transgender children there is no specific washroom. Due to their identity crisis most of the time they became confused which washroom is for them “Male or Female?” Schools could implemented various support systems to assist transgender children. Peer support groups, counseling services, and partnerships with LGBTQ+ organizations have been shown to enhance the well-being of transgender students (Russell *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, involving parents and caregivers in creating inclusive policies can strengthen the support network for transgender children (Ryan *et al.*, 2013). Government primary schools can also collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide resources such as educational materials, training programs, and awareness campaigns. Some schools have started providing gender-neutral toilets, though implementation is still limited (UNICEF Bangladesh Report, 2021). The government, with UNICEF and local NGOs, conducts awareness campaigns to reduce bullying of transgender students in schools (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2020). The Right to Protection from Discrimination Act (2015) theoretically protects transgender students from harassment, though enforcement remains weak (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust – BLAST).

2.3 Context and Background of transgender children in Bangladesh:

Official statistics from the Department of Social Services indicate that Bangladesh is home to around 12,629 Hijras (BIDS, 2022). However, research conducted by the Bandhu Social Welfare Society (2015) suggests that the actual Hijra population may be substantially larger, with approximations varying from 50,000 to 150,000. Chowdhury (2020) similarly estimates

the figure to be above 50,000. Despite their significant numbers, most Hijras are systematically denied fundamental rights owing to widespread social exclusion. Prevailing negative attitudes among the general population have resulted in widespread indifference toward integrating transgender individuals into the formal education system (Trimarchi, 2022). As a signatory to the United Nations' Education for All initiative, Bangladesh has committed to achieving universal primary education as part of the Millennium Development Goals. This commitment is further reinforced by Articles 17 and 27 of the national constitution, which guarantee non-discriminatory access to education for all citizens (Ministry of Education, 2021). Education is, therefore, an inalienable right for every Bangladeshi, including transgender individuals. However, societal attitudes remain largely apathetic toward ensuring educational equity for the Hijra community, reflecting a troubling disregard for their fundamental rights. Persistent social prejudices and institutional barriers have forced many transgender individuals to relinquish their educational aspirations (Khan, 2022). Historically, the Hijra community has faced severe social marginalization in Bangladesh. Their limited access to education has perpetuated their low social standing. A distinct divide has long existed between the Hijra community and other sexual minorities, stemming from disparities in education, socioeconomic status, linguistic patterns, and public visibility. Nevertheless, recent years have witnessed a gradual erosion of these barriers, fostering greater solidarity among sexual minority groups and generating renewed optimism (Sifat & Shafi, 2021). Despite these positive developments, mainstream Bangladeshi society continues to exhibit widespread reluctance to engage with the Hijra community, sustaining their exclusion from social and educational opportunities.

Their current situation has reduced them to abject poverty, illiteracy, hostility, and humiliation (Islam, 2019; Aziz and Azhar, 2020). A 2023 study by UNICEF Bangladesh revealed that only 12% of transgender children complete primary school, with harassment and inadequate facilities being major barriers. While the government provides stipends and has introduced gender-neutral toilet initiatives in some urban schools, implementation remains inconsistent (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2023).

NGOs like Bandhu Social Welfare Society and BRAC supplement state efforts through awareness campaigns and scholarships, but widespread policy enforcement and societal acceptance are still needed to ensure equitable education for transgender students in Bangladesh. Bangladesh government has taken steps to include transgender students in mainstream secular schools, Islamic educational institutions such as Qawmi and Alia madrasas remained largely inaccessible to them. The National Education Policy 2010 (revised

2021) promoted inclusive education, but its implementation in religious schools is limited (Ministry of Education, 2021). A 2023 study by Justice Makers Bangladesh found that less than 5% of madrasas admit transgender students, with many citing "religious incompatibility" as a reason (JMBD, 2023). However, some NGOs, such as Bandhu Social Welfare Society, have initiated dialogue with moderate Islamic scholars to advocate for inclusive madrasa policies. Additionally, a few Alia madrasas in Dhaka and Chattogram have begun enrolling transgender students with support from local activists (Daily Star, 2024). In Bangladesh, transgender individuals encounter significant barriers when pursuing higher education, primarily due to systemic discrimination, social stigma, and institutional barriers. A 2024 study by Human Rights Watch revealed that less than 1% of transgender individuals pursue tertiary education, with many dropping out due to harassment, lack of gender-sensitive facilities, and financial constraints (HRW, 2024). Public universities such as the University of Dhaka and Jahangirnagar University have introduced quotas for transgender applicants, but implementation is inconsistent (The Daily Star, 2023).

2.4 Challenges Faced by Transgender Children in Primary Education

A 2024 report by UNICEF Bangladesh highlighted that over 60% of transgender children face verbal or physical abuse from peers, while teachers often lack training to address their needs (UNICEF, 2024). Infrastructure gaps such as the absence of gender-neutral toilets forced many to drop out, and societal stigma discourages families from enrolling them (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2023). Although the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-4) mandates inclusivity, implementation remained weak, with only 15% of schools providing targeted support (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2023). Financial barriers also persisted, as many transgender families relied on unstable incomes, making access to uniforms and supplies difficult (Bandhu Social Welfare Society, 2024). Transgender children often experienced significant barriers to accessing quality education. Research highlighted that these children are more likely to face bullying, harassment, and exclusion in school settings (Greytak *et al.*, 2016). A study by Kosciw *et al.*, (2020) found that 75% of transgender students reported feeling unsafe at school due to their gender identity. These challenges can lead to poor academic performance, higher dropout rates, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Toomey *et al.*, 2018). Transgender individuals in Bangladesh face systemic marginalization across multiple spheres of life, including familial, educational, and community settings. This exclusion stems from pervasive social stigma, entrenched prejudice, and limited access to essential resources

(Hossain & Ferdous, 2020). Despite education being enshrined as a universal human right regardless of personal characteristics (Jemeli & Fakandu, 2019), Bangladesh's transgender community remains largely excluded from educational opportunities (Islam, 2016). The educational challenges faced by transgender individuals create significant psychological and social consequences. Research indicates that gender nonconformity in academic environments frequently leads to increased vulnerability to bullying, discrimination, and institutional neglect (Roop, 2014). These negative experiences often trigger a cascade of mental health issues, including depressive disorders, anxiety, addictive behaviors, and elevated suicide risk (Nadal, 2017). Furthermore, Bartholomaeus and Riggs (2017) emphasize that these educational barriers negatively impact not only transgender individuals but also their familial support systems. Transgender students experienced bullying badly in the classroom and most of the time did not get support from the teachers or peer groups. A 10-year-old transgender student in a Cox's Bazar government primary school faced daily verbal abuse from peers, such as being called "chhakka" (a derogatory term). Teachers ignored the bullying, citing "cultural norms." The student stopped attending school after six months ("Safe Schools for Marginalized Children in Cox's Bazar" UNICEF Bangladesh, 2023). They also faced institutional bias in admission processes. Besides, lack of awareness about third-gender rights among school authorities. Bandhu Social Welfare Society (2023) in their article titled "Barriers to Transgender Enrollment in Urban Schools" studied that a transgender child in a Dhaka slum was denied admission to a local government primary school. The headmaster claimed the school lacked "facilities for such students." The family approached NGOs for help, but bureaucratic delays prolonged enrollment by two years. Most of the school had absence of safe, inclusive infrastructure and that impacted mental health of exclusionary environments. Transgender students did not use washroom because of safety purpose. A transgender student in Sylhet was forced to use the male toilet, leading to harassment. The school had no gender-neutral facilities, and the student developed chronic anxiety, affecting academic performance (The Daily Star, 2024). Transgender students ignored by their teachers in the classroom of GPS at a large scale. They hold traditional views, leading them to misunderstand or dismiss transgender students' needs. Many teachers in Bangladesh grew up in communities where transgender identities are stigmatized or misunderstood. Deep-rooted cultural norms often associate Hijra/third-gender individuals with begging or sex work, leading teachers to view transgender students as "deviant" (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2023). Teachers frequently referred to transgender students by their birth names or assigned genders, even after being corrected. A 2023 study in Dhaka found that 63% of transgender students reported being mocked by

teachers in front of peers (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2023). The National Education Policy (2010, revised 2021) emphasizes inclusivity but does not mandate gender-sensitivity training for teachers. Most primary school teachers receive no instruction on supporting transgender students (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2023).

2.5 Acceptance of transgender children in primary school environment:

The circumstances of TG students in the primary school environment is a complex issue with multiple challenges. TG students in Bangladesh have faced significant discrimination and violence, and this extends to the education system. In schools, TG students face bullying, verbal harassment and exclusion from activities and facilities, such as rest rooms or sports team or class groups (Islam, 2024) additionally, many teachers and school administrators lack the knowledge and training to support students effectively. Transgender students in Bangladesh face significant social and educational exclusion, encountering hostility both in society and classroom settings. Persistent verbal abuse and mistreatment from peers and educators contribute to diminished self-confidence and profound social isolation (Kosciw *et al.*, 2014). Such discriminatory experiences frequently lead to withdrawal from academic and community engagement. Alarming, national surveys indicate that 55.2% of gender-diverse students endure harassment specifically targeting their gender expression (Kosciw *et al.*, 2014), with more recent data showing 78% experience peer harassment and 31% face mistreatment from school staff (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2023). While Bangladesh has seen growing advocacy for transgender rights in recent years, including government initiatives like third-gender options on enrollment forms (Shahin *et al.*, 2018), systemic barriers persist. These challenges underscore the urgent need for comprehensive institutional reforms to ensure safe and inclusive learning environments for gender-diverse students. This hostile environment contributes to alarmingly high dropout rates, with only 22% of transgender students progressing beyond Grade 5 (BANBEIS, 2024). Efforts to foster acceptance have seen limited success, particularly in urban areas. For instance, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), in collaboration with NGOs like BRAC and Bandhu Social Welfare Society, has rolled out gender-sensitivity training for teachers in cities such as Dhaka and Chattogram, equipping them to address bullying and use inclusive language (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2023). Additionally, pilot programs in 50 schools have introduced gender-neutral toilets and revised textbooks featuring diverse gender identities, signaling a shift toward institutional inclusion (The Daily Star, 2024; National Curriculum and Textbook Board, 2023). Financial incentives, such as stipends for marginalized students, have also improved enrollment rates in some regions. However,

these initiatives often fail to penetrate rural and conservative communities, where socio-religious norms reinforce transphobia. A 2023 Ain o Salish Kendra report documented cases in rural Sylhet and Rajshahi where parents withdrew transgender children from school due to community pressure, fearing social ostracization (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2023). The gap between policy and practice is further exacerbated by inconsistent enforcement. While the DPE's 2023 anti-discrimination guidelines prohibit bias based on gender identity, few mechanisms exist to hold schools accountable. Teachers in under-resourced regions frequently lack training, and many still refuse to acknowledge third-gender students, misgendering them or excluding them from classroom activities (Human Rights Watch, 2024). Moreover, the absence of safe facilities such as private changing rooms or counseling services leaves transgender students vulnerable to mental health crises. According to recent research conducted by BANBEIS (2024), only 8% of primary schools have gender-neutral toilets, forcing transgender children to avoid using restrooms altogether, which impacts attendance and health (BANBEIS, 2024). NGOs and international organizations play a critical role in bridging these gaps. Bandhu Social Welfare Society, for example, partners with schools to conduct community workshops that challenge stereotypes and advocate for transgender rights (Bandhu, 2023). Similarly, UNICEF's Safe School Program has established student-led anti-bullying committees and helplines, reducing harassment by 30% in pilot districts like Cox's Bazar (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2024). Yet, sustainable progress requires systemic changes, including stricter enforcement of anti-discrimination policies, nationwide teacher training, and targeted funding for inclusive infrastructure.

2.6 Acceptance of the transgender children in the classroom practices:

The acceptance of TG students in classroom at govt. Primary school is a relatively new concept that is slowly gaining traction. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of transgender rights in Bangladesh which has led to more open discussions about TG identity and inclusion. While there are still many challenges that TG students face in Bangladeshi classrooms such as bullying, discrimination, Physical and psychological mistreatment, bias inside the classroom and institutional constraints (Pandey, 2018; Biswas & Soora, 2021). Many transgender students in Bangladesh demonstrate strong motivation to pursue education, yet they frequently encounter unsafe and unwelcoming school environments. Facing persistent hostility, a significant number ultimately discontinue their education due to unbearable conditions (Khan, 2022). Educators, often reflecting broader societal prejudices, frequently

subject gender-nonconforming students to verbal abuse particularly targeting those with feminine mannerisms. Research indicates that teachers commonly reprimand effeminate male students for allegedly disrupting classroom norms, reinforcing discriminatory attitudes through their actions (Khan, 2022). The integration of transgender children into classroom practices in Bangladesh remained a contentious and uneven process, reflecting broader societal tensions between progressive policy commitments and entrenched cultural resistance. Although Bangladesh officially recognized third gender individuals in 2013 and updated its National Education Policy in 2021 to reflect this, which mandates inclusive education for marginalized groups, classroom environments often perpetuate exclusion. Data from the 2024 national education survey (BANBEIS) indicated that 68% of transgender students in primary schools experience daily misgendering by teachers, who frequently use birth names or assign gendered roles (e.g., segregating boys and girls for activities) without regard to their identity (BANBEIS, 2024). Such practices reinforce stigma and alienate transgender children, with 55% reporting avoidance of classroom participation due to fear of ridicule (Human Rights Watch, 2024). A UNICEF survey (2024) found that 72% of transgender students in urban schools and 89% in rural areas endure verbal abuse from classmates, often unchallenged by educators (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2024). Efforts to improve classroom inclusion have seen fragmented progress. NGOs like Bandhu Social Welfare Society and BRAC collaborate with the government to train teachers in gender-responsive pedagogy, reaching over 4,000 educators in Dhaka, Chattogram, and Khulna since 2022 (Bandhu, 2023). These programs emphasized pronoun usage, anti-bullying strategies, and inclusive lesson planning. Pilot initiatives, such as the Safe Classroom Project in Cox's Bazar, have reduced harassment by 40% through student sensitization workshops and anonymous reporting systems (The Daily Star, 2024). Additionally, stipend programs now permit third-gender identification in enrollment forms, though bureaucratic delays and corruption often hinder access (BANBEIS, 2024). However, systemic barriers persist. Infrastructure gaps such as the absence of gender-neutral toilets in 92% of primary schools force transgender students to endure physical discomfort or skip school entirely (UNICEF Bangladesh, 2024). Mental health support was virtually non-existent, with only 3% of schools offering counseling services for marginalized students (Human Rights Watch, 2024). Conservative communities further undermined inclusion: parents in regions like Sylhet and Noakhali frequently withdraw transgender children from school due to fears of social ostracization (Ain o Salish Kendra, 2023).

2.7 Supports and Facilities Required for Transgender Students:

Establishing a mental health counselling centre in school for TG students is a crucial step towards building classroom communities that embrace diversity and ensure psychological safety. TG students often face unique challenges related to gender identity that can negatively impact their mental health, including discrimination, harassment and social isolation, having access to counselling services specifically tailored to their needs can help these students cope with these challenges and build resilience. The counselling centre should be staffed by trained mental health professionals who have experience working with transgender individuals. These professionals should be knowledgeable about unique mental health concerns that TG individuals face, such as gender dysphoria, and have a deep understanding of the social and Deep-rooted societal attitudes that disadvantage gender minorities. Counselling services must extend their support to include family members, peers, and educators of transgender students, as their acceptance and understanding play a pivotal role in fostering mental well-being among transgender individuals (Islam, 2024). Given that discrimination and violence against hijra communities often originate within households, targeted interventions at both individual and familial levels are imperative. Counselling initiatives should incorporate mental health education for families and teachers to cultivate inclusive attitudes and equip them with strategies to support transgender students effectively. Overall, establishing a mental health counselling centre in a school for TG students is an important step towards creating a safe and supportive environment for all students. By providing targeted mental health services and support, schools can help ensure that TG students have the resources they need to thrive and succeed in their academic and personal lives.

Transgender students often face discrimination and lack of support in educational settings. It is important that the primary level governing body take proactive steps to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including those who identify as transgender. TG students are individuals who do not identify with the gender they are assigned at birth. They may experience significant challenges related to social isolation, harassment and discrimination which can lead to poor academic and mental health outcomes. After experiencing family level violence, when children with so called “Abnormal gender identity” enters in school level, face newer forms of violence, as none of teachers and classmates leave them from the chance of being humiliated and discriminated (Noorie, 2016). The governing body has a responsibility to ensure that all students feel valued and respected in school community. For this, the governing

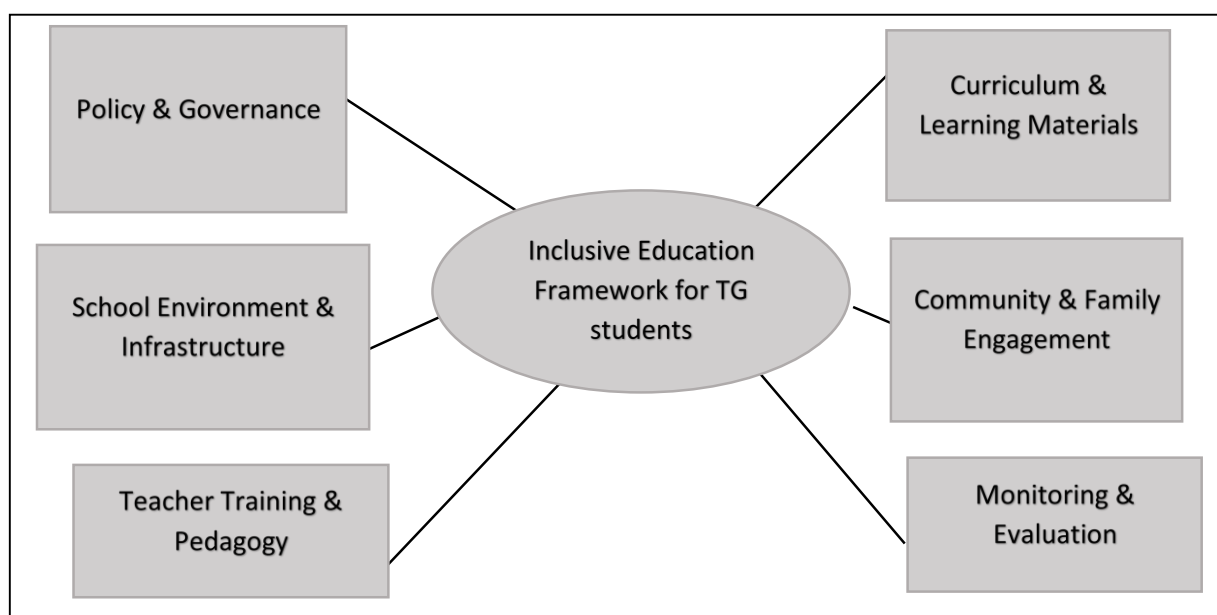
body should sensitize themselves and create awareness on TG issues by organizing workshops and training sessions for all members of the school community. The workshops should cover topics such as gender identity, gender expression and the unique challenges faced by TG students. They can take practical steps to support TG students in school. For instance, providing gender neutral bathrooms, changing rooms, allow students to use their preferred pronouns and use inclusive language that acknowledge the diversity of gender identities.

Inclusive practices are essential for ensuring that transgender children feel safe and supported in the classroom. Research suggests that teacher training on gender diversity is critical for fostering inclusivity (Meyer *et al.*, 2016). Educators who are knowledgeable about gender identity issues are better equipped to create welcoming environments and address bullying effectively. Additionally, the use of gender-neutral language and the availability of gender-neutral restrooms and changing facilities can significantly improve the school experience for transgender children (Snap *et al.*, 2015). Several case studies highlight successful initiatives to support transgender children in primary education. For instance, the "Safe Schools Program" in Australia has been effective in reducing bullying and promoting inclusivity through teacher training and student-led activities (Jones & Hillier, 2013). Similarly, the "Gender Spectrum" initiative in the United States provides resources and training to schools to create gender-inclusive environments (Gender Spectrum, 2021). These examples demonstrate the potential for government primary schools to adopt similar practices to support transgender children.

The concepts of diversity and inclusiveness are becoming increasingly important in today's world. It is essential that children are taught about these concepts from a young age so that they can grow up to be accepting and respectful members of the society. Integrating the concept of diversity and inclusiveness in primary level text books in Bangladesh would be a great way to promote these values. Textbooks could include stories and examples of people from different genders and highlighting the importance of respecting differences and embracing diversity. This approach cultivates compassion and acceptance in young learners towards those with differing identities. Additionally, textbooks could include activities and lessons that promote inclusiveness, such as encouraging students to work together in groups and appreciate each other unique perspectives. By integrating these concepts in textbooks, a more tolerant and accepting society can be created that values diversity and inclusiveness.

Conceptual Framework

“Primary Education For Transgender Children: Available supports and Facilities for them in the classroom of Government Primary Schools” is my research topic. For analysing my research findings, this study incorporated a thorough investigation of scholarly materials from diverse national contexts, through which common elements were discerned. Despite constitutional guarantees of education for all, transgender children in Bangladesh face systemic exclusion in primary schools due to social stigma, lack of policy enforcement, and inadequate institutional support (HRW, 2024). This paper proposes an Inclusive Education Framework (IEF) to ensure equitable access and participation for transgender students in government primary schools. The Inclusive Education framework integrates- 1) Policy & Governance, 2) School Environment & Infrastructure, 3) Teacher training & Pedagogy, 4) Curriculum & Learning Materials, 5) Community & Family engagement, 6) Monitoring & Evaluation. I used the following Inclusive Education framework to analyze and discuss the available supports and facilities Transgender children get in the classroom of Government Primary School.



Inclusive Education Framework for TG students

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

In my study, I used Qualitative Research Approach because in this study I explored peoples in depth thoughts, interpretation and contextual understanding. My study sought to understand the experiences, challenges, and needs of transgender students in primary schools, which required exploring deeply personal and context-specific narratives. Qualitative research designed to prioritize participants' voices, perspectives, and lived realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). By using methods like interviews or focus groups, one could captured how transgender students perceived their educational environment and the support systems (or lack thereof) available to them. This aligned with qualitative research's strength in uncovering subjective meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Transgender students in Bangladesh were likely a marginalized group facing systemic exclusion and stigma. Qualitative approaches a particularly suited to studying marginalized communities, as they empowered participants to narrate their lived experiences through authentic self-expression, fostered inclusive and ethical research (Charmaz, 2014). Qualitative methods allowed me to generate rich, context-specific insights rather than relying on predefined categories or assumptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Qualitative research emphasized contextual understanding, enabling me to examine how societal norms, policies, and classroom practices intersect to shape transgender students' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Qualitative methods liked in-depth interviews or diaries allowed for empathetic and adaptive engagement, letting participants controlled the pace and depth of disclosure (Creswell, 2013). My study aimed to propose actionable recommendations for policymakers or educators. Qualitative research was inherently inductive, meaning theories or frameworks emerge directly from the data (Charmaz, 2014).

3.2 Research Site

For this study I chose two govt. Primary schools in two different area of Dhaka City. Savar and Mirpur area was being chosen for this study and one renowned govt. Primary school was chosen from each zone.

The choice of interest behind choosing these two zones was the abundance of transgender community. A large number of transgender peoples lived in these two zones and already developed a very strong community. I had access to visit both of the community as because I had gone there for my previous working place requirements and got a chance to observe them so closely. For this reason, I had chosen these two schools as the placement is just near by the transgender communities living place.

School A was established on 19 April, 1959 in Savar, Dhaka, marking the beginning of its educational journey. The institute received official recognition on 01 January, 1967. It is recognized at the Secondary, indicating the level or grade of approval. The institute is included in the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) system. It is categorized as a secondary, such as school, college, university, training center. The institute operates under the board of Dhaka. The academic programs and examination standards of these institutions are governed by national educational regulations. Offering a comprehensive curriculum across disciplines including Humanities, Business Studies, and Science, the schools cater to diverse academic pathways. As a girls-only institution, it operates exclusively for female students, with all classes conducted during daytime hours under the supervision of a dedicated managing body responsible for institutional administration. School B, established on July 7, 2006, is situated in the urban community of Duaripara, Rupnagar, within Mirpur, Dhaka, and falls under the jurisdiction of Rupnagar Thana. According to WSUP survey data, the surrounding area has a population of 100,020 residents living in approximately 2,571 households, with the student body primarily drawn from neighboring low-income settlements. The local economy is characterized by 35% of residents employed in the garment sector, 50% working as rickshaw pullers or day laborers, and a substantial number of women engaged in domestic service occupations. This school had total 500 students. 292 female students and 208 male students. All of the students did any kind of extra work beside their study to earn their livelihood.

3.3 Research Participants

For this research I chose five categories of participants as Research Participants. Targeted population were 1) One transgender student from each school 2) Two Transgender student's

mothers, 3) Two non-transgender student's mothers, 4) TG and Non-TG student's One Class teacher from each school, 5) TG and Non-TG student's One subjective teacher from each school. From two schools, 10 participants were chosen in total. Two 12 year old female students from two different schools who claimed themselves as transgender chose for the interview.

For the school A from Savar zone, I chose one transgender student from grade 5. Her family background was well established and educated. Most of her family members did not accept her normally with the identity she belonged except her mother and elder brother. She had few friends both inside and outside of the school.

Two teachers (one class Teacher & one subjective teacher) from that particular classroom of grade 5 selected for the interview. The selected class teacher of grade 5 from school A completed her Bachelor's in Bengali and then further she did special Teacher's training courses arranged by Education Ministry. She was working in that school more than 17 years. Another subjective teacher of grade 5 from school A completed his Bachelor's in Mathematics. He was chosen as he was one of the most senior teachers in School A. He provided extra class service after school in school premises to weak students.

Two parents (Mother of the transgender student and non- transgender student) chose as research participants from school A. Mother of the transgender student was well educated and self-dependent lady. She was a government nurse by profession. She had basic knowledge about Transgender children. She was concerned about the education right of transgender students.

Another Non -Transgender student's mother was a housewife and studied till 12th grade. She was very concerned about her children's study. She believed like her children, a transgender children has the right of education. Her daughter was very good friend of the transgender student of school A. That's why she was chosen for the interview.

For school B from mirpur zone, I chose one transgender students from grade 4. She had only one friend in school. She used to be a helping hand in a house, later she admitted in school B. She felt that after the admission, she got respect from others and her dream was to complete education and find a respectable Job. Two teacher (one class Teacher and subjective teacher) was selected from grade 4 of school B. The class teacher was the principal & founder of school B. She was also brought up in slum area and struggled a lot to achieve this position in society. She completed her MBA in Marketing. As the steward of all institutional funds, she tirelessly pursued educational betterment for teachers and pupils. Another selected teacher was the

subjective teacher, He used to teach ICT and English. He completed his bachelor's in IT. After school he offered free Computer course and English learning class among the students. Two parent (Mother of the transgender student and non- transgender student) selected as research participants. The transgender student's mother worked as a helping hand in others house. She did not receive any basic education. She was a single mother and did not get any financial supports for her TG daughter from her husband. Also, her in- laws never provided any support to her and her children. She had no knowledge about Transgender children. Another non-transgender student's mother did not receive any basic education and by nature she was very rude. She had misconception about transgender due to lack of proper knowledge. She was just concerned about her children. She was selected as her children was a good friend of that TG student and studied in same class.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

For conducting this research, I followed two data collection methods.

1. Interview

2. Observation

1. Interview method

I interviewed one transgender student, one TG student's mother and one Non- TG student's mother, one class teacher and one subjective teacher from TG student's class from each selective research site. With the transgender student, I used unstructured informal interview method as they are minor. Additionally, I conducted this interview in a way that does not make them feel uncomfortable and helped to express their inner feelings about their classroom environment and how their teachers and classmates behaved with them. I focused on knowing the TG student's mother feeling about her child, what type of behavior and support she got from other family members as a TG child mother, Did she accept her child as she is or not, What did she know about the right of TG children. While interviewing Non-TG student's mother, I focused on exploring how much she know about TG children and their basic rights, what did she think about TG children and did she accept them as they are or not. While interviewing the teachers, I emphasized on knowing the classroom environment, how did they ensure convivial and supportive classroom for TG students, what kind of facilities school authority provided for TG students, how was the other teachers mindset about TG students,

how did they manage Non-TG student parents, what kind of steps they took to ensure acceptance about TG students in the classroom and school premises. I chose Kramp's (2003) framework of narrative inquiry, which focuses on exploring lived experiences through storytelling and personal accounts. Kramp emphasized that narrative inquiry is a qualitative method that allows researchers to understand human experiences by collecting and analyzing stories from participants. Bayley *et al.*, 2009 described that conducting interviews is a common practice in qualitative research to reveal meaning and to compose sense of experiences. In-depth interviews conducted to get narrative details from all the individual participants in this study. Prior to data collection, the research objectives and ethical considerations were clearly communicated to all participants. Ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation, informed consent was obtained before commencing the interviews. It took 35-45 minutes to complete each interview. Particular interview guidelines were set for each category research participants.

2. Observation

I observed grade 5 four classes Religion, Science, Bengali and one Extracurricular Class (Debate) in School A and four classes Religion, Science, Bengali and one Extracurricular Class (Drama) of grade 4 in School B. These three subjects covered moral (Religion), factual (Science), and cultural (Bengali) perspectives and gave a well-rounded view of how transgender students might experience in the classroom of GPS. Observing Religion class helped to understand how teachers discuss gender roles, morality, and inclusivity. Whether transgender identities were acknowledged or stigmatized in religious teachings. The potential conflicts or accommodations between religious values and transgender acceptance. Science class revealed whether teachers taught about biological sex vs. gender identity. And if there was any discussion on diversity in human identities how teachers handled questions about gender differences and convinced students. Bengali classes included stories, poems, and essays that reflect societal values. Observing this class helped that whether textbooks or discussions include gender-diverse characters or themes, how teachers frame gender roles in literature. Observing classroom dynamics helped me to understand how transgender children and their peers/teachers constructed gender identity through daily interactions that followed Symbolic Interactionism theory by Blumer, H. (1969). During observation I followed the Ethnomethodology theory of Garfinkel, H. (1967). This theory helped to uncover the "hidden norms" in classrooms that may marginalize or include transgender students. The constructivism theory of Vygotsky, L. S. (1978), helped me to explore how transgender children engage in

learning environments reveals how school structures shape their identity and inclusion. I followed observation checklist and that helped me systematically assess the classroom environment and school facilities for transgender (TG) students in Bangladeshi government primary schools. By focusing on teacher and student activities, I analyzed whether lessons are inclusive or reinforce gender stereotypes. Classroom engagement observation revealed if TG students participate equally or face exclusion. Tracking challenges faced by TG students (bullying, discrimination, or lack of teacher support) highlighted systemic barriers. Under school facilities, checking for special washrooms showed infrastructural inclusivity. Scholarship availability indicated financial support for marginalized students, while skill development training examines whether schools provide equitable opportunities. Lastly, classroom counseling options could demonstrate psychosocial support systems. This structured approach ensured you collect balanced data on both academic inclusion and institutional support, helping identify gaps in policies and practices affecting TG students.

3.5 Role of the Researcher

My participation in the Teach for Bangladesh fellowship provided me with two academic years of teaching experience in government primary education, I had prior exposure to the educational environment for transgender students. While I possessed some preliminary understanding of the supports and facilities available to them, I consciously set aside my preconceptions to maintain objectivity throughout this study. During data collection and analysis, I strived to remain as impartial as possible, ensuring that my personal biases did not influence the findings. As a researcher, I took full responsibility for maintaining ethical rigor, paying close attention to even the subtlest observations during interviews. I approached each participant's perspective with deep respect, valuing their insights without judgment. To create a comfortable and safe space for participants, I was mindful of my tone, body language, and wording, ensuring they felt at ease while sharing their experiences. My priority was to foster trust and openness, allowing their authentic voices to shape the study's outcomes.

3.6 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, various analytical approaches exist, such as thematic analysis, grounded theory, and content analysis. For this study, I employed the content analysis method, which systematically organizes data through coding and categorization to uncover recurring patterns and emerging themes. The analytical process involved multiple close readings of the interview transcripts and classroom observation records. Through iterative examination, I identified key themes and systematically grouped the data under these thematic categories. During this phase, I refined the dataset by removing redundant or repetitive information to ensure clarity and precision. My analytical approach followed Lichtman's (2010) framework of the "three Cs" progressing from initial coding of raw data, to organizing information into meaningful categories, and finally developing conceptual understandings. Throughout this process, I remained rigorously focused on data that directly addressed my core research questions, ensuring relevance and methodological coherence. This structured analytical procedure allowed me to transform raw qualitative data into substantiated findings while maintaining systematic rigor in interpretation.

3.7 Ethical Issues and Concerns

As an educator and researcher of a Govt. Primary School for 2 years, my personal ideologies sometimes conflicted with the research. Personal biasness refers to an individual's inclination

or preference towards a particular belief, opinion, or perspective based on their experiences, cultural background, and socialization. During the data collection, sometimes my personal biases could impact ethical issues by influencing my perception of right and wrong, judgment of situations, and decision-making processes. My approach to this research challenge involved exhaustive review of academic sources coupled with iterative feedback from my supervisor. Through this process, I gained critical insights that helped transcend initial limitations and preconceptions.

3.8 Credibility and Rigor

During my enrollment in the Master of Education program at BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BIED), I engaged with multiple research methodology courses that equipped me with the necessary theoretical frameworks and methodological competencies for this investigation. As part of my preparatory work, I formulated a comprehensive research proposal to establish academic rigor and conducted an extensive literature review to identify pertinent scholarly conversations. Prior to formal data collection, I implemented two preliminary pilot interviews to refine my research instruments and ensure methodological validity. For this study, data took from one Government School and one non govt. school which I found perfectly matched with my targeted participants in Dhaka Division. But it needs to be mentioned that those data do not represent the whole scenario of other govt. primary school in Dhaka Division.

3.9 Limitations of the study

This study acknowledges certain methodological constraints. Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, I had completed the research design and successfully recruited an adequate sample size for interview-based data collection. However, the subsequent public health crisis necessitated modifications to the original research plan. However, due to the pandemic induced school closures, data collection was delayed. When schools reopened in 2022, I revisited the selected school to conduct interviews and observations, only to find that many students particularly my key research participants from the transgender community had dropped out. This attrition was largely attributed to their families' financial difficulties, which were exacerbated by the pandemic. Additionally, some remaining students and parents declined to participate in the study, as the topic of transgender identity remains a social taboo. Consequently, the final sample size was significantly reduced.

Chapter 4

Results of the Study

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings organized into three key themes derived from interviews with two transgender students, four teachers (two class teachers and two subject teachers), and four mothers (two of transgender students and two of cisgender students), along with observational data. The results, analyzed through established protocols, connect directly to the study's theoretical framework and literature review, providing empirical support for the research.

4.2 Concept of Transgender

As transgender issue is very sensitive in our society perspective, as a result it has created a great impact in general peoples mind. Peoples including the educated ones also not interested to talk much about them. Most of the people do not have basic concept about the transgender. During the interview session one of my interviewers (Non-transgender student's mother) said she has no idea about transgender and doesn't have any interest to learn about them. She said I do my prayer every day, never miss it. So, hearing this term "Hijra" is comparable to conduct a great sin to me. My Creator will punish me. My child is perfectly okay. Hijra peoples are totally ridiculous and in our religion, there is no space for them. (Interview #02, 27-01-2022). Another TG parents also said that she has no idea about Transgender children (Interview #01, 27-01-2022). About the acceptance of her TG children, she stated that she has no option without accepting this child as the way the TG children is. The TG children do not get any support from his father. In fact, her father doesn't accept her till now. So, she asked her child to earn for her own livelihood because it's not possible for her to bear the TG children cost all alone. Not only the neighbour but also the family members poke her by saying irrelevant things about her daughter. She always feel that she is living in a hell (Interviewer#01, 27-01-2022). Another Non-TG parents stated that "They are called Hijra, neither boy nor girl" (Interviewer#01, 23-01-2022). One TG parent mentioned that "She is a govt. Nurse and as an advantage she gathered knowledge about transgender children from different kind of training took place in her working place. She also learned about TG from few books. She believed that like masculine and feminine gender, TG is a different gender. She thinks if concept of transgender can be

incorporated in the primary textbook, children can have basic knowledge about TG and it will be very effective (Interviewer#02, 23-01-2022)

Most of the students did not have clear idea about Transgender. One transgender student mentioned that “Teachers discuss about eunuch in classroom and they are like normal people. We all should behave well with them (Interview#01, 26-01-2022).

One TG student stated that she knows that she is different but she didn’t have any problem with it. She looks like a male person. As the God has created her & she doesn’t have any option so that she admits herself (Interview#01, 26-01-2022)

From observation it is found that few teachers do not have basic idea about the concept of TG and lack of growth mind set. They still believe in prejudice and have a firm believe that only two gender exists in the world and others are curse for the society. As the teacher stated these kind of things during the class period, so it impacts the students mind set and I found it alarming. These directions can be cause of discrimination, Bullying, Harassment. (Observation#01, 26-01-2022).

Both non-transgender and TG parents demonstrated limited or no understanding of transgender identities. Many respondents had never encountered the concept before and showed no interest in learning about it. Some non-transgender individuals associate transgender identities (e.g., "Hijra") with sin or moral corruption, believing their faith condemns such identities. While some TG parents reluctantly accept their children due to lack of alternatives, others (especially fathers) completely reject them. Neighbors and extended family members ridicule and harass both TG children and their supportive parents. Most of the teachers lack basic awareness of transgender identities and reinforce binary gender norms. Some TG students acknowledge their difference but accept themselves as part of their identity. Teachers’ prejudiced remarks influence student perceptions, leading to potential bullying and discrimination against TG students.

4.3 Context and Background of TG children:

Over the past few decades, transgender rights and visibility had increased significantly, leading to greater awareness and policy changes in educational institutions. However, transgender students still faced unique challenges related to discrimination, mental health, access to facilities, and legal protections.

One Non-TG parents stated that “Everything is very easy for them, because they got everything free. They don’t have to work tirelessly as they received fund and sympathy from local people fullest, they do not have to work hard for their livelihood” (Interview #02, 27-01-2022).

In context of the same school, one TG parents described that “She didn’t have enough money to send school her children. Everybody neglects her daughter. That’s why she sent her daughter for household work. From there, the Head teacher of School B, admitted her daughter in her school and the tuition fee is also free. She is very happy that her daughter is able to receive education (Interview #01, 27-01-2022).

One TG student said that “Everyone behave well at school both the teachers and peers, But sometimes they irritates her by saying that her vocal sound is like a BOY and they do this repeatedly (Interview #01, 26-01-2022).

One teacher said there is still a big understanding gap between general people and TG individuals. In school context, TG students face bullying, harassment and violence from their peers, teachers and sometimes school administrators. Mostly they did these kind of things unintentionally. This can lead to high rates of dropout and exclusion from education, particularly at the primary level. TG students face practical barriers to accessing education. (Interview#01, 18-01-22).

Another teacher stated that Social acceptance and respectful lifestyle are the most important things for the TG students to establish identity in the society and the only key for this is EDUCATION. The govt. should ensure compulsory primary, secondary and Higher secondary education for TG students (Interview#01, 26-01-22).

According to the observation checklist, in some schools they have programs specifically for TG students that provides a supportive and accepting environment where they can grow and play. There is still much work to be done to promote inclusion and equality for TG students in Bangladesh’s primary education sector. (Observation#03, 30-01-22)

Some non-transgender parents believed TG individuals receive excessive financial support and sympathy, claiming they "get everything free" without needing to work hard. In contrast, a TG parent shared that poverty and social neglect forced her to initially send her daughter for household work instead of school. Only after intervention by a supportive head teacher was the child enrolled with free tuition. Teachers noted that bullying and exclusion often occur unintentionally due to societal ignorance, leading to high dropout rates among TG students, especially at the primary level. Some schools had taken proactive steps, such as fee waivers

and inclusive programs, to support TG students. Teachers emphasized that education is crucial for TG students' social acceptance and called for government-mandated compulsory education policies at all levels. A few schools have created supportive environments where TG students can thrive. Despite some progress, deep-rooted stigma and lack of understanding persist, requiring structured sensitization programs for students, teachers, and parents.

4.4 Status of Primary Education of the TG children:

Transgender students experienced significant challenges in accessing education due to social stigma and discrimination. Many dropped out due to lack of acceptance from peers and teachers. They also faced issues while their admission in school not only from the teachers but also from other student parent's. One of the Non-TG student's mother stated that what's the need of their education? It's not good to give them chance in school along with other students. This can be cause of unstable school environment (Interview#02, 27-01-22).

A TG student mentioned that her classmate's mother filed complain against her to the Head teacher as she didn't want her child to share the same classroom with the TG student (Interview#01, 19-01-22).

In school A, I asked one subject teacher that do you ever think about separate school for transgender students. He replied that "Yes, Our society still don't have the mentality to accept TG students as like as normal student. TG students need separate school so that they can study there without any obstacle. In our kind of school, they treated like minority, as a teacher i believed it could affect his/her mental growth (Interview#02, 19-01-22).

Another Teacher's reply of the same question from school B was that "To prevent bullying and for the mental development, TG students need separate school at least till high school. If we can ensure the quality of education and convivial environment for them till higher secondary, their further life will be easier in this cruel world (Interview#01, 26-01-22).

It is a matter of regret that experienced obstacle mostly from my fellow teachers and other guardian's during the admission time of TG students (Interview#01, 26-01-22).

From observation it is found that is that status of primary education in government primary school for TG students is not similar like other students. TG students face significant discrimination and barriers to accessing education, including harassment and exclusion from school activities. But in few cases, there may be efforts to create inclusive and supportive environments for transgender students. Several educational institutions are actively fostering

supportive and inclusive learning environments for students of all gender identities. These efforts include adopting anti-discrimination policies, conducting professional development programs for educators on transgender student support, and collaborating with community organizations to provide necessary resources. Such initiatives aim to ensure that transgender students receive equitable opportunities for academic success (Observation #02, 26-01-22).

Some Non-TG parents opposed TG students' inclusion in mainstream schools, believing it creates an "unstable" environment. Instances of parents filed complaints to prevent their children from sharing classrooms with TG students highlight deep-seated prejudice. Some teachers advocated for separate schools for TG students, arguing that society lacks acceptance, leading to discrimination and mental health challenges. The belief was that segregated schools could provide a safer, more supportive environment until higher education. TG students experienced significant obstacles during admissions, often due to resistance from fellow teachers and guardians. Many educators viewed TG students as "minorities" who disrupt the "normal" school environment. TG students experienced harassment, exclusion from school activities, and unequal treatment in government primary schools. Discrimination affected their mental well-being and academic progress. Some schools implemented inclusive policies, anti-discrimination measures, and teacher training to support TG students. Community partnerships and supportive environments in certain schools showed progress, though these cases remain limited.

4.5 Challenges faced by TG students in primary education:

“Transgender students face numerous challenges in educational settings, often stemming from systemic discrimination, social stigma, and institutional barriers and it’s been a real difficult journey, beyond description” stated by one subjective teacher of school A (Interview#02, 19-01-22). One TG student stated that “yes, I do. But many of my classmates and also teachers do not want me to come school and shared the classroom with all of them (Interview#01, 19-01-22). One TG parent shared that “It’s not possible for me to stop other’s mouth. People continuously bully, mock and discuss about my daughter, especially when we go to village to celebrate Eid with other family members. These kind of behavior affected my daughter’s mental health. That’s why I stopped going to village. So that my daughter need not to face this kind of situation that’s not healthy for her (Interview#02, 23-01-22). In school A, I observed that during the debate class, other students were trying to make the TG students realized that

all of the points she presented were valueless, illogical and not interconnected with the topic. They were doing that intentionally to break the self-confidence of the TG students (Observation#04, 23-01-22). About the support and facilities for TG students in School B, one teacher stated that she tried to make separate washroom and common room for TG students but all of the guardians and teachers were against this endeavor. That's why she couldn't build this for TG students (Interview#01, 26-01-22). One TG student mentioned that she has only one friend except her, no one wants to sit with her and their behavior towards her is little bit weird (Interview#01, 26-01-22). One TG parent said that "My daughter's paternal side relatives do not like her, actually they hate her because of her identity. Also the neighbor bullied and mocked her daughter. Sometimes she felt like left the area and started living in a new area with her daughter. But her husband is not supportive (Interview#01, 27-01-22). Another Non- TG parent stated that "As the tuition fee is less than other school that's why she admitted her child here, otherwise she never allowed her child to continue the education in this school. Because of the TG student, the environment is not good (Interview#02, 27-01-22).

I observed that there is no specific separate washroom for TG students and the TG student was facing issue while going to use the common washroom and during the class time, other students were behaving well with the TG student but the scenario was totally different during the break time. Other students bullied, mocked and harassed the TG student continuously (Observation#02, 26-01-22). TG students face deliberate exclusion from peers, including refusal to share seats and intentional humiliation in academic settings (e.g., debates). Bullying intensifies in informal settings (break times) even when classmates appear civil during structured class hours. Mockery and harassment extend beyond school, affecting TG students in their communities. Few teachers attempt to advocate for TG students but face resistance from school authorities and parents. No formal policies to protect TG students from discrimination, leaving them vulnerable. Relatives and neighbors often reject TG children, leading to emotional distress and isolation. Some parents feel forced to relocate due to hostility but lack spousal support. TG students experience anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression due to constant ridicule. Non-TG parents perpetuate stigma, believing TG students "ruin" the school environment. Hostile environments lead to self-doubt, as seen when TG students' contributions are dismissed as "illogical." Non-TG parents admit discomfort with TG students, prioritizing affordability over inclusivity. Teachers' efforts to support TG students are undermined by systemic biases.

4.6 Acceptance of TG children in primary school environment:

The acceptance of transgender students in the primary education sector is the most vital issue that required careful consideration and support from school community. But sometimes TG students got most careless attitude from school environment. One TG student said that her classmates usually maintain a class group and she is also not the member of that kind of group. Sometimes she feels really bad for this. She also added that during tiffin break her friends also go outside to play in the field but they never asked her to go and play with them. (Interview#01, 19-01-22). One teacher said that initially, it was a big challenge for them to ensure a convivial and accepting mentality for TG students in the school community. Teachers who have supports for this, they had to work tremendously on this matter. Because handling transgender students in school can pose a significant challenge for teacher and school administrators who are not familiar with the issues related to gender identity. Few teachers have acquired in-depth knowledge about what constitutes transgender identity and may not be familiar with the challenges that transgender students face. This can lead lack of empathy and support for these students. Some of my colleagues may accidentally misgender transgender students by using the wrong name or pronouns, which can be hurtful and damaging to the student's self-esteem and mental health. Now the environment of our school is exactly the same as we wanted for the TG students. Eveready's is not same but I believe we are successful to cultivate school environments that validate gender-diverse students (Interview #01, 18-01-2022). Another teacher stated that they have to go through various issues due to transgender admission in their school. The fellow colleagues of her and the parents have misconception about TG students and they believe in social Taboo. They are not willing to accept a TG student as per the real identity. Also mentioned that they arranged weekly and monthly discussion meeting among the teachers and parents about the acceptance of TG students in school environment. During the meeting, they all supported and agreed about ensuring a convivial environment for TG students but in reality, they never follow (Interview #01, 26-01-2022).

One teacher said that "It's been a really difficult journey, beyond description (Interview #02, 19-01-2022). One TG student replied that she used to take part in cultural activity and also got prize, but this year she will not attend. Then I asked her the reason she was silent and was not willing to share her feelings (Interview #01, 19-01-2022). Some teachers and students still hold negative attitudes or misunderstanding about TG students and sometimes inside the classroom the reflection cannot be controlled by them, though their negative and fixed attitudes were not

long lasting but that has a great impact on TG student's mental health and academic carrier. (Observation#04, 30-01-2022). Some teachers lacked awareness about transgender issues, leading to misgendering and unintentional harm. Efforts to create inclusivity face resistance from colleagues and parents who hold traditional beliefs. Regular meetings on TG inclusion held, but follow-through is weak, with many still resisting change in practice. Progress was slow but visible some schools have successfully fostered a more welcoming environment after persistent efforts. Many parents and teachers believed in social taboos, making it difficult for TG students to gain full acceptance. Superficial support in meetings contrasted with real-world discrimination, indicating deep-rooted prejudices. Negative attitudes in the classroom, though temporary, significantly impacted TG students' mental health and academic performance. TG students experienced sadness and reluctance to participate in activities they once enjoyed. Misgendering and exclusion damage self-esteem, leading to withdrawal and disengagement. Teachers acknowledged the struggle of ensuring a supportive environment, describing it as a "difficult journey." Some schools improved inclusivity through teacher training and policy adjustments. Awareness initiatives (workshops, meetings) are in place, though implementation remains inconsistent. Supportive teachers played a crucial role in gradually shifting school culture.

4.7 Acceptance of TG children in classroom practices

Acceptance of TG students in classroom practices is an important issue that educators and school administrators should prioritize.

One teacher said that he always try to maintain same classroom rules for all students. And always respect a student's gender identity by using their chosen name and pronouns. All teachers should make an effort to learn and use the correct name and pronouns when addressing the student in classroom related communications. He also mentioned that for the TG students of his class, he maintained a performance tracker's component such as one to one session and that session help the students feeling accepted and important in classroom premises. He mentioned that Teachers who have transgender students in his/her classroom can create a supportive community in the classroom by promoting respect, understanding and acceptance of diversity. This can include creating opportunities for students to share their experiences, perspectives and engaging in open and respectful dialogue about TG issues. (Interview#02, 19-01-22)

One Parent said that she never ask her children not to fraternize with TG children. I always instructed my child to make friendship with all of your classmates and be humble and kind about word choosing. Actually, if we do not teach our children positive thinking, they will definitely behave negatively with others. We are also responsible for their behaviour (Interview #01, 23-01-22).

One subject teacher of TG student mentioned that “All of the teachers are empathetic. But all of them are not conscious enough. Some teachers bullied verbally the TG student during class period (Interview #02, 19-01-22). From observation data it is found that maximum students behaved positively with TG students. But some students always waiting for the right moment to harass the TG students and make them feel low about themselves. During the observation of an extracurricular class, I observed that few students were intentionally making fun of the TG student and continuously poked them and made them realize that the point they were presenting were valueless. They also not giving priority to the TG students, ignoring the TG students like an invisible character (Observation#04, 23-01-2022). Some parents actively taught acceptance, instructing their children to befriend TG classmates. Positive parental guidance helped reduce bullying, demonstrating that early socialization matters. However, not all parents shared this mindset, leading to inconsistent peer behavior. Many teachers were empathetic, but some lack awareness and unintentionally (or intentionally) harm TG students. Verbal bullying by a few teachers occurred during class, undermining institutional efforts for inclusion. Most students appear friendly, but some engaged in covert harassment.

4.8 Supports and Facilities required for TG students:

Accessibility of support systems and infrastructure for transgender pupils within school environments can vary depending on many things. During the interview session I found that line true. In one school I observed that they have special supports and facilities for TG students. They make the school fees Free only for the TG student’s so that their parents at least showed interest to enrol them in school. Day meal also provided by the school authority once in a week. A special training skill development program also conducted for all students they also concern about a classroom counselling corner and are working on it (Observation#01, 26-01-22). Another school do not have any specific facilities for TG students. But they are thinking about working on it (Observation#01, 20-01-22). One student said that she feels great when she

comes to school. Before joining the school, she has suicidal tendency but now she gets available supports from school. Such as she has joined dance and drawing class. Those extracurricular class at the school took place on every Thursday and she feels really good while attending those class. She said it feels like I am free butterfly. All of my sorrow just fly away from me during my dance performances and when I drew, it felt like I coloured all of my pain with my colourful crayons and all of the sorrow turns into Rainbow (Interview#01, 26-01-22).

A participating educator expressed support for gender-segregated facilities as an inclusive measure, viewing them as a progressive approach to fostering acceptance for transgender students within the school community. She wanted to build separate washroom and common room in school premises for TG students but her other colleagues were not agree with her and Parents of other students also against this decision. She added that I thought, TG students may feel uncomfortable using gendered washrooms that do not align with their gender identity. Having separate facilities that are designated as safe spaces for transgender students can help to reduce anxiety and ensure that they feel uncomfortable and safe. By providing separate facilities for TG students, schools can send a message that they value and respect the needs and identities of all students, regardless to their gender identities (Interview#01, 26-01-2022).

Another Teacher said that their school don't have this option specifically for the TG students. They don't have enough budget but they are concern about the issue and planning to build separate washroom as soon as possible. Educators and researchers consistently find that transgender students who experience safety and support in school demonstrate higher academic engagement and improved performance. (Interview#02, 26-01-22). Mental Health counselling point establishment in primary school for TG students is an important step. It is important to identify qualified mental health professionals who have experience with TG individuals. In Bangladesh this problem is taken as for granted and most of the people thinks that there is nothing important about mental health. One of the teachers said that she is very proud of herself that she could manage student counselling point in her school premises. She shared that they always ensure that all counselling services are confidential so that TG students feel comfortable seeking support without fear of discrimination or stigma. In that counselling part, they always use inclusive language to all communications to promote a safe & welcoming environment for all students. She added that sometimes she talked with the TG students personally about the student's personal, social and family life. Maximum time she did not give any further reaction but just listen. She stated that I did it purposefully so that the TG individuals feel that there is

at least someone with whom they can talk and share personal untold things (Interview#01, 26-01-22). One TG students shared that she used to be a home maid from very early age. She faced enormous humiliation, harassment and bullying. Moreover, lack of acceptance from family and friends. All those reasons lead her feelings towards isolation, anxiety, depression. She always felt low about herself. But when she started joining school, she feel confident about herself. Mental Health expertise come and talk with them that provides them inspiration. Now, she feels relieved to have a safe and confidential space to discuss their feelings and experiences. She feels more comfortable and confident with her identity and this fact improved her self-esteem and quality of life (Interview#01, 26-01-22).

From observation in this regard is found that TG students are trying their best to cope up with the adverse situation that created during their class period. They always seek supports from their class teachers and if the class teachers provide them support within a second they become confident enough to handle any kind of obstacles. They always searching for a counsellor who is knowledgeable and affirming of their gender identity can provide validation, empathy and support which can be incredibly helpful in reducing stress and improving mental well-being (Observation#03, 30-01-22).

One teacher said that in every month they arranged parents - Teachers meeting in presence of school governing body to educate and discuss them about TG identities and the challenges that TG individuals may face in school. Those meetings include providing information on appropriate language and terminology, common misconceptions about TG people and strategies for supporting TG students. They emphasized on hearing personal stories from TG individuals or their families can be a powerful way to help the school governing body understand the experiences and challenges faced by TG individuals (Interview #01, 26-01-22). Another teacher stated that if the governing body is sensitize about TG issue they can develop policies and procedures that explicitly prohibit discrimination and harassment based on gender identity or expression and establish protocols for addressing incidents of discrimination of harassment. These policies and procedures should be communicated to all school staff, students and parents. He also suggested that it is important to provide training to school staff on how to create a supportive and inclusive environment for TG students (interview#02, 19-01-2022). From observation it is found that the school governing body is already sensitize about the TG issue. And they arranged parents' teachers meeting to educate all about TG individuals. Facilitate the meeting in a way that is inclusive, respectful and informative, provide opportunities for questions and discussion, and encourage active

participation. They ensured that all individuals attending the meeting are respectful of others experiences and perspectives. Another thing is that they did follow up after the meeting. They provide resources and support to attendees after the meeting. Collect feedback from attendees and use it to improve future meetings and initiatives related to TG inclusion in the school (Observation#02, 26/01/22). Adding a chapter or integrating concept of Diversity & Inclusiveness in primary school textbooks can be a valuable way to promote inclusivity and understanding of TG individuals from a young age. One parent of a transgender student shared that her understanding of gender diversity came primarily from literature. She suggested that incorporating content about transgender individuals in primary-level textbooks could foster greater awareness and acceptance among young learners. Such inclusion, she noted, would not only educate students about gender diversity but also contribute to a more inclusive and supportive school environment for transgender youth. The content should be age-appropriate and provide accurate and inclusive information about TG identities, such as appropriate language and terminology, common misconceptions and strategies for supporting TG individuals (Interview#02, 23-01-2022).

Progressive Schools demonstrated model practices and Offered fee waivers and weekly meal programs to encourage TG enrollment. Conducted skill development training for all students and developed classroom counseling corners. Other Schools show willingness but lack implementation acknowledged need for TG facilities but cited budget constraints. Some teachers faced resistance from colleagues/parents when proposing gender-neutral facilities. Some educators advocated for separate gender-neutral facilities to reduce anxiety. In some school counseling Services showed proven effectiveness. TG students reported feeling "relieved" having safe spaces to share experiences. Monthly sensitization meetings are held, but follow-through is inconsistent. Some parents resist policy changes despite governing body efforts. Some schools drafted anti-discrimination protocols and the governing bodies conducted follow-up assessments after awareness sessions. Parents and educators suggest age-appropriate chapters on gender diversity and could normalize TG identities and reduce bullying. Supportive Teachers employed innovative methods. One-on-one performance tracking and active listening techniques.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion of the Study

In this chapter, I presented my findings from the analysis and recommend some strategies based on the findings and the literature I reviewed.

This study was conducted in two key areas of Dhaka City, focusing on the challenges transgender (TG) students face in government primary schools (GPS) regarding acceptance, support, and available facilities. Globally, transgender individuals remain a marginalized community, and Bangladesh is no exception.

This study explored the challenges and support systems available for transgender (TG) children in government primary schools in Bangladesh. The findings highlight deep-rooted social stigma, institutional barriers, and limited awareness among teachers, parents, and students. Below, the discussion is structured under sub-themes derived from the research questions and findings, supported by relevant literature.

5.1. Lack of Awareness and Misconceptions about Transgender Identity

5.1.1. Social and Religious Stigma

The study found that many parents, teachers, and students lacked basic knowledge about transgender identities, often associating them with sin or moral corruption. One non-TG parent stated "Hearing this term 'Hijra' is comparable to committing a great sin to me. My Creator will punish me." (Interview #02, 27-01-2022). This aligns with Islam (2020), who notes that the term "Hijra" in Bangladesh carries pejorative connotations, reinforcing social exclusion. Similarly, Chakrapani (2010) explains that historical perceptions of Hijras as "eunuchs" or "deviants" contribute to modern-day discrimination. Many transgender children are systematically denied basic rights, including education, in various parts of the world. Through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, parents, and students, and an analysis of stakeholder perspectives, this research confirmed some initial assumptions while challenging others. Mixed responses emerged while some parents supported their children studying alongside TG classmates, others strongly opposed it. These findings resonate with Sansone's (2019) study, which found that discrimination at home, school, and in society diminishes TG

students' educational aspirations and sense of belonging. The in-depth qualitative responses aligned with prior literature, reinforcing the study's validity.

5.1.2. Reluctant Acceptance and Family Rejection

Some TG parents accepted their children out of necessity rather than genuine understanding "She has no option but to accept her child as the way they are." (Interview #01, 27-01-2022). This reflects findings by Bartholomaeus & Riggs (2017), who note that transgender individuals often face rejection from family members, leading to emotional distress and economic instability. Need for Gender Diversity in Curriculum a TG parent suggested that "If the concept of transgender can be incorporated in primary textbooks, children can have basic knowledge." (Interview #02, 23-01-2022). This supports the argument by Forsyth & Copes (2014) that early education on gender diversity can reduce bullying and foster inclusivity. The acceptance of TG students varies significantly across schools, influenced by institutional policies and societal attitudes. While some educators show progressive views on transgender inclusion, resistance persists among less-educated parents who oppose their children sharing classrooms with TG students. Many feel ashamed to acknowledge their transgender children in social settings, fearing judgment a sentiment echoed in Gedge's (2009) research on societal stigma. Cultural norms heavily influence TG acceptance, yet there is growing optimism that attitudes are gradually shifting toward inclusivity. Contrary to misconceptions, transgender identity is not innate at birth but develops through personal experiences, choices, and self-realization (NHRC, 2015). Recognizing gender diversity is essential for fostering an equitable society where all individuals, regardless of identity, can thrive.

5.2. Discrimination and Exclusion in School Environment

5.2.1 Bullying and Peer Harassment

TG students reported frequent bullying. "Sometimes classmates irritate me by saying my voice sounds like a boy." (Interview #01, 26-01-2022). These results align with Kosciw *et al.*'s (2020) research documenting that three-quarters of gender-diverse students experience school environments as unsafe due to persistent bullying. Many educators failed to address instances of peer bullying or harassment, creating a hostile learning environment. Additionally,

transgender students were frequently excluded from co-curricular and extracurricular activities a finding consistent with Silveria and Goff's (2016) observations on institutional marginalization. Alarming, some teachers actively participated in demeaning transgender students through various means, contradicting Ullman's (2017) recommendations for fostering an inclusive school climate that supports transgender educational success.

5.2.2 Teacher Biases and Misgendering

Teachers often lacked awareness, leading to unintentional harm. "Some teachers bullied the TG student verbally during class." (Interview #02, 19-01-2022). This aligns with Ullman (2017), who found that teacher biases contribute to an unsafe learning environment for transgender students. According to GLSEN (2009), nearly 90% of transgender students face verbal harassment, with many skipping school due to safety concerns. One school in the study demonstrated commendable efforts by offering one-on-one counseling and fostering a supportive classroom environment. However, most teachers lacked awareness of TG students' struggles, highlighting the need for mandatory training on diversity and inclusion. Integrating gender diversity into primary curricula (Noorie, 2016) can cultivate acceptance from an early age.

5.2.3 Exclusion from Social Activities

A TG student shared that "My classmates have a group, but I am not a member." (Interview #01, 19-01-2022). This exclusion reflects Roop's (2014) argument that transgender students often experience social isolation, leading to depression and anxiety.

5.3 Limited Institutional Support and Facilities

5.3.1 Lack of Gender-Neutral Infrastructure

One teacher attempted to create a separate washroom but faced resistance:

"All guardians and teachers were against this endeavor." (Interview #01, 26-01-2022). This corroborates UNICEF Bangladesh (2021), which found that only 8% of schools have gender-neutral toilets, forcing TG students to avoid restrooms altogether. A critical issue identified was the lack of institutional awareness regarding TG students' needs. As Lees (1998) emphasized, students cannot benefit from education if they constantly fear for their safety. This study underscores how parental attitudes shape TG children's academic journeys while some

parents actively support their education, others succumb to societal biases, forcing many TG students to drop out due to harassment and exclusion. Chandra (2017) similarly highlighted how rigid cultural norms dehumanize transgender individuals, restricting their educational opportunities. Schools must provide gender-sensitive facilities to ensure TG students' safety and comfort. During fieldwork, none of the visited schools had gender-neutral restrooms, leaving TG students uncertain about which facilities to use an issue also raised in the U.S. Department of Education's Dear Colleague Letter (2016). Establishing inclusive sanitation infrastructure is crucial to normalizing TG identities. Additionally, mental health support is vital, as young transgender individuals frequently endure bullying and violence (Bauer, 2002).

5.3.2 Financial Barriers and Dropout Rates

A TG parent explained that "I couldn't afford school fees, so my daughter worked as a maid until a head teacher admitted her for free." (Interview #01, 27-01-2022). This supports BANBEIS (2024), which highlights that financial constraints and stigma lead to high dropout rates among TG students.

5.3.3 Mental Health Support is lacking

A teacher noted that "We need counseling services, but most people dismiss mental health as unimportant." (Interview #01, 26-01-2022). This aligns with Nadal (2017), who found that transgender youth face elevated risks of anxiety and depression due to systemic discrimination. The research revealed a concerning pattern of teacher indifference toward transgender students in educational settings. The study further highlighted severe psychological and academic consequences stemming from this mistreatment. Transgender students reported experiencing depression, frequent school absences, heightened dropout rates, and even suicidal thoughts mirroring Ortiz-Luis' (2014) findings on how victimization disrupts personal and academic development. These outcomes underscore the urgent need for systemic interventions to protect transgender students and ensure their equitable access to education.

5.4 Efforts toward Inclusion and Policy Gaps

5.4.1 Some Schools Show Progress

A teacher shared that "We have created an inclusive environment, though it was a difficult journey." (Interview #01, 18-01-2022). This reflects UNICEF's "Safe Schools Program" (2024), which reduced bullying by 30% in pilot schools through awareness campaigns. Many

mainstream schools hesitate to admit TG students, fearing discomfort among other pupils (Safa, 2016). To counter this, sensitizing school governing bodies is essential. A well-informed administration can implement anti-discrimination policies, reduce bullying, and create safer learning environments. Governing bodies must consist of ethically principled leaders, educators, and stakeholders committed to equitable decision-making. Only through systemic change can schools truly embrace inclusivity for transgender students.

5.4.2 Government Policies Lack Enforcement

While Bangladesh's "National Education Policy (2010, revised 2021)" mandates inclusivity, implementation remains weak (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2023).

5.4.3 NGOs Play a Critical Role

Organizations like "Bandhu Social Welfare Society" provide scholarships and teacher training (Bandhu, 2023), but systemic change requires stronger government action. While Bangladesh has made some progress in recognizing transgender rights, primary education remains a battleground for acceptance in the classroom of GPS. Deep-seated stigma, lack of awareness, and institutional resistance hinder TG students' access to equitable education. However, the success of inclusive initiatives in some schools demonstrates that change is possible through sustained advocacy, policy reforms, and societal sensitization. Ensuring TG students' right to education requires collective effort from families and schools to policymakers to create a truly inclusive environment where every child can thrive.

The study reveals that transgender children in government primary schools face severe discrimination due to social stigma, lack of awareness, and institutional neglect. While some schools and NGOs are making progress, systemic reforms are needed, including:

1. Gender-inclusive curriculum to educate students and teachers.
2. Anti-bullying policies with strict enforcement mechanisms.
3. Gender-neutral facilities (washrooms, changing rooms).
4. Mandatory teacher training on transgender issues.
5. Mental health counseling for TG students.

5.5 Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the significant challenges transgender (TG) students face in government primary schools in Bangladesh, stemming from deep-rooted social stigma, institutional neglect, and a lack of awareness among educators, parents, and peers. The study reveals that TG students experience discrimination, bullying, and exclusion, both within and outside school environments, which adversely affect their mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being.

Despite some progressive efforts such as fee waivers, counseling services, and inclusive policies in certain schools, systemic barriers persist. Many teachers and parents hold misconceptions about transgender identities, often associating them with religious or moral transgressions. This lack of understanding leads to misgendering, harassment, and social ostracization, forcing many TG students to drop out of school. Additionally, the absence of gender-neutral facilities and comprehensive anti-discrimination policies further marginalizes TG students, reinforcing their exclusion from mainstream education.

However, the study also identifies promising practices, such as teacher-led initiatives to create supportive classroom environments, parental sensitization programs, and NGO interventions that provide scholarships and skill development training. These efforts demonstrate that inclusive education is achievable with structured policy reforms and community engagement.

5.6 Recommendations:

To foster a more inclusive educational environment for TG students, the following measures should be implemented:

- i. Mandate teacher training programs on transgender inclusion to prevent misgendering and promote supportive classroom practices.
- ii. Introduce gender diversity education in primary curricula to foster acceptance and reduce bullying of TG students.
- iii. Enforce strict anti-discrimination policies with clear consequences for harassment targeting transgender children.

- iv. Provide gender-neutral facilities (restrooms, changing rooms) to ensure TG students' safety and dignity.
- v. Establish mental health counseling services in schools to address the emotional trauma faced by TG students.
- vi. Offer scholarships and fee waivers to economically disadvantaged TG students to improve enrollment and retention.
- vii. Conduct community awareness campaigns to challenge societal stigma and engage parents in supporting TG education.
- viii. Strengthen government-NGO partnerships to monitor policy implementation and provide resources for inclusive schools.

While Bangladesh has made strides in recognizing transgender rights, much work remains to ensure equitable access to education. A collaborative effort involving policymakers, educators, parents, and civil society is essential to dismantle systemic discrimination and create an inclusive learning environment where all students, regardless of gender identity, can thrive. By implementing these recommendations, schools can move toward a future where transgender students are not merely tolerated but truly accepted and empowered. This study underscores the urgent need for systemic change to ensure that transgender children receive the education and support they deserve free from discrimination and exclusion. Only through sustained advocacy and policy enforcement can Bangladesh's education system become truly inclusive.

References

- Alam, M. (2018). Study of Educational Aspiration and Socio-Economic Status of Secondary School Students. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 6(2), 191–201. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2303102529>
- Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK). (2021). Human rights report 2021: Situation of transgender people in Bangladesh. Retrieved from <http://www.askbd.org/ask/2022/01/12/annual-human-rights-report-2021>
- Al-Mamun, M., Hossain, M. J., Alam, M., Parvez, M. S., Dhar, B. K., & Islam, M. R. (2022). Discrimination and social exclusion of third-gender population (Hijra) in Bangladesh: A brief review. *Heliyon*, 8(10), e11076. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e11076>
- Altilio, T., & Otis-Green, S. (Eds.). (2011). Oxford textbook of palliative social work. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199739110.001.0001>
- Amanullah, A. S. M., Abir, T., Husain, T., Lim, D., Osuagwu, U. L., Ahmed, G., & Agho, K. E. (2022). Human rights violations and associated factors of the Hijras in Bangladesh—A cross-sectional study. *PLOS ONE*, 17(7), e0269375. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0269375>
- Aziz, A., & Azhar, S. (2019). Social exclusion and official recognition of Hijra in Bangladesh. *Journal of Research on Women and Gender*, 9(1), 3-19. Retrieved from <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/handle/10877/12901>
- Bandhu Social Welfare Society. (2020). Baseline study on transgender access to education in Bangladesh. Retrieved from <https://bandhu-bd.org/publications/>
- Bandhu Social Welfare Society. (2024). socioeconomic challenges in transgender education access: A Bangladesh perspective. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Author. Retrieved from <https://bandhu-bd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Trans-Education-Access-Report-2024.pdf>

- Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS). (2024). Annual report on inclusive education. Retrieved from <http://www.banbeis.gov.bd/new/index.php>
- Bartholomaeus, C., & Riggs, D. W. (2017). Whole-of-school approaches to supporting transgender students, staff, and parents. *International Journal of Transgenderism*, 18(4), 361–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15532739.2017.1355648>
- Becker, H. S. (2019). *Evidence*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). (2022). Population & housing census 2022: Primary report. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Author. Retrieved from https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/b343a8b4_956b_45ca_872f_4cf9b2f1a6e0/2022-07-28-14-31-b21f81d1c15171f1770c661020381666.pdf
- Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS). (Impact Analysis on Development Program for Improving the Living Standard of Hijra Community (IADPILSHC) Retrieved from <https://bids.org.bd/page/researches/?rid=197>
- Beemyn, B. G. (2003). Serving the needs of transgender college students. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 1(1), 33-50.
- Beemyn, B. G., Dominguez, A., Pettitt, J., & Smith, T. (2005). Suggested steps to make campuses more trans-inclusive. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 3(1), 89-94.
- Beemyn, B. G. (2005). Making campuses more inclusive of transgender students. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 3(1), 77-87.
- Beemyn, G., & Rankin, S. R. (2011). *The lives of transgender people*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

- Buchmann, C., & Dalton, B. (2002). Interpersonal influences and educational aspirations in 12 countries: The importance of institutional context. *Sociology of Education*, 75(2), 99–122. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3090287>
- Chakrapani, V. (2010). Hijras/transgender women in India: HIV, human rights and social exclusion. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Retrieved from <https://archive.nyu.edu/handle/2451/33612>
- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chandra, S. (2017). Transgender children's education and their reengagement in society. *International Journal of Educational Research Studies*, 2(13), 875-890.
- Chowdhury, S. (2020, November 20). Transgender in Bangladesh: The first school opens for trans students. BBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-54838305>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dear Colleague Letter on Transgender Students. (2016). U.S. Department of Education (Office for Civil Rights) and U.S. Department of Justice (Civil Rights Division).
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2018). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (5th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2022). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (6th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Feinberg, L. (1999). *Transliberation: Beyond pink and blue*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Flick, U. (2018). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Forsyth, C. J., & Copes, H. (Eds.). (2014). *Encyclopedia of social deviance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Gender Spectrum. (2021). Schools in transition: A guide for supporting transgender students in K-12 schools (2nd Ed.). Retrieved from <https://www.genderspectrum.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Schools-in-Transition-2021.pdf>
- Greytak, E. A., Kosciw, J. G., & Diaz, E. M. (2016). From teasing to torment: School climate revisited, a survey of U.S. secondary school students and teachers. New York, NY: GLSEN.
- Hossain, M. I., & Ferdous, G. K. (2020). Social exclusion of transgender people in Bangladesh: Implication for social work practice. In Conference proceeding on social work and sustainable development (pp. 89-109). Dhaka, Bangladesh: [Publisher].
- Human Rights Watch. (2024). Barriers to education for transgender individuals in Bangladesh: Systemic exclusion and harassment. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/transgender-education-bangladesh>
- Human Rights Watch. (2022). "I thought of myself as defective": Neglecting the rights of transgender youth in Bangladesh. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/07/28/i-thought-myself-defective/neglecting-rights-transgender-youth-bangladesh>
- Islam, M. A. (2016). Right to education of the third gender of Bangladesh: An overview. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 21(9), 29-34. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2109072934>
- Jemeli, C. M., & Fakandu, A. M. (2019). Equitable access to education and development in a knowledgeable society as advocated by UNESCO. Educational Research and Reviews, 14(6), 200-205.
- Jones, T., & Hillier, L. (2013). Comparing trans-spectrum and same-sex-attracted youth in Australia: Increased risks, increased activism. Journal of LGBT Youth, 10(4), 287-307. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361653.2013.825197>
- Kalam, A., Alam, M.J., Basharat, L., Sarker, G.F., Mamun, M.A.A. and Ahsan, A.H.M. (2024), "The right to education and attitudes toward Hijras in Bangladesh: assessing educational support to achieve sustainable communities", Quality Education for All, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 187-203. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QEA-11-2023-0016>

- Khan, S. I., et al. (2009). Living on the extreme margin: Social exclusion of the transgender population (Hijra) in Bangladesh. *Journal of Health, Population and Nutrition*, 27(4), 441-451. <https://doi.org/10.3329/jhpn.v27i4.3388>
- Lichtman, M. (2010). *Qualitative Research in Education: A User's Guide* (2nd Ed.). Sage, California.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th Ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Norris, A. L., & Orchowski, L. M. (2020). Peer victimization of sexual minority and transgender youth: A cross-sectional study of high school students. *Psychology of violence*, 10(2), 201
- Nadal, K. L. (2017). Transgender people. In *The SAGE encyclopedia of psychology and gender* (pp. 1-14). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ortiz-Luis, C. (2014). The Transgender Experience Impact on Secondary School Choice: A Case Study. <https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/concern/theses/hq37vp07m>
- Rahaman, M.M., Mahwish, R., Islam, M.K. & Sha, M.F. (2020). Identify, Discrimination and Social Stigma: A Narrative Analysis of Hijra Community in Dhaka City. *Teacher's World: Journal of Education and Research*, 47: 61-80.
- Reddy-Best, K. L., & Olson, E. (2020). Trans traveling and embodied practices: Panopticism, agency, dress, and gendered surveillance. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 85, 103028.
- Russell, S. T., et al. (2010). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender adolescent school victimization: Implications for young adult health and adjustment. *Journal of School Health*, 81(5), 223-230. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-1561.2011.00583.x>
- Sansone, D. (2019). Economics of Education Review LGBT students: New evidence on demographics and educational outcomes. *Economics of Education Review*, 73(April), 101933. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2019.101933>
- Silveira, J. M., & Goff, S. C. (2016). Music teachers' attitudes toward transgender students and supportive school practices. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 64(2), 138-158.

- Snapp, S. D., et al. (2015). LGBTQ-inclusive curricula: Why supportive curricula matter. *Sex Education*, 15(6), 580-596. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2015.1042573>
- UNESCO. (2015). Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233137>
- UNICEF Bangladesh. (2023). Safe schools for marginalized children in Cox's Bazar: Education access challenges for transgender and gender-diverse students. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/reports/safe-schools-marginalized-children-coxs-bazar>

Appendices

Appendix A. Consent Letter

Dear Participants,

I am Jannatul Ferdous Tithi (Former fellow of Teach for Bangladesh), as of now pursuing Masters of Education at BRAC Institute of Educational Development. Currently, I am in the process of conducting a Master's Thesis which is a part of my course. The name of the thesis topic is **PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR TRANSGNEDER CHILDREN: AVAILABLE SUPPORTS AND FACILITIES FOR THEM IN THE CLASSROOM OF GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS**. This study intends to find out what kind of supports and facilities transgender students get in the classroom of GPS. I would like to have your opinions and views regarding this issue. I will conduct a semi-structured interview using questionnaire for around 40-45 minutes and observe the classroom environment also for 40-45 minutes. This is to ensure you that your identity will be kept confidential and the information provided will only be used for academic purpose. Please feel free to ask questions regarding this study. Please sign the consent form below to confirm your permission regarding the interview.

Thank you for your kind assistance and support in this academic endeavor.

Jannatul Ferdous Tithi

M. Ed. Participant, BIED, BRAC University Dhaka, Bangladesh.

I have read the above and discussed it with the researcher. I understand the study and I agree to participate.

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

Appendix B. Interview Guideline for Transgender Students

Name-

Date-

Age-

Interviewer No-

Class-

School -

For Transgender students-

a) Do your classmates share their seat with you?

তোমার সহপাঠীরা কি তোমার সাথে এক সটি এ বসে?

b) Do your classmates play with you?

তোমার সহপাঠীরা কি তোমার সাথে খেলোথুলা করে?

c) Does your teacher provide any information to other students about transgender identities or issues (in sex education, science or any other subjects)?

তোমার শিক্ষকরা কি অন্য শিক্ষার্থীদের তৃতীয় লিঙ্গদের বিষয়ে তথ্য দেয়? (লিঙ্গ বিষয়ক শিক্ষা, বিজ্ঞান কিংবা এই সম্পর্কিত অন্য কোন বিষয় পড়ানোর সময়)

d) Are you happy with the way your classmates treat you?

তোমার সহপাঠীদের আচরণে তুমি কি সন্তুষ্ট?

e) Do your teacher treat you well?

তোমার সাথে শিক্ষকরা কমন আচরণ করে?

f) Is there any specific washroom for you in your school?

তোমার জন্য কি বিদ্যালয়ে আলাদা শৌচাগার আছে?

g) Why do you come to school?

তুমি বিদ্যালয়ে কেনো আসো?

h) Do you like to come to school?

তুমি কি বিদ্যালয়ে আসতে পছন্দ করো?

i) Are the students of school bullied?

বিদ্যালয়ে অন্যান্য শিক্ষার্থীরা কি তোমাকে উত্ত্যক্ত করে?

j) What do you think the role of education in your life?

তোমার জীবনে শিক্ষার ভূমিকা কি?

K) Do you have any friends in your school?

তোমার কি বিদ্যালয়ে কোনো বন্ধু আছে ?

L) Do you ever participate in any kind of school cultural function?

তুমি কি কখনো বিদ্যালয়ে কোনো ধরনের প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করছো ?

M) How do you feel about yourself?

তুমি নিজের সম্পর্কে কি ভাবো?

Appendix C. Interview Guideline for Teachers

Name-

Date-

Age-

Interviewer No-

Class-

School -

1. For stakeholders (Teachers):

a) Do you follow any specific kind of teaching approach?

আপনি কি নির্দিষ্ট কোন শিক্ষা পদ্ধতি ব্যবহার করেন?

b) How do you treat a transgender student?

একজন তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীর সাথে আপনি কমন আচরণ করেন?

c) Does your school have any anti-bullying policy to protect transgender students?

আপনার বিদ্যালয়ে তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীরা সুরক্ষার্থে কি কোন লাঞ্ছনা প্রতিরোধক ব্যবস্থা আছে?

d) Do you agree that transgender students are depriving?

তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীরা কি সামাজিক বিভিন্ন সুযোগ সুবিধা থেকে বঞ্চিত হচ্ছে বলে আপনি একমত?

e) Have you faced any obstacles to ensure a convivial and supportive classroom environment for a transgender student?

আপনি কি তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য আনন্দময় এবং সহযোগিতাপূর্ণ শ্রেণীকক্ষ বাস্তবায়নের ক্ষেত্রে কখনো বাধার সম্মুখীন হয়েছেন?

f) Does your school have specialized washroom for transgender students?

আপনার বিদ্যালয়ে কি তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য কি বিশেষ শৌচাগার আছে?

g) Does your school provide any specific supports or facilities for transgender students?

আপনার বিদ্যালয় কি তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য কোন নির্দিষ্ট সুযোগ সুবধির ব্যবস্থা রেখেছে?

h) Do you think education can bring a change in transgender students' life?

আপনি কি মনে করেন শিক্ষা তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জীবনে পরিবর্তন পারে ?

i) Do you ever think about separate schools for transgender students?

আপনি কি কখনো তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য আলাদা বিদ্যালয়ে কথা চিন্তা করছেন?

j) Do you arrange any community or teacher's meeting regarding TG rights and normalization of TG issues in your school?

আপনি কি কখনো তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের অধিকার এবং তাদের বিষয়টা স্বাভাবিক করার জন্য বিদ্যালয়ে এলাকার লোকজন কিংবা শিক্ষক দের নিয়ে আলোচনা সভা করছেন?

k) Have you arranged any one to one session with your TG students to know more about the student's feeling?

আপনি কি কখনো তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীর সাথে একান্ত আলোচনা করেছেন তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীর মনের কথা আরও ভালভাবে জানার জন্য?

l) How do the other teachers treat your TG student?

অন্য শিক্ষকরা কমন ব্যবহার করে তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে ?

m) What are the measures did you take to prevent bullying in your school regarding TG students bullying?

তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে লাঞ্ছনা প্রতিরোধে আপনার বিদ্যালয়ে কি আপনারা কোন পদক্ষেপে নিয়েছেন?

n) Did you invite any external resource person at your school for a introductory session TG students and their rights in education sector?

আপনি কি বাইরে থেকে কখনো রিসোর্স পারসন এনেছেন তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের অধিকার এবং তাদের বিষয়টা নিয়ে বিদ্যালয়ে আলোচনা সভা করার জন্য?

Appendix D. Interview Guideline for Parents

Name-

Date-

Age-

Interviewer No-

Class-

School -

For Transgender parents-

- a) How do you feel about that your children is getting education?
- b) Do you accept your children?
- c) How do the other family members behave with your child?
- d) How much do you know about your child's right?
- e) Do you have any idea about Transgender?

For Non-TG parents -

- a) Do you know about Transgender people?
- b) How do you feel that your children share classroom with TG classmate?
- c) What do you know about the right of TG student?
- d) What do you think that TG children should have education right or not?

Appendix E. Class Observation Check List

A) Basic Information:

School Name-

Date-

Class-

Observation no-

Subject-

B) Classroom Environment:

- ✓ Teacher's Activity-
- ✓ Student's Activity-
- ✓ Classroom Engagement-
- ✓ Challenges TG students facing-

C) School Facility:

- ✓ Special Washroom-
- ✓ Scholarship-
- ✓ Training for skill development-
- ✓ Classroom counselling Option-

Appendix F. Interview Transcript

প্রধান শিক্ষক - বদ্ব্যালয় বার

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা - এমবিএ (মার্কটিং)

জন্ডার - মহিলা

অভিজ্ঞতা -১৮ বছর

কথোপকথন :

গবষেক : আপনার বদ্ব্যালয় কী তৃতীয় লঙিগরে শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য কোনো নির্দিষ্ট সুযোগ সুবধির ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : পৃথক শোচাগার ও কমনরুমরে ব্যবস্থার জন্য চেষ্টা করছি। কনিতু অভিবাবক ও শিক্ষকদের আপত্তরি জন্য তা সম্ভব হয় উঠে নাই। তবে মানসকিভাবে বরিপযস্ত, বশিষে করে বযিন্নতায় ভোগা তৃতীয় লঙিগরে শিক্ষার্থীর জন্য স্টুডেন্ট কাউন্সলেং এর ব্যবস্থা করতে পরেছি।

গবষেক : আপনি কমনে করেনে শিক্ষা তৃতীয় লঙিগরে শিক্ষার্থীদের জীবনে পরবির্তন আনতে পারে?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : অবশ্যই হ্যাঁ। তৃতীয় লঙিগরে জীবনমান ও সামাজকি মর্যাদা পরবির্তনরে জন্য সবচয়ে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ মাধ্যম হলো শিক্ষা বশিষেকরে প্রাথমকি,মাধ্যমকি ও উচ্চমাধ্যমকি শিক্ষার সাথে আবশ্যকিভাবে উচ্চতর শিক্ষা অর্জনে যনে তাদের অসুবধি না হয় সদেরকি সরকাররে লক্ষ্য রাখা জরুরী।

গবষেক : আপনি কী কখনো তৃতীয় লঙিগরে শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য আলাদা বদ্ব্যালয়রে কথা চনিতা করেছেন?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : সামাজকি লাঞ্ছনা (Bullying) প্রতিকার ও শিক্ষার্থীর মানসকি স্বাস্থ্যরে কল্যাণে আলাদা বদ্ব্যালয় ভালো কাজে দতি পারে। বশিষেকরে মাধ্যমকি পর্যায়ে পর্যন্ত যদি শিক্ষার্থীর জন্য সুন্দর শিক্ষা পরবিশে নশ্চিতি করা যায়। পরবর্তী ধাপগুলোতে বভিন্ন প্রতিকূলতা মোকাবলো তকদের জন্য অনকোংশে সহজতর হবে।

গবেষক: আপনিকি কখনো তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের অধিকার এবং তাদের বিষয়টি স্বাভাবিক করার জন্য বদ্যালয়ে এলাকার লোকজন কথিবা শিক্ষকদের নিয়ে আলোচনা সভা করছেন?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : বদ্যালয়ে অভিবাক ও শিক্ষকদের নিয়ে সভা করা হয় নিয়মতি ই। সভাতে সবাই তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের জন্য উপযুক্ত শিক্ষা পরবিশে তরৌতে মতামত প্রদান করলও, বাস্তবে তাদের কারো আচার ব্যবহারেরে তার প্রতিফলন হয়না।

গবেষক : আপনিকি কখনো তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে একান্ত আলোচনা করছেন, তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীর মনের কথা আরো ভালোভাবে জানার জন্য?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : ব্যক্তিগতভাবে তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে আলোচনা করি তাদের ব্যক্তিগত, পারিবারিক শিক্ষা সম্পর্কতি বিভিন্ন বিষয় নিয়ে। বেশিরভাগ সময়ই আমার হাতে কোনো গঠনমূলক সমাধান থাকনো। কিন্তু হতাশা ও বহিন্তার কথা বলার একটা জায়গা করে দেওয়াটা ও তাদের জীবনে কিছুটা স্বস্তি দিয়ে বলে আমি মনে করি।

গবেষক : অন্য শিক্ষকরা কমন ব্যবহার করে তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে?

প্রধান শিক্ষক : অন্যান্য শিক্ষার্থীদের নরিদশেনা দয়ো হয়ছে যনে তারা তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের শিক্ষার্থীদের সাথে ভিন্ আচরণ না করেন। সাথে সাথে এটাও নশ্চিতি করার জন্য তাদেরকে নরিদশে দয়ো আছে যনে কোনোরকম বুলিং এর শকার যনে তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের কোনো শিক্ষার্থী না হয় এবং যো কোনো মানসকি সার্পোটি ও বিষয়ভিত্তিকি সাহায্য দতি তারা যনো সবসময় সচেষ্টে থাকনে।কিন্তু দুর্ভাগ্যজনভাবে বেশিরভাগ শিক্ষক এই অবদান গুলো রাখতে সমর্থ হন না।