

TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENTS IN THE
CLASSROOM LEARNING PROCESS OF BANGLADESH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

By

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the requirements for the degree of
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

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

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Ethics Statement

Hereby, I ArpitaPalit consciously assure that for the manuscript **TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENTS IN THE CLASSROOM LEARNING PROCESS OF BANGLADESH PRIMARY SCHOOLS**, the following is fulfilled:

- 1) This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.
- 2) The thesis is not currently being considered for publication elsewhere.
- 3) The thesis reflects the authors' own research and analysis in a truthful and complete manner.
- 4) The thesis properly credits the meaningful contributions of the author.
- 5) The results are appropriately placed in the context of prior and existing research.
- 6) All sources used are properly disclosed (correct citation). Literally copying of text must be indicated as such by using quotation marks and giving proper reference.
- 7) The author has been personally and actively involved in substantial work leading to the thesis, and will take public responsibility for its content.

The violation of the Ethical Statement rules may result in severe consequences.

I agree with the above statements and declare that this submission follows the policies of BIED as outlined in the Guide for Authors and in the Ethical Statement.

Date:20th December, 2021

Abstract

This study explored student engagement and teachers' perspectives and thoughts about it in the context of Bangladesh primary schools. This are written following the research reviews literature in the area of student engagement. Prior to outlining the specifics of the research, a general overview has been presented based on the broad literature about student engagement for the readers better understating. Teachers from two different government primary schools were interviewed for this research about their understanding about student engagements and how do they practice their pedagogical skills to promote students' engagements, if there is any. The selected questions were drawn from an extensive research literature understanding teachers' behaviors the research suggests though teachers have quite similar perceptions about the concept of student engagements; it is quite dissimilar from the existing literature review in some extent.

Keywords: students' engagement, teaching and learning, teachers' behaviors and actions in the classrooms, terminal exams,

Dedication

This Thesis is dedicated to my mother who always wanted to see me achieving my masters' degree.

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Chapter 1: introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Even if students finish their assigned tasks, how often do they engage actively in the classrooms? How much do they apply their deep thoughts in completing their tasks? Do they actively participate in a discussion in the classrooms? Do they even help their classmates to learn? There are enormous questions that could arise to understand the importance of students' engagements in the classroom. It is highly essential to know and understand the importance so that teachers can facilitate the classrooms to increase students' engagements because to learn effectively students need to engage themselves actively in the classroom so that it creates an active-learning environment (Parsons & Parsons, 2014). Engagement is necessary in the learning environment as “the student’s psychological in and effort directed toward learning, understanding or mastering the knowledge, skills or craft that academic work is intended to promote” (Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992, p. 12). Therefore, it is highly recommended that to have productive and efficient results in the classroom, students should be encouraged to engage themselves so that active learning continues in classrooms. Moreover, student engagement is basically the proof of how much they develop their cognitive development through regular engagements as it also helps students to create their own knowledge leading to higher further success (Martin & Bolliger, 2018). It is evidence that students who actively engage themselves in a classroom have higher academic success. Therefore, it not only helps teachers to know about students' learning environment and learning but also helps to understand attendance, retention, and any chances of dropping out from schools. For that reason, if teachers get support from schools to actively work on increasing student engagements, there is a high chance that it would ultimately contribute to academic scores (Olson & Peterson, 2015).

Schaufeli et al. (2002) mentioned in their research that engagement is the word that has been overly used in professional places; however, nowadays, it is now used in the academic area which emphasize more on “personal assets and efficient performance” so that students feel accountable and positive towards their school environment. Similarly, Finn and Zimmer (2012) have mentioned that as a response to isolation, boredom, and dropout among students, students’ engagement has been applied as a method of improving the dropout rates of students.

In other researches, some other researchers talked about positive psychology in the learning environment. Basically, the researchers in that research mentioned about the effectiveness of learners and teachers’ characteristics, motivation, enjoyments, and engagements, considered as more influential factors in the classroom environment and have impacts in successful learning. That’s why Egbert (2020) believes that effective and successful learning occurs when students are eagerly involved in the learning process as well as they are strongly passionate about using correctly the materials and environments of the classrooms. Moreover, university or any educational institutions which give students chances to participate in decision-making activities and good relationships with institutions staffs lead to great educational achievement.

Therefore, students’ engagement has been found as a way out for solving the problems like high drop outs, low achievements among students, high levels of distractions, isolation. Engaged students are often found to be more actively participate more than attending a class, participating in classroom activities, and having a sense of belonging (Fredricks and Wendy, 2012).

To have an effective learning process, it requires having a learning environment where both the learners and teachers create a space to share their thoughts, values and opinions. If a classroom does not provide an opportunity for the students to speak up their minds and share their thoughts, the learning process perhaps will not ensure quality education.

Teachers' actions are most important to increase students' engagement. As one of the research projects done by Bryson and Hand(2007) concludes that students engage themselves in the classroom only if their teachers help them to do so and the materials presented by the teacher should also be engaging. More importantly, having a good relationship with teachers and students can help to increase student engagements as positive relationships building among teachers and students will result in to an effective learning. That's why a Gallup study found that increasing teachers' engagement in a school will increase students' engagements in a classroom (Kamenetz, 2014).

Students' engagement mainly consists of three main components, which are: behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement and emotional engagement. Behavioral engagements mostly refer to how students participate in the classroom activities. Cognitive refers to how much effort or willingness students have for completing a given task. Lastly, emotional engagements indicate "a sense of belonging" in the classrooms and interests, empathy for others or any other specific topics or tasks (Parsons & Parsons, 2014).

Despite student engagements having multifarious impacts in developing and improving school environment for learning achievements, student engagements for students' academic performance were not given as importance as it required. Thus, this research aims to clarify what

student engagement is, how student engagement develops or help to develop students' academic performance in the context of Chattogram government primary schools of Bangladesh.

1.2 Research Topic: Teachers' Perceptions About Students' Engagements in the Learning Process.

It is quite common that not every student in the class will engage themselves in the learning process. Some will engage more, whereas some are not. Considering the issue that students' engagement has great roles in establishing greater impact in the learning process of students, this research aims to find about teachers' opinions and thoughts about how students engage themselves in the learning process and what are the impacts of students' engagement to make the learning effective. Therefore, the research topic is *teachers' perceptions about students' engagement in the learning process*. The research is done in the context of Bangladesh and focused on government primary schools of Bangladesh. Given the importance of students' engagement for current success, it is highly necessary that to know how teachers perceive about it and the impacts of it in their learning process in the classrooms. Basically, this research tried to explore and analyze what are the effects of students' engagement that can affect the learning process. School engagement has multifarious impacts not only in individual performance but also in whole school improvements. Moreover, it also influences the dropout rates. Finn's identification and participation model explains that students' engagements and also disengagements particularly in the lower grades have long term effects in their academic as well as social life (Fredricks, et. al, 2004). Therefore, it is a highly influencing factor that needs to be analyzed and researched for further better outcomes.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Every year there is improvement in terms of high enrollment rate in Bangladesh primary schools as the government is trying to take many steps to have further developments in those schools. However, can it ensure quality education in Bangladesh? A USAID-funded report done in spring 2018 explored that nearly 44 percent of students who have passed first grade cannot read a word and also 27 percent of third graders do not have any comprehension skills while reading. It also depicted that all poor outcomes in Bangladesh primary schools are mostly grade repetition and drop out before they finish their primary education (Haque, 2020). Surprisingly, 70 percent of students who completed their primary level education struggle with reading, writing and calculating. Neither their reading-writing nor numeracy skills improved throughout this five-year education at primary schools (Chandan, 2019). Thus, in the context of Bangladesh, it is highly important to see what are the causes that may have some effects on these circumstances because to improve students' achievement gaps, there are many policies and strategies that have been already taken by the government of Bangladesh.

In government primary schools, students do not get scores for either participating in the classrooms or outside of the classrooms for any extracurricular activities. To see what goes on in a classroom and how students' behavior or engagements have any effects on students' learning achievements requires exploring through this research on students' engagement and academic performance.

To see in depth what really happened in most government primary schools, it may require sitting in the classroom as a student. It has been practiced that due to having an overcrowded classroom with around 100 students makes it difficult for a teacher to create an environment in

the classroom that helps every other student to engage and participate. Most importantly, as a Bangladeshi, I did experience the same as one of the Bangladeshi author of “Leadership for Student Engagement: Enabling Student Attention in the Crowded Classroom” where he shared that how students were given roll numbers based on the score they receive, how only students roll from one to ten used to get a chance to speak during the class and sit in the front benches and how teachers used to use a lecture-method teaching styles in the class, and students were not encouraged to ask many questions. Only the “best”, ranked from one to ten students, used to have the scope of asked and answer questions. Other students who were not ranked as ‘best’ hardly get a chance to participate. This practice is not completely abolished yet as many schools have similar practices in the classroom. Teachers’ action is the most important to make the classroom a friendly and safe environment (Salahuddin& Greenwood, 2017). Furthermore, classroom practices should be made in a way that every student should feel accountable for not only a number of students should get a chance but every other student also. Teachers’ perspectives towards students play a great role for students to be interested in school activities. If students do not feel safe and valued, they might not try to have an impact on school or even on themselves. This is the most common scenario that can still be found mostly in the government schools, where a large number of students enroll (Salahuddin& Greenwood, 2017). Lack of resources, lack of teachers and lack of infrastructure made it difficult for a school to make changes in regards to students’ engagements. Research on fostering student engagement shows that there is a strong association between how students engage in the classrooms and how well they learn. Engagement in the classrooms often motivates students in learning. This research also focuses on teachers’ roles as how teachers act on a day-to-day basis is also essential and a great

factor in fostering students' engagement. However, teaching a subject and at the same time engaging students in the lessons is challenging (Miriam, et. al, 2020).

Above all, when the class size is a large number, it becomes quite more challenging for a teacher just like the scenario we often get to see in the government primary schools of Bangladesh.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1) How can students engage themselves in classroom activities?
- 2) What are the teachers' actions towards engaging students in learning activities?
- 3) What are the most important factors that teachers think have effects on student engagement?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The study will examine to what extent students' engagement influences the learning process of primary schools in Bangladesh in terms of teachers' perspectives. Moreover, it will also clarify teachers' thoughts about how student engagement can be improved with the curriculum provided by the government, particularly in the case of government primary schools of Bangladesh. The research will also elaborate on what are the factors that have influenced students' engagement in the learning process.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will further advance research on students' engagement and how student engagement can be used to improve the learning process. The analysis of this study will benefit educational society particularly in the context of Bangladesh considering what role students'

engagement has in developing the learning outcome. Moreover, it will benefit to know what teachers' thoughts are about student engagements which have not been introduced in the primary schools of Bangladesh and what are the lying impacts of it on the students' learning process also get explored throughout the research paper. More importantly, knowing about what are the factors that affect student engagement and working on those factors will result in improving student engagement and ultimately will benefit the educational system of Bangladesh.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Though there is much global research done for the students' engagement and its impacts on school improvement, hardly we could see research on the Bangladesh perspectives. Since the study depicts the effects of students' engagement and its impacts on their academic achievement, the literature review will discuss students' engagement including two different aspects of it- behavioral and cognitive engagement in the classroom and academic achievement related to students' involvement. As student engagement is considered to be easily shaped by the influencing factors that help to increase students' engagement in classrooms, factors are mostly context and characteristics based. Learning environment becomes friendlier for students who find it easily to cope up with it through knowledge sharing, involvement in learning and extra-curricular activities, and their belongingness at schools (Devito, 2016).

Students' engagement: According to Trowler (2010), there is no single definition that can define students' engagement due to having different contextualization of the term engagement. On the other hand, Wang and Eccles (2013) think the outcomes of students' engagements are durable when students start to believe the idea that schools are capable of completing their needs of competency, and autonomy (Devito, 2016).

Therefore, though to many, student engagements may take a broader definition in terms of the context and environment, students' engagement can take three forms of it: behavioral, cognitive and emotional. Behavioral engagement mainly refers to the idea of students' involvement in both academic and extracurricular activities and on the other hand cognitive manners of the students define how intellectually and critically students gain mastery of different

skills for development. For example, writing a critical analysis of an essay or participating well in a class discussion sharing thoughtfulness of ideas. And lastly, the emotional behavior depicts the idea of how students feel about or even react to their teachers; peers of school culture. Now the question comes why students' engagement is needed or even helpful? According to a report of Program for International Student Assessment 2000 (OECD, 2000), Willms explored that 25 percent of the students among 43 countries struggle with having the sense of belonging at school—a consequence of lack of students engagement, and 20 percent of them showed unsatisfactory level of participation at school (Fredricks, et. al, 2004). Interestingly, the method of how students engage themselves has effects on finding the impacts of students' engagements on academic performance. For example, Fall and Roberts (2012) shared that according to teachers' reports on students' engagement and academic performance, the Pearson correlation coefficient of students behavioral engagement and academic performance is .48, whereas the same Pearson correlation coefficient according to students report between their behavioral engagement and academic performance is .27.

School Environment: Reviewing other works on how students' engagement affects academic achievement leads to finding an insightful distinction among researchers' work. A study conducted with high school students found that school climate has a significant impact on students' engagement and academic performance as it evaluated how school structure and student support are strongly related with greater engagement which ultimately connected with the idea of relationship between school structure and academic achievement. This research identifies a model “authoritative school climate model” which tests what role of students' engagements explains the relationship between school climate and students 'learning ambiance in the schools. Basically, it was a correlation study aimed to explain 'school climate, individual

characteristics and behavioral outcomes, it also examined how high adult expectations for students and supportive adult-student relationships at the school climate level are associated with students' engagement and academic achievement. Having structured and student-supportive school climates are associated with higher students' engagements. This study brought the concept of "Authoritative school climate model" which includes parenting research of two dimensions, one with high expectations and demands for children and the other is warm and supportive for children. For this research, both teachers and students were surveyed on the same questions (for example, for students the question is 'I like the school' whereas for teachers it is something 'students like schools') in 298 high schools. Surveying both teachers and students for the same research indicates it did not only study students' responses but the teachers also. However, students' responses depend more on other factors, like personal experiences and peer interaction, whereas teachers take a more comprehensive and integrated view on school overall. Since it was a correlation and cross-sectional studies, to know the better impact of school climate on students' engagement and academic performance more longitudinal research is needed (Konald, et. al, 2018).

Relationships with other peers and teachers: Another study through regression and cumulative risk analysis presented that some factors (relatedness to parents, peers and teachers with students influence their engagements particularly emotional engagements at schools. It explains theoretical, empirical and practical concepts of relatedness as an important factor in relation with academic achievements. The study revealed children who are high on relatedness show greater engagements is schools' activities and ultimately reinforce to improve learning environment. Moreover, the study found a gender perspective with students' engagement and performance. For example, in the study, it is found that girls show higher behavioral and

emotional engagement than boys. Basically, this study relates how relatedness with the social factors impact students' engagement and thus academic performance. This research uses scale for surveying students in different grades within three days. It also surveyed both teachers and students. Students were responded on how they feel related with other social members-parents, teachers, and peers and the factors, which can be controlled, students believe to have influences on their academic performances. Both teachers and students' perceptions about engagement versus disaffection were evaluated and analyzed. Though the research has found different social factors that contribute to students' engagements and gone through rigorous research work surveying both teachers, students, this research has a sample that could have been more diverse. For example, students who do not feel welcome at schools, might not respond well to the questions about social partners-teachers or peers at schools. Furthermore, there is no information about extracurricular activities found in the research and for academic performance evaluation only some specific courses were considered. However, the rationale behind choosing those specific courses was not mentioned throughout this research (Furrer and Skinner, 2003).

Teachers' perceptions: What teachers think, what are their beliefs and thoughts about students engagement have impacts on how do they teach and make their lesson plans. It is the teachers whose role have a greater impact on encouraging students to participate actively in the learning process. Teachers' actions in the classroom have greater role to establish teacher-student relationship, create a safe and secure environment in the classroom, and reshaping students' constructive minds about learning process. Therefore, as teachers make a lot of decisions every day to make the learning process effective, they should know how to engage students actively in regular learning process to avoid students' disengagement, school dropouts and ineffective learning outcomes (Havik&Westergard, 2018). Students who are actively engaged themselves in

the learning process, they will continue asking questions to their teachers for clarifications. And then teachers' way of helping students through answering students' clarifications will increase students' engagements and ultimately help to gain effective learning outcomes. Classrooms where students actively participate, "will have a learning environment where actively engaged students will have more energy and students give more energy to their peers and to their teachers too" (Furrer, Skinner, & Pitzer, 2014).

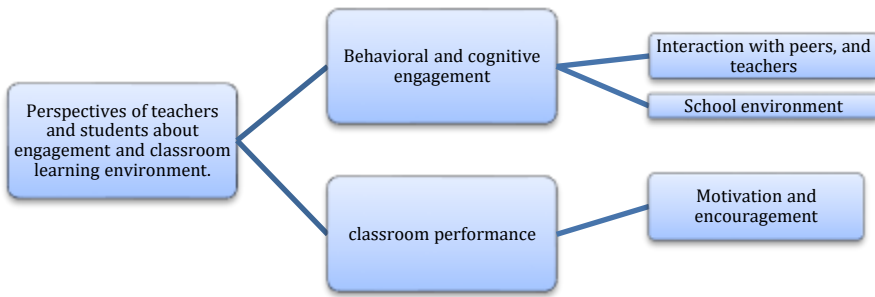
Motivation and Encouragement: Though it is highly important to find out and explore what are the relationships students share among themselves and how well and communicative the relationships between teachers and students, communicative language through providing continuous motivation and encouragements will not be a crucial factor but also be a key to academic success and language development. There have been many studies that have researched and experimented about factors for students' academic success as the factors are motivation, encouragement and academic results. Importantly, the researchers have proved that motivation does not act individually but might be interrelated to improve students learning in the classroom through increasing active engagements in their class (Dowson & Mcinerney, 2001).

Classroom Learning Process: A research on students' engagement and the impacts of it on the learning process categorized as reading literacy which is basically defined by how much students understand reading a text and develop the knowledge to participate in society. The target population of the research was 15-year-old students. Behavioral engagement had four distinct dimensions: working hard, working even harder despite difficulty, trying best to gain knowledge, putting forth one's best effort. On the other hand, emotional engagement refers to a sense of belonging and how students feel attached to school environments. It was found that students had higher and improved reading scores when they put more effort and felt a strong

sense of belonging. In spite of not having enough evidence from literature that emotional engagement has an impact on students' academic or reading skills for this research, the research explored that higher student's emotional engagement, the higher their academic or reading performance. When students feel welcome at the school and belong to school, they try harder or put much effort in learning and getting good grades or perform well academically. It is an essential finding because with this schools will try to promote a healthy and welcoming environment for all the students so that the overall academic performance goes higher (Lee, 2013). However, defining a limit on students' behavioral engagements has many more aspects, for example, attending classes, doing homework, concentrations and many more which were not considered.

2.3 Conceptual framework

From the diagram, it is quite clear that the research will look at whether the independent variables have an impact on students' learning environment in the classroom. There are many other factors that affect those independent variables. In this case, factors are relationships with peers, teachers and parents as well as school ambiance where students spend most of their time have effects on how they engage in their classrooms. From a learner centered perspective, teachers' manners and attitudes have important influences in learning outcomes and academic achievements. Moreover, school climate refers to "the quality and characters' ' of schools. The quality and characters include teachers' way of teaching, teachers –students' relationships and all those creates positive or negative school environments (Nako, 2015).



Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Research Site: For this research, the researcher will mainly perform the work and gather information from government primary schools in Chattogram, Panchlaish thana. In total five primary school teachers have been accessed for this research purpose from two different government primary schools of Chattogram. For selecting the research site, the researcher chose the schools depending on the size of the students as one school has more than 1200 students and the other has near about 600 students.

3.2 Research Participants/Sampling: The researcher had interviewed five participants from government primary schools. The interviewed teachers were the teachers for the subjects of Bangla, English and Social Studies. The interview was in Bangla and later on translated in English by the researcher and attached in the appendices.

3.3 Research Methods and tools: For the purpose of this research, the researcher has decided to use a qualitative approach using the methods of interviews. The researcher interviewed five assistant teachers from two different schools of Panchlaishthana. Since the purpose of the study was to see the perceptions among teachers, the researcher chose in depth interviews as a tool including personal views and perceptions on certain aspects of students' engagements and the impacts of it in the learning process. The depth interviews are efficient tools as it is more open-ended and discovery-mood to explore respondents' feelings and responses (Adedoyin, 2016).

3.4 Data Collection and analysis process: The interviews were done through in the both of the virtual and physical ways. Three of the interviews were done through face to face. However, due to the pandemic condition, two of the interviews have been done over phone calls. For this research, the researcher purposefully selected government schools from Panchalaishthana in Chattogram. The analysis of the research followed a thematic analysis process where the researcher followed six-steps of this process including familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up at the end. Since it will explore what teachers and students' perceptions are in terms of students' engagement and thematic analysis will be applied following both inductive and deductive reasoning (Caulfield, 2020).

3.5 Limitations of the study: The great challenge for this research is collecting information from the respondents. Since the respondents are the teachers of government primary schools, due to pandemic schools were closed and the interviewer hardly find a chance to meet teachers at the school. Another lacuna could be the lack of published research works found in this topic. Though many researchers did their research work on this, contextualized research papers, particularly in the context of Bangladesh, were not found much. Lastly, since this research aimed to see the impact of students' engagements on academic achievements, it required to do longitudinal research so that for a long period of time the research outcomes can be produced. Moreover, the researchers wished to interview the students physically as well as observe the classes to see how students participate mostly in the government primary schools of Bangladesh. However, due to covid pandemic and continuous lockdowns and closure of schools made it quite impossible to reach and observe classes. The researcher also tried to reach many other teachers in other areas schools. Unfortunately, not having a prior familiarity with those expected participants (teachers

of other government primary schools) did not allow the researcher to conduct interviews and observe the school environment.

Chapter 4

Results

The concept of students' engagements

Teachers interviewed in this study seemed to have a narrow understanding about what students' engagement could be in the classroom as they refer this term related to studies and achieving daily lesson objectives. However, only a few of the teachers did mention about how students can actively engage themselves not only being active in learning process rather some behavioral and emotional engagements students can get involved. When I asked about their thoughts on how they define students' engagements particularly in the classroom, they seemed to mostly consider this term as an "academic term" fully as they response how students actively participate during class lectures, answering what the teacher is teaching and questioning. Moreover, their expression and body language revealed that this concept of students' engagement was not quite familiar to them as most of the time they are diverting from the point of students' engagement to students daily learning process in the classroom. One of the teachers framed her answer in this way about students' engagement,

"Well! Students' engagements are how students learn actively in the classroom, and how much they studied the previous lesson back at home so that they could answer me properly when I ask them any questions regarding the previous lesson, it is important for students to study at home so that they can actively engage themselves with the lesson materials" (Barua, personal communications, (April 14, 2021).

Therefore, there are teachers who seem to consider students' engagement is a process of increasing achievement and thus mostly their responses define students' engagement in terms of academic perspectives.

However, few teachers were able to provide relatively a detailed response to express their understanding about the concept of students' engagements in the classroom mostly. According to them, the concept of students' engagement encompasses a range of activities that students do that could include academic, behavioral and giving or receiving emotional supports to other fellows around in the schools. Moreover, they shared students engagements do not only refer to how it is measured through students learn or even how do they complete an assignment, or participate in a class discussion; it is beyond of those acquired scores students get, it is more on how they behave in the classroom mostly how do they engage themselves when teachers provide an lecture or give a work to do, how students help or collaborate with other students in the classroom so that it makes an effective learning environment for everyone. Interestingly, one of the assistant teachers mentioned about students' sense of belonging that comes through active students engagements in the classroom, as she puts her words in this way:

“Through engaging well in the classrooms, students not only engage themselves actively with the lessons but also they develop a sense of belonging. As a result, they feel attached with the schools' environment” (Hafiz, personal communications, April 16, 2021)

Basically, she explained how students feel close to schools and its activities through active engagements in the classroom. Improving the class environment has a lot to do with students' engagements because when students are engaged actively, the class environment get changed and improved. Students become cooperative to each other and create a learning environment that is favorable to learning.

Overall, it has come out from the teachers' statement for many of the teachers think students' engagement is all about academic achievements and learning text books. However, some of them shared a broad and unique concept of students' engagements particularly how students' engagement creates a favorable environment in the classroom for learning.

Factors influencing students' engagements in the classrooms:

While sharing about the influencing factors that cause students engagement either to rise or fall, teachers seemed to be very confident as they confidently share what they experience in their classroom. The factors seemed to be challenging issues for teachers as one of the assistant teachers told,

“We have students in our classroom who remain empty stomach for hours and hours; the struggle of hunger does not let them to give their whole concentration on what the teacher is teaching in the class. Sometimes they even get sick. We provide food to them so that at least they can have something to eat for the day” (Akhter, personal communications, April 20, 2021)

Therefore, the factors influence students' engagements are socio-economic background of the students, parents' awareness for their children growth, teachers' motivation, school environments, getting higher scores, and the chance of dropping out. Parents play a great role in increasing students' engagement in the schools. If parents are aware of their children's growth, how are they doing back in the classrooms, how much they are enjoying or not liking the schools, they can help their children to motivate so that they can engage themselves more, she added (Akhter, personal communications, April 20, 2021). Similarly, Wang and Neihart (2015) mentioned about it in their writings that if parents praise their children's efforts, trials, and their continuous encouragement will ultimately make the learning process effective and also there is a lack of chances that students will feel left out from the group or the family (2015). Therefore,

continuous not only teachers supports but parents supports and concerns will make children more engaging in the classrooms.

The common factors among the teachers' responses were students' socio-economic condition and teachers' motivation. However, many of them do believe that getting high scores or even being noticed by the teachers also play a role in increasing students' engagements in the classroom. Students feel encouraged when teachers praise about their achievement no matter how small that may sound. Students feel special and love to notice by their teachers. Thus, teachers' action plays a great role in this. If teachers do not pay attention well to the students or remain indifferent towards students' class achievements (e.g. answering teachers questions, helping teachers or any other classmates in learning activities) may have negative impact or decline the chance of students' engagements in the classroom (Begum, personal interviews, April 20, 2021). One of the senior assistant teachers depicted in her interview that all teachers should put well-efforts to make the classroom engaging for students as she said,

“If a teacher wants, he/she can do anything for students' achievement. It is the teachers' action on which mostly 90% of the learning achievement depends. Teachers know a lot of techniques in providing class lectures to students through innovative ideas of presenting insightful and interesting materials (Razia, Personal interviews, April 22, 2021).

Basically, teachers' role in increasing or even encouraging students to actively engage in the classroom is inevitable, as she believed. Teachers' engagement comes first before students' engagements. She also thinks, if a teacher remains reluctant and doesn't make use of varieties of materials, students will feel bored.

There is another factor that came up throughout interviewing with teachers about students' engagement is favorable school environment. Interestingly, half of interviewed teachers

talked about corporal punishment in this. They think if a school encourage or favor corporal punishments, it does not only create a fearful environment but teachers-students relationship gets worse. Therefore, school environment also play a vital role in students engagements in the classroom.

Activities run by teachers to increase students' engagements:

As earlier stated that the interviewed teachers are mostly concerned about students learning rather than extra-curricular activities, they consider students engagement to be fully accommodated by the academic performance either in the classrooms or learning environment. Therefore, while practicing activities by the teachers to promote students' engagements mostly for increasing learning achievements and how much students are able to understand the learning materials and achieve the daily learning objectives. That's why perhaps one of the assistant teacher elaborated her teaching learning techniques dividing the lesson into different parts and then deliver the lecture using appropriate and interesting materials. However, another teacher mentioned about how she used to hold office hour or an extra time for those students who remain indifferent or even reluctant to answer or interact with students or teachers (Hafiz, personal interviews, April 16, 2021). However, it is necessary to take into consideration that how effectively teacher students' relationships can be built upon the students own interests. For example, in a conversation with an English assistant teacher of a government primary school, having students to get involved with making the decisions for class activities also can be a way of engaging them in the class. She explained, if students see their opinions and thoughts are getting valued by their teachers, they feel attached to it and once they feel connected, they start to feel accountable for their responsibilities and expectations that have for them by their teachers. More often, students feel afraid of talking in publicly or with the whole class. Some of them do

not feel safe to share their thoughts. They mostly get concern with the fact that what others in the class would will take it as, or how the teachers will react about it. Thus, they refrain from participating in the classroom, she added. Teachers play a great role to make the classroom safer and comfortable so that students feel free to share their thoughts (Hafiz, personal interviews, April 16, 2021). Interestingly, this relates with the sense of autonomy, stated in the article *Fostering student engagement with motivating teaching: an observation study of teacher and student behaviors that* to experience a sense of freedom, students should get a chance to contribute in the class content. Thus, it is the teachers' responsibility to engage students while making the class content and allow students to choose and ultimately to explore according to their choices given appropriate choices.

Relationship between Students' Engagements and Learning process:

It can be inevitably asserted that having more students to be engaged in a classroom will make the learning process more productive and effective in terms of obtaining the regular lesson objective. Almost every teacher's during their interviews think that there is a strong relationship between how students engage themselves in the classroom and their learning process. However, as mentioned earlier in the above result section that students' engagements are defined mostly by the government primary school teachers are the activities related to learning or more academic or how actively students participate during the class lectures. For example, answering teachers' questions or asking academic questions to their teachers, presenting a well-prepared presentation or paper are some of the examples are mentioned by the teachers about students' engagements. Thus, one of the teachers clarified that if a student is well prepared for the class as he/she studied

at home, he/she will ultimately score higher in the term exams (Barua, personal interview, April 14, 2021).

Chapter 5

5.1 Discussions and Conclusion

This chapter shows a comprehensive discussion along with the findings and recommendations. The first section of this chapter will present a discussion on the findings compare to other researches. The main purpose of this discussion is to share the researcher understandings and how does it relate with the other researches done on this area. Then the later section will conclude with some constructive remarks based on the findings of this research. Finally, the last section will present some recommendations based on the findings of this research.

As the findings of the study suggest that, teachers interviewed in this study gave a notion of students' engagement that it mostly relates with the results at the end of a term and how actively students participate in the class discussions or answer a teachers' question. Whereas, in the other researches done on teachers and students' perceptions about engagements in the classroom, a different notion has been defined by the teachers on the particular research. And in research called *Improving Students Engagement*, interviewed teachers tend to measure students' engagements based on work productivity of students, whereas in this research, teachers think students who are attentive will surely participate in the classrooms and do their regular works of studying and answer teachers' questions. As a result, the terminal results will obviously be good for those students who mainly participated. Interestingly, the research results depicted that having good learning environment and verbal communications with the teachers in the classrooms as indicators of students' engagements. On the other hand, teachers in the previous research mentioned above assumed quality of the student's work production as a crucial indicator for engagements in the classrooms. They also mentioned it is not necessary that

students will actively communicate or even participate in the classrooms but their performance or what they submit as their work is important to measure the engagements.

Understanding the contrasts between teachers in these two researches reveals that there are two views of engagements- socio-cultural and cognitive view of engagements. On the one hand, socio-cultural view of engagement depicts a students' active participation in the classroom is necessary for effective learning (Hickey &Granade, 2004) whereas, the cognitive view reveals that engagement is a process where students experience and links between academic and his/her achievements (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Basically, the teachers interviewed in this research tend to have the socio-cultural view of engagement whereas in the other research, teachers have cognitive view of engagement as they tend to perceive students' engagement reflects on their work production (Taylor and Parsons, 2011).

Another important area that stands out distinctively from other researches is about the factors of students' engagement in the classrooms. The most common factor mentioned by interviewed teachers was students' socio-economic status as there are students who have no food before coming for schools. As they come along with empty stomach, they hardly engage themselves in the daily lessons in the classrooms. However, this factor is more contextualized based on the context of Bangladesh as mostly government primary school students are from poor economic background. Thus, to measure or understand the scopes of students' engagements particularly in government primary schools of Bangladesh requires to have a understanding on the hidden factors that indirectly have impacts on it.

5.3 Conclusion:

This paper discussed the literature have been found to show relationships among students' engagement and learning effectiveness in the classroom or learning place. As this paper mainly focused on what are the teachers' perceptions about students' engagements in the class, this paper brought light into teachers' thoughts and suggestions to build strong evidence on this research area. How actively students participate or engage themselves in the classroom or in a learning environment has direct impacts on their learning as student engagement has influences not only students' achievement, but ensuring positive behaviors, creating a sense of belonging for the students so that they don't lose the learning track and stay at schools. Students' engagement is not only an indicator of the level of education in the society but also proves the quality of the particular educational institutions(Fredricks,et. al, 2004).Basically, this research has basically focused on to see what teachers think and what they do to engage students more in the classroom. In this regard, it can be said that there is a positive correlation between students' engagement and learning outcomes or even academic performances. To sum up, this research also stated that student's engagement is the key to not only learning outcomes but also regular performance and achievement in the classrooms.This research helps to see how the government primary school teachers in Bangladesh think of student engagement and at what extent they believe that this has impacts on students learning and if there are any scopes to improve students' engagement rate in a school, what actions should be taken as a teacher or as a policymaker for the greater growth of students learning.

5.4 Recommendations:

Based on the results of this study, the following are some of the recommendations have been made for the future researchers and policymaker for the improvement of learning environment at schools through increasing students' engagements.

1. Firstly, teachers should receive more comprehensive and structured trainings on the concept of students' engagements and how elaborately and expressively it can be defined in the learning environments particularly not only in the classrooms but also in the school environments.
2. A broad understanding on students' engagements including the different types of students' engagements: academic, cognitive, intellectual, institutional, emotional, behavioral, social and psychological should be covered in the trainings addressed for teachers. Along with teachers, the school management committee should be aware of this. Therefore, a structural framework will need to be developed in schools and the aim of the framework will add students need, their voice so that teachers can build a strong relationship with students and having a good relationship with the authority or teachers will help the learners or students to make an unique contribution and 'knowledge of themselves as a learner (Taylor and Parsons, 2011).
3. As school climate has enormous impacts in the learning process, encouraging students to participate more and engage actively requires to have a good and positive school climate where students' interests, motivation and enthusiasms in learning simultaneously improve (Taylor and Parsons, 2011). Schools should make sure the environment at the school is not threatening for anyone and does not become hurting to any students particularly.

Therefore, to build a safe and secure environment in a school requires to have empathy, respect among students and teachers.

4. Importantly, there is no rules particularly in the government primary schools of Bangladesh for participation or any sorts of engagements in the schools for students. Based on the results, it can be asserted that teachers do believe that having participation marks will make students more engaging in the schools. Therefore, a little portion or percentage of total marks could be allocated for active engagements in the classroom or schools.
5. To promote students' freedom and voice in schools, students' forum can be formed where students will get a chance to let their needs and demands to be known to the authority so that the school can work according to that for the betterment.
6. Having at least once in a month one to one parental meeting with teachers is necessary so that teachers know the student well and his/her family too. Depending on the different cases or issues, teachers can provide supports accordingly to students.
7. Teachers should always address the importance of engagements in the classroom and school, as there might be students who have good learning scopes or results in the terminal exams but not quite active in school or classroom activities. Thus, having teachers said that about importance of engagements will encourage students to actively participate.
8. To promote accountability, teachers and the school authority should include students' representatives in the decision-making process so that students do not feel left out and feel heard. As a result, their accountability towards schools will also increase and motivate them to participate for the growth of schools.

9. Including all of the above-mentioned recommendations by school authorities or even policymakers will result higher students' engagements and thus higher learning achievements.

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Annexure 1

Interview a Teacher

Consent Letter to a Assistant teacher

Title : **Teachers perspectives about students engagement on their (students) classroom learning achievements in the government primary schools of Chattogram.**

The Assistant teacher

Respective school name:

Chattogram, Bangladesh.

Greetings!

I am ArpitaPalit here with you for my thesis purpose and seek your cooperation. My thesis title is “Teachers perspectives about students’ engagement on classroom learning process in the government primary schools of Chattogram. I am a Masters’ (M.Ed) student of BRAC University. In partial fulfillment of my Masters degree, I must prepare a research work on this topic. For this purpose, I’m undertaking the above mentioned research project. In this respect, I seek your generous co-operation and your consent to give some of your valuable time for the

interview. Note that all the information provided by you will be strictly confidential and your answers will not be published in any circumstances. Your responses will be used only for this academic research and not for any other purposes.

I would really appreciate if you could allow me to take 20-30 minutes from your valuable time for the interview.

Thank you

Sincerely

ArpitaPalit

M.Ed Student

Brac University, Dhaka.

Annexure 2

Interview Questions

- 1) What do you know about the concept of students' engagements in the classrooms activities?
- 2) Do students engagements have any effects in daily learning activities? If yes, how? If no, how?
- 3) What are the factors have impacts in increasing students' engagements in classrooms?
- 4) How students feel about students engagements? (do they feel engaged or reluctant?)
- 5) What are your ways of teaching in the classrooms? (give some examples-like how do you teach or what are practiced values or norms present in your classrooms?)
- 6) And how these can benefit the students in the classroom?
- 7) What is your role to make students more engaged in the classrooms?
- 8) What do you do to make students engaged in the classrooms (give examples)?
- 9) Do students' engagements and academic performance share any commonality or do these two have any relationship? (details)
- 10) What pattern do you get to see in students for their learning achievements based on their engagements in the classrooms?
- 11) What are the other benefits or loopholes of students' engagements in the classrooms?
- 12) How students' engagement can benefit students overall?
- 13) Do you think motivation and encouragement have any impacts on students engagements?

14) How about students' social life or family life? Does students personal or social life have any influence on students' engagements?

15) What do you think parents know about students' engagements? Do they encourage their children to actively participate?