

**Instructional Leadership Role of Government Primary School Head Teachers
for Successful Implementation of Curriculum**

By

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**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 & School Improvement**

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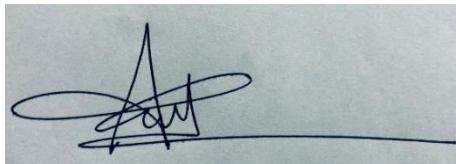
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'Raisul Abedin Ananda'. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

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Approval

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Ethics Statement

Before starting data collection, I submitted an ethical approval form to BRAC University and got the approval.

There were several ethical issues and concerns in this research, such as taking consents, comfortability regarding the interview questions, confidentiality of the identity of the participants. For the first concern, not only a consent form was sent to all the participants. A consent form explaining the research purpose and researcher's role was provided to each participant. All of the participants officially signed the consent form after getting clear about all of their concerns. Meanwhile, a few questions could have made participants uncomfortable while answering as the answers might include sensitive information. In this case, the participants were given total freedom to skip any questions if they feel awkward answering during the interview. Another issue came up regarding the confidentiality of the participants' identities. And, it was ensured that their identities would not be disclosed in public or anywhere in the research paper. All of the conversations were recorded and transcribed maintain ethical pinciples.

Abstract

The objective of this research was to study the perceptions of Government Primary School Head Teachers about their instructional leadership at school, which was broken down into specific themes and subthemes under the categories of instructional leadership dimensions. This research can be significant to the Government Primary School Head Teachers who practice instructional leadership to develop their leadership qualities and skills. A qualitative approach was taken for the study. Data collection was done through one-to-one interviews, and the thematic analysis method was used to analyze the findings. The findings found that Government Primary School Head Teachers feel the importance of all instructional leadership dimensions. They highly prioritize strong collaboration with relevant stakeholders towards achieving a collective goal. Head Teachers stated that they maintain shared decision-making and responsibilities while coordinating with assistant teachers and encourage professional development. Besides ensuring a safe environment, they regularly monitor students' progress and supervise teachers' performance. While implementing instructional leadership, Head Teachers receive support from assistant teachers for different school-related works, School Management Committee (SMC) for resources, and Education Officers for training. However, they also face challenges, such as lack of accountability or integrity of the assistant teachers, low educational quality, or corrupted SMC members. Head Teachers usually take situation-based strategies to address the challenges. Finally, it was recommended Head Teachers should maintain a weekly tracking system, analyze assistant teachers' job satisfaction, cooperate more with URC instructors, establish a student behavior tracker at school, and involve Parents Teacher Association more in school improvement activities.

Keywords: Instructional Leadership, Curriculum, Successful Implementation, Head Teacher's Perspective, Government Primary School.

Dedication

This Thesis is dedicated to my father and my late mother, who gave their best effort to ensure I receive a quality education.

Acknowledgement

At first, I am thankful to almighty Allah for all the support and guidance. Then, I would like to show my gratitude to my advisor Mr. Somnath Saha for his continuous guidance throughout this study. I am also thankful to Dr. Md Tariqul Islam for all the support he provided as an external to this thesis work. My sincere gratitude to all the Government Primary Schools Head Teachers, who enthusiastically cooperated with me as the study participants. Special thanks to my friend Rehel Auditi Rema, a fellow researcher and an alum at Teach For Bangladesh, for being a peer reviewer of this research. Finally, I am grateful to my younger sister, friends, and colleagues who helped me with various resources and logistical supports during this thesis work.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

According to Billah (2017), quality education involves critical thinking, learning to work with others and work independently, a broad range of subjects. Primary education is the key foundation of this central belief. It is also evident that the Head Teachers play a crucial role in securing a primary school's quality provision. Hammond (1999) said that Head Teachers usually plan their schools' ethos, direction, and purpose, which are fundamental to the instructional leadership role for successful curriculum implementation. Instructional leadership aims at achieving academic excellence within a particular subject area for the complete development of learners. Hallinger (2011) claimed he had seen unsuccessful schools turn around into successful ones, and regrettably, outstanding schools slide rapidly into decline. In each case, the rise or fall could be traced to the quality of the schools' Head Teacher.

As being an instructional leader, a Head Teacher must incorporate multiple things to achieve the curriculum's effectiveness by being a manager, administrator, guide, helper, and mentor for teachers and students. The focus of instructional leadership is the effectiveness of outcomes rather than the process of achieving the goals. Daria et al. (2018) suggested that instructional leadership components as analysis of evidence, analysis of impact, determining a focus, and implementing and supporting interconnected. Instructional leadership varies in many ways from other leadership roles. Here, the Head Teachers remain close to the teaching-learning process by planning, implementing, providing resources, implementing lesson plans, and evaluating the outcomes. The tasks are distributed among teachers based on their abilities, interests, and dedication towards the subject. Dufour (2002) mentioned that instructional leadership is so focused on learning quality,

preferably teaching, that some researchers have tagged it as "learning leadership" instead of "instructional leadership." Instructional leaders concentrate on reviewing and reviving the teaching-learning process and exert their utmost efforts to bring forth curriculum outcomes to benefit learners and the community. According to Nader (2019), the Head Teacher is involved in planning instructional methodologies, encouraging teachers, resolving problems, and creating a non-threatening atmosphere for learners. Head Teachers interested in instruction quality must focus on instruction and its effectiveness. The instructional point is a goal that needs priority because it helps the most in achieving education or the teaching-learning process. Hoy and Miskel (2008) narrated that instructional leadership defines an academic institution's manifesto, facilitates its instructional program, and endorses the institute's climate, which shows their focus on teaching and learning practices prevail there.

1.2 Research Topic

Instructional Leadership Role of Government Primary School Head Teachers for Successful Implementation of Curriculum.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Hornig, Leo, and Mindich (2010) reported that poor organizational management of institutional heads diverges the followers from the organization's common goal. Alimuddin et al. (2020) stated that Head Teachers are less effective at leading teachers and sharing school goals in reality. Less clear goals make it hard for assistant teachers to share and achieve. Meanwhile, Goodwin et al. (2003) claimed that instructional leaders, particularly Head Teachers in primary schools, face many challenges arising from specific political and social situations, traditional teaching methods, and other human and non-human factors. A study by Makgato (2019) found that school

performance problems occur due to weaknesses in leadership practices and a lack of focus on curriculum management. Research by Mansor et al. (2020) in Malaysia revealed that many school Head Teachers in rural or small schools who are less proactive, less creative, less innovative often lose focus as curriculum managers. Rapid changes in education and the increasing workload have had implications for teachers' work performance. Concerning this, Danish (2019) stated that teachers expect guidance, Support, help, encouragement, and constructive advice from the headmaster. However, due to the busy factor with other tasks, the Head Teachers do not have time to discuss and communicate effectively with teachers. As a result, their instructional leadership role gets hindered while implementing successful curriculum. In Bangladesh, the current recruitment policies do not require a Head Teacher to have had previous teaching experience or training. In Bangladesh, according to the report of MoPME (2013), inexperienced graduates get appointed as Head Teachers in this current process of recruitment. This indicates that newly appointed teachers might not have enough expertise or matured mindset to understand their instructional leadership role. Based on the above research, Head Teachers of Bangladesh have less experience and face a lot of challenges, which are causing their poor instructional leadership role at the primary schools of Bangladesh. And, it is also evident that the primary level school system and students are getting heavily affected due to the lack of instructional leadership role of Head Teachers. So, more in-depth study on the instructional leadership role of Head Teachers is highly required in the context of Govt. Primary Schools in Bangladesh.

1.4 Research Question

- a) How do Government Primary School Head Teachers perceive their instructional leadership role in the successful implementation of curriculum in school?

- b) What are the challenges Government Primary School Head Teachers usually face while implementing their instructional leadership at schools?
- c) How do Head Teachers address the challenges?

1.5 Research Purpose

The research aimed to understand the Government Primary School Head Teachers' perceptions about their instructional leadership role broken down into specific themes and subthemes, which are developing school goal, school improvement plan, decision making, decision making, coordinating activities, supervise and evaluate teaching, providing Support to the teachers, monitor student progress, protecting instructional time, encourage professional development, receiving Support from relevant stakeholder, challenges while implementing instructional leadership and strategies to address the challenges. Another purpose of this research was to know the challenges Head Teachers usually face during the implementation of their instructional leadership and which strategies are taken by to address the challenges. As a whole, research aimed to have a holistic understanding of the instructional leadership role, challenges, and strategies of the Government Primary School Head Teachers.

1.6 Significance of the Research

This research can be significant to the Government Primary School Head Teachers who practice instructional leadership to develop their leadership qualities and skills. This research will also give them new insights and possibilities to progress their leadership role. They can certainly take the results as feedback. And being leaders as learners, they can use this feedback to improve their instructional leadership role.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

In this literature review, I reviewed information from different articles, research papers, books, and documents that I reviewed to understand my research topic of the instructional leadership role of Government Primary School Head Teachers. I have reviewed government and nongovernment programs which have a connection to the Instructional Leadership role of Head Teachers. Let's take a look at the job description of the Govt. Primary School Head Teachers.

Job Description of the Govt. Primary School Head Teachers: (Source: PEDP3-DPE, 2015)

- i. Managing Curriculum
- ii. Managing assistant teachers
- iii. Preserving records
- iv. Protecting school assets
- v. Working with School Managing Committee, Parents and Teachers
- vi. Communicating with Assistant Thana Education Officer and other Higher Authorities
- vii. Monitoring and evaluation
- viii. Professional development of teachers through academic supervision
- ix. School Improvement through the planning process.
- x. Creating and Implementing Annual Lesson Plan and Preparing weekly routine accordingly
- xi. Ensuring daily attendance of school teachers.
- xii. Preserving Record, register and files
- xiii. Protecting school furniture with the help of the School Management Committee
- xiv. Forming Parents Teacher Association and ensuring its effectiveness.
- xv. Preparing different documents of school and providing those to ATEO regularly

- xvi. Conducting Child Survey with the help of teachers and the members of School Management Committee
- xvii. Monitoring the classroom teaching and encouraging teachers for achieving the success of the school. Implementing weekly plan with the help of annual lesson plan

In the literature review, I have reviewed the instructional leadership of Govt. Primary School Head Teachers into following categories -

2.1 Instructional Leadership Dimensions

2.1.1 Developing School Goal

2.1.2 School Improvement Plan

2.1.3. Decision Making

2.1.4. Coordinating Activities

2.1.5 Supervise and Evaluate Teaching

2.1.6 Providing Support to the Teachers

2.1.7 Monitor Student Progress

2.1.8 Protecting Instructional time

2.1.9 Encourage Professional Development

2.2 Receiving Support from Relevant Stakeholders

2.3 Challenges while implementing Instructional Leadership

2.4 Strategies to address the challenges

2.5 Contextual View of Bangladesh

In this chapter, I dug deep into the concept of instructional leadership, then blend its themes or dimensions with the context of Bangladesh. Finally, a conceptual framework was established based on the research themes and subthemes.

Hallinger, P. (2005) stated that instructional leadership generally focuses on promoting and supporting teaching and learning for successful curriculum implementation. In addition, Mazzeo (2003) mentioned that instructional leaders significantly impact student achievement and school improvement both directly and indirectly.

2.1 Instructional Leadership Dimensions

A lot of researchers provided a variety of models of instructional leadership. Researchers like Marishane & Botha (2013) and Mestry et al. (2013) reached a general agreement that instructional leadership is multidimensional. According to Salo et al. (2014), a bundle of multiple professional practices has to be executed concurrently to implement instructional leadership.

Stronge (2012) broke down instructional leadership responsibilities of a Head Teacher into the categories of vision, sharing leadership, leading a learning community, monitoring, and instruction. He said these dimensions are developed to reflect the Head Teachers' responsibility for collaboratively building an appropriately context-based vision, communicating with other school stakeholders, and ensuring teaching and learning processes are aligned with the shared vision. This dimension assumes the Head Teachers' engagement in managing, monitoring, and assessing instruction-and-curriculum-based activities in the school. In the present model, the roles of Head Teachers are treated as the key leadership responsibilities. In their recent study, Wahab et al. (2020) stated about the instructional leadership dimensions, which are developing school goals,

supervising and evaluating teaching, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, and encouraging professional development.

2.1.1 Developing Goal

According to Kearney (2010), forward-thinking Head Teachers understand that creating a vision is the first step towards future decisions, goals, and dreams. In this regard, Hallinger (2020) asserted that clear goals could help school leaders ensure teachers' teaching and learning process effectiveness. In contrast, Schildkamp (2019) explained that school excellence depends on its leaders who share goals with teachers. Kouzes (2002) signified that successful Head Teachers also understand that they would have to create a shared vision if they want to reach fruition through inspiring different stakeholders. Cotton (2008) stated that high-achieving schools have Head Teachers who believe that established school goals are attainable. Leithwood et al., (2003) mentioned that high-achieving schools have Head Teachers who expect that both teachers and students can meet established goals. This means aligning the expectation of a goal with the mindset of the relevant stakeholders is necessary while developing goals.

2.1.2 School Improvement Plan

Marzano et al. (2005) stated that high-achieving schools have Head Teachers who communicate to all who are connected to the school improvement mission. They also said that recognizing the value of collaborative participation in the learning community is a significant fundamental way to build trust, collective responsibility, and further improved student learning. In this case, sharing leadership plays a huge role. Meanwhile, Gronn (1986, 1999, 2003) has argued, the term "School Leadership" does not refer to the Head Teacher's leadership alone. Weber (1971) considered that a school head's leadership quality is essential for the school's success and enlisted as creating the

school's quality and atmosphere; facilitate uplifting of speculations among students; improve learning abilities and reading acuties. However, the Head Teacher remains a key player in organizational change, in other words, improvement. Edmonds (1979) emphasized school leaders' role as great supporters of the schools' learning process. Reason and Reason (2007) claimed that Head Teachers positively affect change from the classroom when they constantly monitor school improvement and then participate in problem-solving. Chew and Andrews, 2010 said that as teacher leaders work with Head Teachers toward school improvement, they provide valuable insights and ideas. Muijs and Harris (2006) implied that willingness to take on additional tasks and responsibilities outside the classroom could benefit the school. Leithwood et al. (2004) mentioned that Head Teachers who develop and tap the expertise of assistant teachers and refocus their emphasis on learning throughout the school improvement effort are more successful than those who do not. Leithwood et al. (2003) stipulated that effective school Head Teachers foster communication with and between all school constituents on an ongoing basis. They try to realize that they may not have all the answers. They are sound listeners and try to hear alternate views on topics. Porterfield and Carnes (2010) said that today's technologies offer various communication possibilities and opportunities. Porterfield and Carnes advocated using traditional and new media as communicative tools to build parent and community trust, expediting the school improvement process relatively smoothly.

2.1.3. Decision Making

Fink and Resnick (2001) found the importance of shared decision-making to maintain high school morale. Both teachers and Head Teachers believe that someone should be positioned to guide the curriculum and make decisions about staff development needs. Portin et al. (2003) suggested providing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in decision-making about issues affecting

them and that they are knowledgeable about. Kearney and Harrington (2010) claimed that capitalizing on other staff members' leadership and instructional strengths is wise leadership.

2.1.4. Coordinating Activities

Grissom and Loeb (2009) said that school Head Teachers affect student learning primarily by hiring and supporting high-quality teachers and staff. Spillane et al. (2001) claimed that effective Head Teachers distribute administrative tasks and create multiple leaders. Meanwhile, Whalstorm (2008) brought a concern that sharing leadership should not be confused with delegating responsibilities or providing extra help. Rather, it can be defined broadly as a positive influence and collaborative participation in school-wide decisions. Because effective Head Teachers understand the significance of a team effort through realizing the shared vision. Portin et al. (2003) suggested that the Head Teachers' selection of quality teachers directly affects student outcomes. That is why the careful selection of support staff is equally important. Portin and colleagues note that Head Teachers in their study talked about the impact of support staff on the school's climate. Therefore, they should be careful while selecting personnel where the outcomes pay dividends later on. Kearney and Harrington (2010) cited that mindful allocation of staffing resources should be a high priority for the Head Teachers. In a study, Balu, Horng, and Loeb (2010) found that personnel management practices play a more significant role when used strategically. This happens when staff are recruited and supported, developed, retained, and removed strategically and not based on random decisions. The deeply check into the details of previous work records of the assistant teachers before sharing responsibilities. According to Peterson (2002), effective Head Teachers understand the school district's hiring system and use this knowledge to acquire the best-qualified people for the positions they seek to fill.

2.1.5 Supervise and Evaluate Teaching

According to Fink (2003), in effective schools, Head Teachers can judge the effectiveness of teaching and serve as role models for the school staff. In this case, monitoring the assistant teacher helps to recognize instructional strengths and weaknesses. Head Teachers are generally aware of instructional practices in their respective schools, know curriculum standards, and ensure that they are taught. Portin (2003) said that Head Teachers trust their teachers to effectively implement instruction and visit classrooms to observe the results of that instruction. He also implicated that effective Head Teachers continue documenting the gap to help struggling assistant teachers with proper documentation. Stronge (1995) mentioned two major purposes of teacher/staff evaluation: professional growth and performance accountability. Meanwhile, Stronge argued that there is room for accountability and performance improvement purposes in the evaluation system. And evaluation systems that reflect both responsibility and personal growth dimensions are highly significant for evaluation at a larger scale. Hinchey (2010) reported that the National Education Policy Center advocates an evaluation system, which includes continuous improvement of the teaching staff. According to the article written by Stronge et al. (2008), if teacher evaluation is to benefit teachers, Head Teachers must consider ways to improve the evaluation process so that quality characteristics mark it. These characteristics include a favorable climate, clear communications, teachers/staff and Head Teachers committed to the evaluation, and technically sound practices. In his research paper, McLaughlin (1990) said that teacher involvement at every level of the evaluation process is highly required for an effective evaluation system.

2.1.6 Monitor Student Progress

Cotton (2003) suggested that Head Teachers must spend time in classrooms to monitor instructional programs, curriculum implementation, and the quality of instructional practices.

Cotton identified three ways in which Head Teachers of effective schools strongly influence the achievement of the students: (1) they provide autonomy to assistant teachers in their classrooms to organize and manage as they see fit; (2) they try to maximize instructional time by minimizing interruptions; and (3) they focus on student achievement. Heck and Marcoulides (1996) stated that a school with solid leadership could positively affect students' learning. Hallinger et al. (1996) said that characterizing Head Teacher effectiveness is important because there is a substantial relationship between the quality of the teacher and student achievement. Usdan et al. (2000) reported that one aspect of effective leadership involves using data and how this can impact student achievement. Usdan and colleagues summarized that Head Teachers play an essential role in teaching and learning improvement, saying that Head Teachers "must collect, analyze, and use data in ways that fuel excellence." Leithwood et al. (2004) noted that effective Head Teachers monitor progress, identify performance, and use the information to make program adjustments. Snipes et al. (2004) stated that Head Teachers also encourage and provide their staff training to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in monitoring students' progress.

2.1.7 Protecting Instructional time

Marzano (2005) mentioned that effective Head Teachers consciously limit activities that diminish instructional time by emphasizing productive teaching and learning. Additionally, Kearney (2010) said that Head Teachers allocate resources based on identified needs, including materials, staff development, and proper instructional time. They encourage the teachers to reflect regarding instructional practices and their impact on school improvement and student achievement. Leithwood et al. (2003) said that effective Head Teachers ensure continuity in the school instructional program. They also implicated that protecting time for instructions for teaching and

learning is highly significant. In this case, reducing external pressures and interruptions and establishing an orderly and supportive environment are needed inside and outside classrooms.

2.1.8 Encourage Professional Development

According to Stronge (2008), effective Head Teachers promote and develop professional growth and learning for themselves and their staff. He also mentioned two primary functions on which schools are organized: (1) teaching and learning and (2) organizing teaching and learning. And to achieve these two functions, Barth (1985) claimed that communicating this focus to every stakeholder in the school community is crucial. And Head Teachers not only plan and organize professional development but also participate in promoting the practices, which lead to effective teaching and mastery learning. Hence, they become learners alongside their staff. He also commented that, due to a special connection between learning and collegiality, the Head Teacher as a learner is very crucial. LaPointe and Davis (2006) suggested that effective Head Teachers participate in different professional development activities, such as attending conferences, networking with others, communicating with other Head Teachers, and observing other Head Teachers. Waters et al. (2004) said that Research-based professional development programs providing what Head Teachers need to be successful are now available.

2.1.9 Providing Support

Kearney and Harrington (2010) claimed that Head Teachers allocate resources based on identified needs, including materials, staffing, and staff development. Blase (1999) said that Head Teachers realize that informing staff about current research and practice is critical to school success. They treat schools as learning communities and provide both formal and informal opportunities for collaborative learning. Tschannen (2004) said that more trustworthy relationships are built by

Head Teachers who balance caring and expectations relationships. In these relationships characterized by high caring and low expectations or low caring and high expectations, balance is the key. Meanwhile, current literature shows that instructional leadership doesn't require the Head Teacher to be a model or exemplary teacher. Yet, a Head Teacher must have the capacity to create the organizational environment to build pedagogical capacity, supply and allocate resources, expand opportunities for innovation, give instructional direction, and Support to assistant teachers. Accordingly, the Head Teacher's concept as an instructional leader should focus on the Head Teacher's role in developing and distributing the understandings, skills, and attributes across the school organizational spectrum.

2.2 Receiving Support from Relevant Stakeholders

According to Piltch and Fredericks (2005), effective Head Teachers cultivate a positive learning environment by using their knowledge of the school community (social, cultural, leadership, and political dynamics). Stakeholder involvement in school success is well-documented. Kythreodis and Pashiardis (1998) noted a positive relationship between parent and school relations is one of the major factors in successful school leadership. Kythreotis and Pashiardis (1998) found in the meta-analysis of school leadership research by Marzano and colleagues that building professional relationships between school Head Teachers and staff is crucial to instructional leadership. Marzano et al. (2005) said that Cotton identifies parent and community outreach as an essential trait of effective Head Teachers. Cotton (2003) suggested that effective Head Teachers build positive relations between the parent and the school. They also make excellent and transparent professional relationships with the staff and provide outreach to parents and the larger community. Lindahl (2009) reported that a positive relationship between school climate and leadership affects

overall school effectiveness. Marzano et al. (2005) also stated that stakeholder involvement and relationship building are fundamentally crucial for establishing and maintaining school success.

2.3 Challenges while Implementing Instructional Leadership

Stronge et al. (2008) said that Head Teachers have a challenging task in meeting the educational needs of an educationally diverse student population, and proper evaluation is necessary to provide the Head Teachers with the Support, recognition, and guidance they need to sustain and improve their efforts. Unfortunately, even though a Head Teacher's effectiveness is recognized as an essential factor in improving student learning, schools rarely measure document or use effectiveness ratings to inform decision-making. Westberg (2009) said that it is difficult to distinguish between poor, average, sound, and excellent Head Teachers. He told in a comprehensive review that many Head Teachers had minimal coverage of leadership behaviors, which ensure rigorous curriculum and quality instruction, which are linked with schoolwide improvement for the student learning, the ultimate purpose of schooling. Goldring et al. (2009) said that when examining the Head Teacher evaluation process more closely, the usual practices of Head Teacher evaluation lacked justification and documentation in terms of the utility, psychometric properties, and accuracy of the instruments. Catano (2003) said that inconsistencies in evaluation instruments do not align with professional standards, producing role conflict and subsequent role strain. As a result, Head Teachers find it challenging to comprehend what should be their top focus. Meanwhile, Goodwin et al. (2003) claimed that Head Teachers in primary schools face many challenges ranging from political and social situations to traditional teaching methods and other human and non-human factors.

2.4 Strategies to Address the Challenges

Huber (2017) claimed that implementing instructional leadership into practice is quite challenging. Waters et al. (2003) Head Teacher leadership plays an essential role in the school-level instructional process's selection, Support, and success. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, Horng et al. (2010) reported that poor leadership of institutional heads deviates the assistant teachers from the common goal of an organization. According to Nurhayat et al. (2019), regulating the time and busyness of the work and the teacher's readiness need to be supervised. That is why Head Teachers need to be very tactical while addressing the challenges.

2.5 Contextual View of Bangladesh

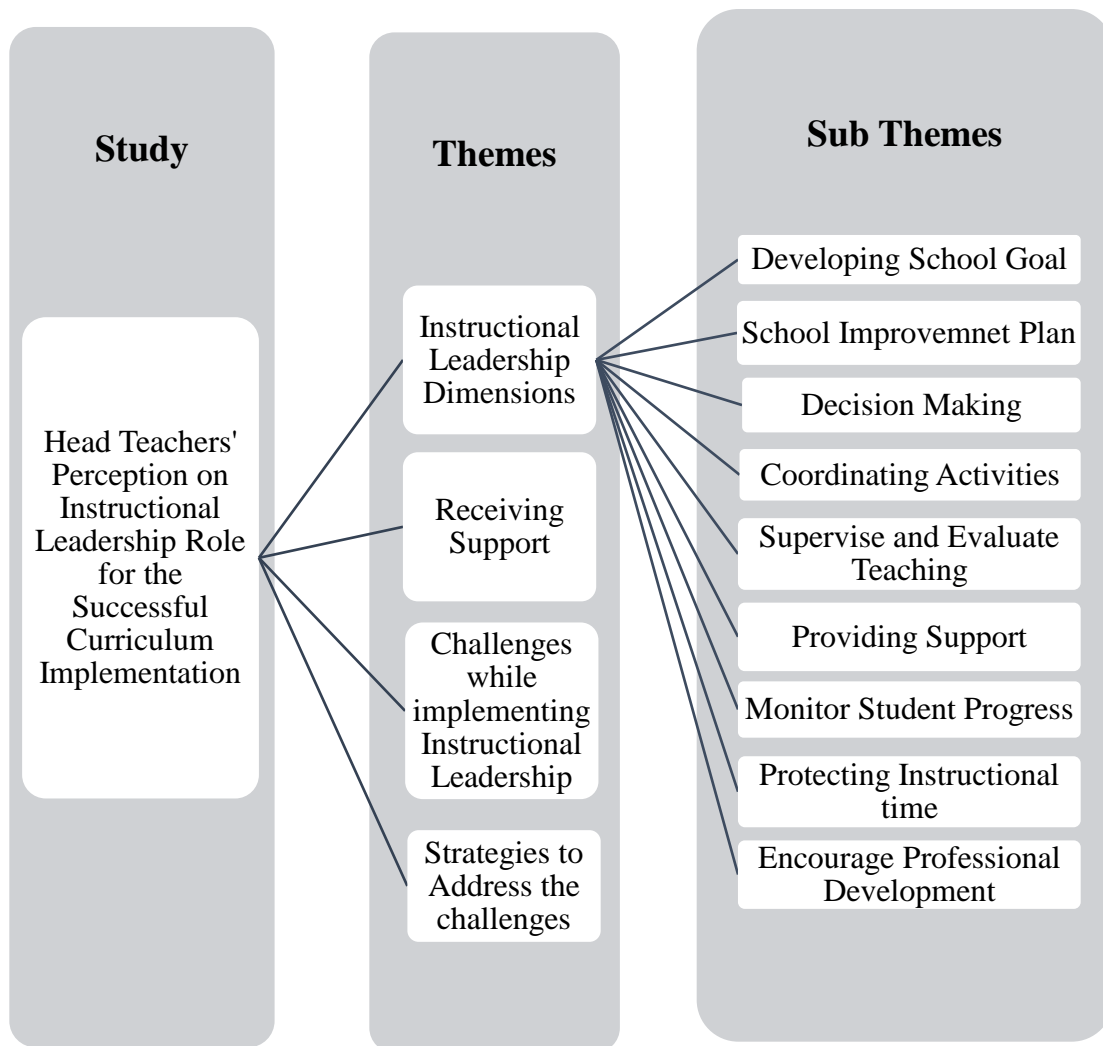
Bangladesh has about 16 million (16,336,096) children in all primary level schools (including GPS, NNPS, community schools, NGO schools, etc.), and 354,722 teachers are engaged in their teaching (Annual Primary School Census, APSC, Bangladesh 2019). The Government is trying to minimize the teacher-children ratio, build accommodation facilities for the constantly rising number of children every year, and other physical facilities to address the quality issues. It is recognized by article 26(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) that education is the fundamental right of a human being. By articles 15 and 17, the Bangladesh Government's constitution has determined free and compulsory primary education for all its primary school-going children. The Government of Bangladesh has already started working on the implementation of the grant project of the United Nations (UN) entitled, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" where the quality of primary education stays in the top priority. To fulfill SDGs' vision in primary education, instructional leadership plays the most crucial role in academic life's ongoing well-being (Jones, 2011). But, the researchers are not well satisfied with the current scenario of the instructional leaders in Bangladesh. As mentioned above, In Bangladesh, the

current recruitment policies do not require a Head Teacher to have had previous teaching experience or training. According to the report of MoPME (2013), inexperienced graduates get appointed as Head Teachers in this current process of recruitment.

Further research by Azlin et al. (2020) revealed that many school Head Teachers in rural or small schools are less proactive, less creative, less innovative, often lose focus as curriculum instructors. Intensive training is needed for the capacity enhancement of HTs. Therefore, it was essential to explore instructional leaders' role in executing curriculum in a Bangladeshi setting.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

In this study, i) How do Government Primary School Head Teachers perceive their role in implementing curriculum in school? ii) What challenges do they face during the successful implementation of the curriculum? iii) How do they address the challenges? – was answered. Based on the literature review part, it has been assumed that successful implementation of a curriculum depends on the instructional leadership roles of Head Teachers. And, the challenges and support systems in the school environment have a significant impact on the instructional leadership role. Therefore, this framework's motive was to understand Head Teacher's perception, challenges, and strategies to achieve a successful curriculum implementation. The framework is given below –



**Fig 1: Conceptual Framework for Instructional Leadership Role
(Head Teachers' Perception)**

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this section, the method of the entire process of this research has been explained. At first, the research approach based on the research questions has been discussed with proper rationale. Later information about the research site, participants, and the sampling procedure have been provided. Later, a detailed description of the data collection method has been followed by the role of the researcher. Good articulation of the data analysis has been provided later. In the following section credibility and rigor of this research have been discussed. In this research, some ethical issues and limitations have been addressed at the end of this chapter.

3.1 Research Approach

I took the qualitative approach for this research. According to the study of Denzin & Lincoln (2005), qualitative research deals with social aspects in their natural settings and attempts to make sense of or interpret phenomena about the meanings people bring to them. Concerning education, Tetnowski and Damico (2001) stated that qualitative research studies individuals (students, teachers, or relevant stakeholders) and events in their natural settings. There were several justifications for choosing the qualitative approach. Firstly, I wanted to have specific insights from the Head Teachers about their instructional leadership role. Past studies from other researchers have conducted qualitative and quantitative research to understand and analyze Head Teachers' instructional leadership roles in different regions. Meanwhile, I wanted to have detailed information about Head Teachers' perception towards their instructional leadership role. Mainly, a combination of holistic and in-depth data would have made this research analysis more productive. Information of facial and verbal expressions regarding an issue was vital, which were only possible through a qualitative research approach. As my interview guidelines consisted of seventeen items for the thematic analysis, I was able to find a pattern of the responses provided by

the participants. Different insights of the Head Teachers from various Government Primary Schools were adjusted to a singular pattern. As a result, the data under each theme and subthemes were quite rich, only possible through qualitative research. Finally, it can be concluded that the qualitative approach of this research gave not only specific insights about Head Teachers' perception towards their instructional leadership role but also provided in-depth views about their experience while implementing instructional leadership. That is why this qualitative research was highly suitable for this research.

3.2 Research Site

Government Primary Schools of Lalbagh Education Thana were taken as the research site. I had previously worked in this area from 2019-2020. The schools of Lalbagh Education Thana are governed and supervised by the same Thana Education Officer (TEO) and Assistant Thana Education Officer (ATEO). More or less, all schools have the almost same type of environment based on the local people and School Management Committee members. Also, during my previous work, I had developed a good connection with a few school Head Teachers. As a result, the data was highly accessible. And, Head Teachers agreed to sit for an interview quickly.

3.3 Research Participants

Four Govt. Primary School Head Teachers in Lalbagh Education Thana were taken as research participants in this study. Head Teachers of the Government Primary Schools of Lalbagh Education Thana went through the same level of training from the Primary Teacher's Training Institute (PTI). They also report to the same TEO an ATEO. Furthermore, they are also trained and supervised by the same Upazilla Resource Center (URC) instructor. Mainly, the Head Teachers are in a homogenous group. Therefore, it was evident their perception and experience

towards their instructional leadership role were working under the same roof. And, I was interested in finding their perception based on this environment.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

In this research, purposive sampling was used for the selection of the participants. According to Bernard, H. R. (2002), this sampling technique is a nonrandom technique for qualitative research, which needs to follow underlying theories or a set number of participants. The researcher decides which needs to be known and finds people who can and are willing to provide the information based on their knowledge or experience. According to Cresswell, J.W. (2011), Purposive sampling includes the selection of participants who are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest. In this research, the participants were selected based on two criteria a) Active Govt. Primary School Head Teacher b) Working in Lalbagh Education Thana Zone. For purposive sampling, Spradley, J. P. (1979) mentioned the importance of availability and willingness to participate and the ability to articulate self-experiences and opinions expressively and reflectively. In this research, all of the participants were willing and gave full consent to share their experiences in detail for the research. The participants had completed their one-year training at Primary Teacher Training Institute. They also had the proper ability to communicate and articulate their experiences and opinions in a reflective manner.

3.5 Piloting

Berg (2009) suggested that pre-test or pilot interview is crucial before the actual interview. In the pilot interview of this research, a Head Teacher was invited. In this interview, the compatibility of the interview guideline was checked if the participants clearly understood and reflected on the questions or not. Head Teacher was able to understand and answer all of the questions. Valuable

feedback and insights of the participant during the pilot interview were collected. The participant stated that there might be some sensitive information regarding Head Teachers' talking challenges while implementing their instructional leadership role. The participant requested to keep the identity anonymous while publishing it on the article.

3.6 Data Collection Method

For the data collection, I chose one-to-one interviews. Coughlan (2009) claimed that a one-to-one interview is a valuable method of collecting rich, in-depth data about participants' experiences and perspectives. I wanted to collect detailed and specific insights from the Head Teachers about their experience and perspectives while implementing instructional leadership. Andersson and Ohlem (2005) provided a useful example of how one-to-one interviews effectively gain and understand participants' personal meanings and experiences. That is why I chose a One-to-One interview for the data collection. Because, The detailed insights would have provided my rich data to pursue my research on this topic, which was only possible through this interview technique. After reviewing literature and discussing instructional leaders' role in the successful curriculum implementation and the experts in the area, the interview framework was developed. The data of the research was conducted through one-to-one interviews.

The interview guidelines included a list of seventeen items. Seven Head Teachers were asked to participate in the interview. But, four Head Teachers could manage their time for the interview, and one Head Teacher agreed to participate in the pilot interview. A consent form was sent to all participants and explained the research study purpose and the safety protocol. After taking consent and their convenient schedule, interview time and dates were fixed. Due to the safety protocol and concern of the researcher and the participant, all of the interviews were conducted online. The

participants were asked to share their perceptions and experiences about their instructional leadership role, challenges, and strategies in the interviews, which have been studied later in this research. The interviews were maintained as flexible as possible so that participants felt quite comfortable while sharing their reflections. Tod (2006) suggested that the flexibility of the interview structure is one of the greatest strengths. All of the participants were given full freedom to skip any questions they felt uncomfortable while answering. Trochim (2005) suggested that more sensitive questions should be kept for when rapport and trust have been established, and the interviewee is relaxed. That is why a few sensitive items like 'challenges' was asked later when trust and credibility were ensured. Even though a one-hour time slot was predetermined for each interview, most of the interviews took more than an hour. It occurred because participants wanted to share many things based on their perception and experience under each theme of this research. So, to get an enriched data, we tried to do the interviews as mindful and elaborated as possible. Each interview was recorded, then transcribed, and coded based on the themes and subthemes of the research question and key questions.

3.7 Role of the Researcher

From the starting to the end of this research, I solely acted as a master's student and a researcher at the BRAC Institute of Educational Development. From 7th February to 4th March of 2021, I was involved in the primary data collection of this research. Even though I had a previous connection with a few Head Teachers as a former Fellow of Teach For Bangladesh, I collected the data by solely acting as a master's student and a researcher in BRAC Institute of Educational Development. Legard et al. (2003) claimed that the interviewer's demeanor is highly significant in an interview. The role of the interviewer is to ensure that the interviewee is at ease and not threatened. In the interview, I clearly articulated my role and the purpose of this research in the

consent form and explained in detail to the participants to keep all of us in common ground. During the data collection, I asked the questions to interviewees and sometimes elaborately explained the questions to the respondents if they had any confusion. I recorded their responses. Then, after listening to the recordings, I transcribed and typed their responses based on each question.

3.8 Data Analysis

I used the thematic analysis method to analyze the interviewees' responses to this research's data analysis. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), thematic analysis refers to identifying, interpreting, and analyzing patterns of themes within qualitative data. Based on the themes, a framework is usually developed to organize and report the researcher's analytic observations. The research question and key questions were broken down into four main themes and nine sub-themes in this study. Seventeen items in the form of interview guidelines were added, which were developed based on the themes and subthemes. Selvam and Collicutt (2013) claimed that qualitative researchers often favor the thematic analysis method. It focuses on producing high-quality and rigorous data analysis. Clarke and Braun (2017) stated that the thematic analysis method offers flexibility regarding the research question, data collection method, sampling, and approaches to meaning generation, etc. Based on the study of Cedervall and Åberg (2010), Mooney-Somers, Perz, & Ussher, (2008), a small or large number of homogenous or heterogeneous samples. In this research, I wanted to have flexibility in these areas too. Four homogenous research participants were taken into one-to-one interviews for this research. Clarke and Braun (2017) also said that the thematic analysis method could identify patterns about participants' lived experiences, views, and perspectives, etc. Interview responses of the participants were taken based on the Head Teachers' perception, experience, and opinions regarding their instructional leadership role at school.

3.9 Ethical Issues and Concerns

Coughan (2009) suggested that the protection of participants is a fundamental aspect of conducting an interview, and the issues of informed consent and anonymity, and confidentiality are of paramount importance. There were several ethical issues and concerns in this research, such as taking consents, comfortability regarding the interview questions, confidentiality of the identity of the participants. For the first concern, not only a consent form was sent to all the participants, but also a full explanation of the consent form was provided. Coughan (2009) also suggested that it is necessary to obtain written consent before the interview, and potential interviewees should be given ample time to reflect on whether they wish to stay or not. All of the participants officially signed the consent form after getting cleared all of their concerns, such as the purpose of the research or the role of the researcher.

Meanwhile, there were a few questions, which could have made participants uncomfortable while answering. In this case, the participants were given full freedom to skip any questions if they feel awkward answering during the interview. Another issue came up regarding the confidentiality of the participants. And, it was ensured that their identities would not be disclosed in public or the research paper. Meanwhile, I want to acknowledge that I changed the order of the questions based on the conversations in the interviews. All of the conversations were recorded and transcribed later to find the results. So, no bias took place while interpreting the collected data. I also submitted an ethical approval form to BRAC University and got the approval before starting data collection.

3.10 Credibility and Rigor

The most common criteria to evaluate qualitative research were developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These are credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. In this research, these criteria were taken into consideration.

3.10.1 Credibility

According to Polit and Beck (2012), credibility refers to the truth of the data or the participant views and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher. The researcher describes his or her experiences verifying the research findings with the participants. Meanwhile, Sandelowski (1986) claimed that if the descriptions of human experience are immediately recognized by individuals who share the same qualitative study experience, the research can be considered credible. This research was focused on quality over quantity. The richness of the relevant information was made sure through a detailed set of questions for the interview. Participants were given complete freedom to provide authentic and detailed insights based on their perception and real-time experience for each question. The experiences they shared could easily be recognized based on my previous study of instructional leadership dimensions of the Government Primary School Head Teachers.

3.10.2 Transferability

According to Houghton et al. (2013), transferability is established when research findings can be applied to other situations or groups. Transferability is ensured when readers can associate the results with their experiences. Sandelowski (1986) mentioned that the aim of the qualitative study could only be relevant if the research intends to make generalizations about the topic. The context, methodology, and findings of this research had been aligned with the instructional leadership

dimensions. As a result, the readers, who practice or want to know more about the instructional leadership of Government Primary School Head Teachers, would be able to relate or connect with a similar situation.

3.10.3 Dependability

Based on the study of Tobin and Begley (2004), dependability means the constancy of the data in similar conditions. This can be acquired when another researcher concurs with the decision trails at each stage of the research process. Koch (2006) stated that qualitative research could be claimed as dependable through the researcher's process and descriptions if the research findings were replicated with similar participants in similar conditions. The study was conducted, analyzed, and presented consistently to an external researcher. The external researcher concurred with the decision trails of the research process. All of the procedures of this research study were regularly monitored and supervised by a faculty of the BRAC Institute of Educational Development. Another faculty of the BRAC Institute of Educational Development acted as an external of this research.

3.10.4 Confirmability

Polit and Beck (2012) mentioned that confirmability refers to the researcher's ability to demonstrate that the data has the actual representation of the participants' responses, which will not include the researcher's biases or viewpoints. Confirmability can be demonstrated by describing how conclusions and interpretations have been established. Researchers can exemplify that the findings have been derived directly from the data. This can be exhibited by providing rich quotes from the participants that depict each theme of the research. The responses of this research have been recorded and transcribed without any biases. I have not used any of my biases while

describing the findings of the research. Furthermore, the findings and quotes of the participants have been given under each theme.

3.11 Limitations of the Study

I did not have any opportunity to observe the participants' activities since schools were closed due to the COVID19 pandemic. If I could have observed their activities in their schools, I would have got more data which would have helped me understand the Govt. Primary School Head Teachers' instructional leadership more rigorously. But, it was not possible as the educational institutions were closed to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. However, I did my best to collect as much data as possible for this research.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this section was to organize and analyze the research data under the categories of instructional leadership dimensions. In order to collect the research data, the participants' responses were collected through one-to-one interviews with the help of online zoom call. In the interviews, the respondents were asked a list of 17 structured questions. All of the questions addressed different instructional leadership dimensions. Each conversation was recorded, which was transcribed, and typed into text documents. Later with the help of the thematic analysis method, the responses were organized to generate patterns under the category of each instructional leadership dimension. In this chapter, all of the reactions of the Head Teachers have been discussed based on the themes and subthemes of this research.

4.1 Findings

The responses of the participants were categorized into the following themes and subthemes.

4.1.1 Instructional Leadership Dimensions

4.1.1.1 Developing School Goal

4.1.1.2 School Improvement Plan

4.1.1.3 Decision Making

4.1.1.4 Coordinating Activities

4.1.1.5 Supervise and Evaluate Teaching

4.1.1.6 Providing Support to the Teachers

4.1.1.7 Monitor Student Progress

4.1.1.8 Protecting Instructional time

4.1.1.9 Encourage Professional Development

4.1.2 Receiving Support from Relevant Stakeholders

4.1.3 Challenges while implementing Instructional Leadership

4.1.4 Strategies to address the challenges

4.1.1.1 Developing and Delivering School Goals

Head Teachers mentioned that they usually consult with the assistant teachers to set up new goals for the curriculum's successful implementation, which is an essential factor for a shared vision of instructional leadership role. In this case, monthly meetings play a vital role. Most of the school goals are mainly fixed by the Thana Education Office and MOPME. In these processes, sometimes in meetings, Head Teachers give feedback to the education officers. The strong involvement of assistant teachers, SMC, education officers plays a vital role in developing school goals. A Head Teacher added-

I also use my self-observation while developing goals to check if the collective goals are strongly well-aligned with the school vision.

4.1.1.2 School Improvement Plan

In every monthly meeting, Head Teachers collect reports from the assistant teachers. They also take feedback from parents from monthly Ma-Somabesh. Based on the data, feedback, and self-observation, Head Teachers develop new strategies for school improvement. Discussion with SMC and PTA also helps them to get some external insights. A Head Teacher mentioned that he also keeps a self-tracker of the improvement list required for the school. To articulate the holistic approach, a Head Teacher said -

To develop a school plan, I mostly use feedback from different stakeholders who are connected to the school curriculum.

While discussing the implementation, a few Head Teachers told about their initiatives to improve the school ground's health and hygiene environment to keep it safe and clean. Because they think a, to implement instructional leadership, the sound learning environment is a key to execute a successful curriculum implementation. A Head Teacher uses to set up a rule where every assistant has to visit their peer classrooms and give feedback. Another Head Teacher helped the assistant teachers form a girl's football team and raise funds. They also have connected with NGOs to ensure clean drinkable water for students at school grounds. Another Head Teacher stated -

My school used to have problems with the decayed building structure. I reported to Education officers, which ended up with a significant budget for the school renovation.

4.1.1.3 Decision Making

According to most respondents, shared decision-making is one of the major keys for an instructional leader. In this case, the discussion always helps them to make a smooth shared decision-making process. They take all necessary feedback and suggestions from assistant teachers before deciding on relevant outcomes. To reach any decision, they try to get a unanimous decision from my teachers. If that fails, they go for the one which has a majority of votes. A Head Teacher mentioned –

Sometimes, a few teachers go against the decision. I talk with them, sorting their perceptions, and try to convince them to make the decision-making process fair.

4.1.1.4 Coordinating Activities

As instructional leaders, Head Teachers usually coordinate the activities according to the potentiality and efficiency of the teachers. They also look for which assistant teachers would be more responsible for the given task. The integrity and dedication of the assistant teachers are also essential to a few Head Teachers. A set of data of the assistant teachers' work performance helps Head Teachers understand the potentiality and productivity of the assistant teachers. A Head Teacher mentioned that teaching quality also depends on the grades assistant teachers are appointed to. There have been many cases that an assistant teacher's teaching style might be a good fit for teaching grade 5 students, where they teach grade 2 students. In these cases, Head Teachers try to analyze the work performance data to sort out the responsibilities. A Head Teacher claimed-

Sometimes, sensitive responsibilities need to be handed over, such as financial issues or confidential data transfer. In these cases, specific personality traits become highly significant.

Furthermore, while coordinating the assistant teachers' activities, Head Teachers give strict deadlines to assistant teachers. In challenging tasks, they also look for teachers with excellent leadership and ownership skills to get the job done. Head Teachers also mentioned that sometimes it's tough for an instructional leader to coordinate activities without proper data.

4.1.1.5 Supervise and Evaluate Teaching Performance

Most participants believe that an instructional leader usually spends a lot of time supervising and evaluating the assistant's teaching performance. Head Teachers regularly check lesson plans, visit the classes of assistant teachers and take notes of their performance. They check if the lesson plans are coherent and well-aligned to the curriculum or not. They observe and direct the teachers based

on their needs and demands. Also, in monthly meetings, they analyze teachers' reports of the tasks given to them. Most Head Teachers usually evaluate the assistant teachers based on daily or weekly class visits and student scoresheets. A few of the respondents said that they sometimes talk with students and take their valuable feedback if they are happy with their teachers' performance. Head Teachers also mentioned that students become shy or afraid to share honest reviews in a few cases. On this note, Head Teachers ask the parents if their children are satisfied with their classroom learning or teachers' teaching style. Meanwhile, a Head Teacher stated -

Apart from classroom teaching, there are various school tasks that assistant teachers do. I also evaluate their performance on the successful or unsuccessful completion of the given task.

4.1.1.6 Providing Support to Assistant Teachers

All of the Head Teachers agreed to one point that they try to provide a sound classroom environment. A few of them try to make a fair student-teacher ratio in each class by evenly distributing the students to each section of a specific grade so that assistant teachers do not have to deal with too many students. Some Head Teachers try to give enough break time between classes to get enough brain space. A few Head Teachers are aware of the assistant teachers' mental well-being by providing mental Support or counseling if the teachers face any trouble while doing any given school tasks. A Head Teacher added -

Every year I try to arrange a school picnic for teachers.

Furthermore, there are times when any teacher asks for any learning materials needed for a curriculum, which are not available in school. In that case, Head Teachers try to collect funds or seek Support from Education Officers or SMC.

4.1.1.7 Monitor Student Progress

All Head Teachers usually check student scoresheets, class visits performance, etc., to monitor the students' progress. Head Teachers check students' daily notebooks during each class visit to regularly prevent them from taking class notes. They also ask students instant subject-related questions during the class visits. Most of the Head Teachers advise class teachers to collect reports of the students' monthly performance. Those monthly reports are very significant to monitor the constant progress of the students. The respondents agreed that students' semester final score reports are not enough to monitor students' progress. Meanwhile, a Head Teacher added-

I also talk with parents to check student's learning progress at home.

Another teacher mentioned that an instructional leader counts a lot of criteria to monitor the students' progress. And it should not be limited to academic study only. Therefore, it is also mandatory to monitor the students' extra-curricular activities because it plays a major role in the students' learning process.

4.1.1.8 Protecting Instructional Time

Being assured of this role of an instructional leader, a participant mentioned that they are very aware of protecting the instructional time. But, they also noted that instructional timeline generally depends on the situation's demand. For emergency cases, such as Govt. orders, Head Teachers take a short time instructing the relevant stakeholders. It also depends on the extent of the curriculum.

If a new curriculum or a new teaching technique is introduced, it takes longer to complete it. A Head Teacher stated -

Sometimes, we get instant notices from Thana Education Offices. At that time, I have to make the instructional time as short as possible. But, in most cases, such as on different occasions, I get offered a significant time to execute the order.

Head Teachers don't take that much time for the instructional time at school activities, where only assistant teachers are involved. They take a long time (multiple meetings) to instruct where parents or SMC are involved because parents or community people take more time than assistant teachers to understand.

4.1.1.9 Encouraging Professional Development

Almost all of the respondents said that they always encourage assistant teachers for their professional development. A Head Teacher said that she encourages the assistant teachers to complete their PTI training as soon as possible. Furthermore, a few Head Teachers noted that they also try to connect with education officers for more sub-cluster training at their school. A Head Teacher mentioned,

During the COVID19 pandemic, I have consistently encouraged and provided our assistant teachers with various online teaching-learning development courses.

Another Head Teacher also aligned his perspectives with "Instructional Leader as Learner." He claimed that he encourages the assistant teachers for the professional development program, but he also got involved with various professional development programs.

4.1.2 Receiving Support from Relevant Stakeholders

Head Teachers get a lot of Support from assistant teachers outside school hours if they are home or not in school, and if any emergency task pops up, a few assistant teachers usually come forward to do the required job. A Head Teacher mentioned,

I also get mental Support from a few of my assistant teachers. Whenever I seem stressed out, a few take ownership to talk to me or share my burden.

SMC mainly provides financial, resource-related support to schools that are not provided by Govt., such as the salary of the school servant or caretaker. They also play a moderately good role in making the school area environment safe for the children. A Head Teacher stated,

If any local occurrence with our school takes place, SMC steps forward to solve the issue.

Head Teachers also said that they receive Support from Education officers, such as TEO, ATEO, URC. Apart from daily school visits, ATEOs collect the reports regarding school expectations and forward them to the Thana Education Office or the training center. Based on their report, the ministry makes decisions to support the school. Sometimes, education officers help them solve conflicts with the SMC. Education officers also connect schools with various NGOs who provide learning resources or infrastructural Support to schools. All Head Teachers mentioned that proper Support from the relevant stakeholders could make the job very easy for the instructional leaders.

4.1.3. Challenges while Implementing Instructional Leadership

All Head Teachers told about various challenges they use to face while doing their responsibilities and tasks. While distributing the works, they experience a lack of enthusiasm and accountability

among the assistant teachers. Most of the associate teachers show reluctance to work extra hours. Furthermore, the Head Teacher mentioned that most assistant teachers prefer to do easy tasks and find ways to avoid challenging tasks or responsibilities. They also hesitate to implement new classroom practices. Many assistant teachers tend to return home as soon as possible at the end of school time.

Most of the primary school heads find it very challenging to work with SMC. Most SMC members are not quite educated enough. Moreover, they try to dominate the decision-making process. A Head Teacher mentioned that whenever Govt. allocates a significant budget for school infrastructural improvement, SMC members tend to take a portion into their pocket. A Head Teacher added -

In financial situations where SMC contributions are required, such as salary for school servants or caretakers, they delay the payment procedure.

They also face trouble while dealing with their parents. As mentioned, most parents think they don't have to nurture their children at home after school. In most cases, the PTA committees are not active enough to do their duties. As a result, students' effective study gets limited inside school boundaries without proper Support at home.

4.1.4 Strategies in Critical Situations

Most participants mentioned that it is a prevalent scenario in Bangladesh that Head Teachers will face many challenges while implementing their instructional leadership role. They also noted that an instructional leader has to be very prompt, careful, and thoughtful to overcome the obstacle. Head Teachers talk with them and try to convince them to do the tasks to address the challenges with

assistant teachers. They also try to be empathetic to understand teachers' reasons for avoiding the responsibility. A few Head Teachers motivate the assistant teachers. Meanwhile, a Head Teacher added,

Sometimes, I have to be very strict towards them to get the job done.

While dealing with SMC, Head Teachers seek support from the local assistant teachers who have good connections with SMC members. If the process fails, they ask the education officers to solve the issue. In terms of parents, Head Teachers distribute the leadership to the class teachers to solve them. In these cases, PTA sometimes comes forward to help out.

4.2 Summary of Findings

In the findings above, the respondents stated their priority on strong collaboration with relevant stakeholders towards achieving a collective goal. Looking at the bigger picture is a significant thing according to their perceptions. Head Teachers also shared their thoughts on having inputs or insights from the relevant stakeholders before the effective decision-making process. Head Teachers shared their cautiousness regarding coordinating activities among assistant teachers. They stated multiple criteria before sharing the responsibilities. While mentioning the strategies to supervise and evaluate the teachers' performance, respondents said about different techniques like class visits, students' reflection, etc. Head Teachers agreed that ensuring a safe and sound learning environment is highly required for successful curriculum implementation. In this study, Head Teachers also showed their interest in using various data analysis techniques to monitor the students' progress. Furthermore, Head Teachers mentioned the importance of the professional development of teachers, and they also claimed that they encouraged their assistant teachers for online training during COVID19 lockdown. Instructional time should be aligned with the level of

detail and school vision. The respondents showed gratitude for the support from relevant stakeholders. Meanwhile, Head Teachers told about many challenges they face at schools, such as lack of accountability of the assistant teachers, low educational quality, and lack of integrity. To address the challenges, Head Teachers usually take situation-based strategies.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

In this section, a discussion was conducted to align the primary data findings with the literature review. The discussion has been organized based on the themes and subthemes of this research. Finally, a few recommendations have been added at the end of this chapter.

5.1 Discussion

5.1.1 Instructional Leadership Dimensions

5.1.1.1 Developing School Goal

According to Robinson (2012), Instructional leaders develop clear and collective goals, creating motivation and efficacy through minimized distraction. The respondents mentioned that they also believe in the clarity and collectiveness of the goal. They also said that minimum distraction is also needed, along with motivation to achieve the goal. Furthermore, the Head Teachers also said that they look at the bigger picture towards achieving goals. According to Hallinger (2011), a broad view of the direction towards a goal in which the school anticipates is highly significant.

5.1.1.2 School Improvement Plan

The findings clearly show that Head Teachers need to collaborate with the assistant teachers to achieve high-quality teaching-learning outcomes. Kyrtheotis and Pashiardis (1998) suggested that this process would be successful if individual and shared efforts are combined to accomplish common objectives". All of the respondents mentioned that school improvement highly depends on a compact school vision and strong collaboration.

5.1.1.3 Decision Making

They also think that every decision-making process should have some inputs or insights from the relevant stakeholders, such as assistant teachers, SMC members, parents, educational officers, etc. Fink and Resnick (2001) stated the importance of shared decision-making to maintain high school morale, which was visible in the reflection of Head Teachers in this study.

5.1.1.4 Coordinating Activities

Hallinger and Heck (1998) stated that effective Head Teachers realize the significance of selection, induction, support, evaluation, and retention of quality staff personnel. And it is evident in the findings that Head Teachers are very cautious about coordinating activities among assistant teachers. They consider multiple criteria to hand over the responsibilities, but they also use different strategies to supervise and evaluate the teachers' performance.

5.1.1.5 Supervise and Evaluate Teaching

A meta-analysis by Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) stated that instructional leaders work directly with assistant teachers to supervise and evaluate teachers' performance. In the study, the respondents mentioned that they use different tactics to supervise and evaluate the performance of the assistant teachers. Furthermore, they also said the importance of discussing instructional strategies with the teachers, providing evaluations that help the assistant teachers improve their practice, observing classroom instruction frequently.

5.1.1.6 Providing Support to the Assistant Teachers

It is also visible in the study that almost all Head Teachers agreed to ensure a safe and sound learning environment for them. And this perspective connects with what Whitaker (2012) explored in his study. He stated that Head Teachers, who create a reassuring and exciting environment,

eventually encourage students and teachers to work more. Head Teachers also feel the significance of learning materials required for an upgraded teaching-learning technique and creating a safe learning environment. And they also think assistant teachers should have the full opportunity to execute a successful lesson plan. Horng and Loeb stated that school Head Teachers could significantly affect student learning by creating opportunities for assistant teachers to improve. It was also good to see Head Teachers show importance about the assistant teachers' job satisfaction by counseling or arranging picnics.

5.1.1.7 Monitor Student Progress

In this study, the responses clearly articulate diverse practices of Head Teachers to determine the student's progress. They didn't limit themselves to checking score sheets only, which is a very effective practice, according to Usdan (2000), who summarized that effective Head Teachers monitor progress, identify performance-based on collecting data and analyzing from different angles. In this study, Head Teachers also showed their interest in using various data analysis techniques to monitor the students' progress. Furthermore, a few Head Teachers also stated the importance of collecting data from parents. And according to Stronge and Catano (2006), Head Teachers who involve parents and community members in data collection are more successful than others.

5.1.1.8 Protecting Instructional time

The respondents were quite conscious of their instructional time. But, the Head Teachers stated that instructional time should be aligned with the level of detail and school vision. It can be related to Katterfeld's (2011) statement, who said that effective instructional leaders focus their attention

on instruction, aligned with the school's vision. The respondents also said that time should not be short or long; rather, it should be precise.

5.1.1.9 Encourage Professional Development

Moore & Kearsley (2011) claimed in their research that professional development is a crucial tool in bringing educational improvement among individuals and organizations. More or less, all Head Teachers also mentioned its importance and said that they regularly encourage the assistant teachers to be involved in professional development. Sullivan & Glanz (2005) noted instructional leaders should provide educators with opportunities to become intellectually engaged with new approaches in environments that support diversity. As much as aligned with this theory, a few Head Teachers claimed that they encouraged their assistant teacher to get involved in online pieces of training during COVID19 lockdown.

5.1.2 Receiving Support from Relevant Stakeholders

Successful implementation of instructional leadership includes effective procurement and resources, both material and human (Marzano et al., 2005, Robinson, 2011). The school climate affects all classrooms and is not dependent upon individual subjects (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). Head Teachers said they had received a lot of support from different stakeholders while implementing instructional leadership roles. The support system providers ranged from assistant teachers to SMC and Educational Officers. Sometimes parents also provided significant support for the thriving school environment. Maringe, Masinire, and Nkambule (2015) highlighted the notion that a welcoming school environment can act as a supporting point and can be the cause of pride for the whole school, leading to improved culture teaching and learning.

5.1.3 Challenges while implementing Instructional Leadership

Goodwin et al. (2003) claimed that Head Teachers in primary schools must tackle many challenges such as political and social situations and other human and non-human factors. A few of the Head Teachers, in the interviews, showed dissatisfaction with the accountability of the assistant teachers. They also think that the low educational quality and lack of integrity of the SMC members hampers the school improvement process. However, all Head Teachers agreed that they face many challenges while conveying their instructional leadership.

5.1.4 Strategies to address the challenges

Robinson (2011) mentioned that instructional leaders work with the limitations of existing school resources and improve the quality of teaching. And in response to that, the respondent agreed that they used diverse strategies to adapt to the critical situation. The strategies differed based on the situations, and stakeholders Head Teachers dealt with at workplaces. Sometimes, they used to seek support from relevant stakeholders, such as Education Officers. Sometimes they used their method to address the challenges. Being an instruction leader, Government Primary School Head Teachers often try to be ready for different critical situations.

5.2 Recommendation

Being an instructional leader, Head Teacher is the key to achieving the school vision, improvement, and curriculum implementation. That is why they must have positive perspectives about their leadership role. Otherwise, it would be hard to execute the curriculum successfully. The Head Teachers need to improve their supervising, evaluating, and support system strategy toward assistant teachers.

- The monthly meetings might not be good enough to track down the performance. If a weekly tracking system is introduced, the Head Teachers will be more frequently updated about assistant teachers' performance.
- According to Glatthorn (1984), heads who visited the classrooms daily, ensuring that these visits should not appear threatening and hence received a teacher's positive reaction. In the study, we have found that a few Head Teachers sometimes become strict with the assistant teachers to get the job done. Head Teachers need to be very careful that they don't seem threatening to subordinates in these cases.
- Head Teachers can also ask help from education officers or NGO staff, or experts to research the assistant teachers' job satisfaction. In this process, they will find more in-depth and broader insights to motivate the teachers. They can also sort out new strategies to build accountability among Head Teachers.
- Meanwhile, it is clearly visible that most of the primary school Head Teachers have better connections with ATEO than URC instructors. However, URC is more involved in the professional development of the teachers. Therefore, Head Teachers should have better links to URC instructors.
- To monitor the student progress, Head Teachers might encourage assistant teachers to maintain a behavior tracker. Furthermore, a list of students, who regularly struggle to understand teachers' lectures, can be made to take extra care of them. Also, an adjustment can be made for the struggling students.
- As an instructional leader and key executor of curriculum, Head Teachers should comprehend the new curriculum and determine the need or reason for the change.

- Finally, Head Teachers should also look for the scope to involve PTA more effectively in developing vision and school improvement plans. Every stakeholder's all-out effort will certainly give Head Teachers a significant capacity to successfully implement instructional leadership.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on my understanding of the whole research, Head Teachers play a holistic role in the successful implementation of the curriculum. They work with diverse stakeholders to ensure a quality learning environment at school. Even though all Head Teachers more or less perform instructional leadership roles, not everyone practices it to the fullest. It occurs due to the many challenges they face and the lack of positive mindsets they do have. Talking about challenges, Head Teachers use different tactics to address the issues based on their experience and skillsets. The purpose of this research was successfully achieved, which was to understand the Government Primary School Head Teachers' Perception towards their instructional leadership. An in-depth literature study was strongly aligned with the findings of this research study. I have gained multiple learnings from this research study. Firstly, while implementing the instructional leadership role at any organization, it is always necessary to ensure that all the dimensions are correctly practiced. And there can be different types of challenges. In that situation, tactics should be address based on the demand of the situation. Sometimes excellent tactics might not work in every case. So, it is crucial to have a plan B. Furthermore, the support of fellow workers in any organization is one of the most important factors to reach a collective goal. Instructional leadership role makes no difference. Therefore, a good relationship with relevant stakeholders can make a lot of difference.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Letter

Title: Instructional Leadership Role of Government Primary School Head Teachers For Successful Implementation of Curriculum

Dear Respondent,

Greetings!

I am, Raisul Abedin Ananda, a Master's degree student of Brac University, here with you for my thesis purpose and seeks your cooperation. My thesis title is "Instructional Leadership Role of Government Primary School Head Teachers For Successful Implementation of Curriculum" In partial fulfillment of my Master's degree, I must prepare a research monograph. For this purpose, I'm undertaking the above mentioned research project. In this respect, I seek your generous cooperation and you are cordially requested to answer these questions. Note that all the information your identity will be kept strictly confidential and your kind response will be used only for this academic research. If you feel uncomfortable answering any question, feel free to skip it. But you are requested to provide the correct answer that you believe to be.

Thanks in advance

Raisul Abedin Ananda

M.Ed. Student,

BRAC University.

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

Signature and Date

Appendix B. Interview Guidelines

As being an instructional leader, a head teacher needs to do a lot tasks for successful implementation of curriculum at school. In this interview you will be asked to reflect on few of those tasks. You can skip answering any questions you feel uncomfortable. Your response will be recorded anonymously, ensuring full confidentiality of your identity.

1. How do you develop school goals?
2. What strategies you usually take to deliver the goals to the relevant stakeholders?
3. How do you maintain the instructional time?
4. How do you develop school improvement plan?
5. What measures have you taken for improvement of the school? Please give some examples.
6. What strategies do you take for the decision making?
7. How do you coordinate the activities of the assistant teachers of your school?
8. How do you supervise the activities of the assistant teachers of your school?
9. How do you evaluate performance of the assistant teachers of your school?
10. How do you provide support to the assistant teachers?
11. How do you monitor student progress?
12. Do you encourage professional development of your teachers? If yes, how do you implement the programs?
13. Do you face any challenges during doing these tasks above? If yes, what are those?
14. How do you address the challenges?
15. What type of support do you get from the assistant teachers?
16. What type of support do you get from the SMC?
17. What type of support do you get from the education officers?