

**A STUDY ON SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF READING MOTIVATION  
AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BANGLADESH**

**PhD Thesis**



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Registration No: 04/2017-2018

Session: 2017-2018

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**June 2022**

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education

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## Declaration

I do hereby declare that the thesis entitled '*A Study on Socio-cultural Aspects of Reading Motivation among Primary School Students in Bangladesh*' submitted to the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education, is an original work. Neither the whole nor any part of it was submitted to any other university or institute for any other degree. My indebtedness to other researchers and their contributions has been duly acknowledged in the relevant places in the thesis.

**June 2022**

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### **Statement of the Supervisor**

I, as the supervisor of the thesis titled ‘A Study on Socio-cultural Aspects of Reading Motivation among Primary School Students in Bangladesh’, hereby confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, Ms. Shilpi Rani Saha has carried out the above-mentioned research in accordance with the requirements of University of Dhaka for a Ph.D. in Education. The thesis, in my opinion, is sufficiently well prepared to be examined.

06.06.2022, Dhaka

-----  
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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to those primary school students of Bangladesh, who, despite having the will and ability, are left behind owing to a lack of a suitable environment.

## **Acknowledgements**

All glory and honour belong to Almighty God, the most generous and compassionate toward human beings and their actions. Thank God for enabling me to keep going through the journey with strength and faith.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Md. Ahsan Habib of the Institute of Education and Research at the University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh, for his active guidance and valuable suggestions in preparing this thesis. This work has come to light due to his wise direction, attention, and participation.

I would like to thank the University Grants Commission (UGC) for selecting me as a Ph.D. fellow and supporting me in conducting the study with a grant. It would have been difficult for a single researcher to conduct this large-scale investigation without their generous financial support.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respected teacher, Professor Dr. Md. Abdul Halim, Professor Dr. M Wahiduzzaman, Prof. Dr. Fazlur Rahman, Prof. Dr. Mahbubur Rahman Litu, and Prof. Dr. Md. Khairul Islam of the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, for their inspiration, encouragement, and cooperation during the research.

I am thankful to Professor Dr. Saiful Malak of the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, for his insightful input and ideas on tool development for the study.

I am also thankful to Shah Shamim Ahmed, Associate Professor, Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, for his opinions and feedback on the methodology of the study.

I am grateful to all of the participants in the study, including students, teachers, parents, community members, and all other participants, who are at the core of the research. My research would have been impossible without their cooperation and active participation in this pandemic. The love and hospitality of the people of different communities enchanted me. A special thanks to all the participants and community people.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the District Primary Education Offices (DPEOs) and Primary Teachers' Training Institutes (PTTIs) in Rangamati, Sunamganj, Siraganj, Bhola, and Gazipur. I am also thankful to the Upazila Education Offices of these five districts' Sadar Upazilas and other five Upazilas named Kaptai, South Sunamganj, Kazipur, Char Fashion, and Sreepur. It would be impossible to perform fieldwork and data collection for the research in this COVID-19 pandemic without their logistic and administrative assistance.

I am also thankful to the Director-General of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) for enabling me to conduct this research at government primary schools in Bangladesh.

I would like to offer special thanks to my friend Md. Monir Hossain, ADC (General), DC office, Siraganj, and Md. Jahid Hasan Siddique, UNO, Kazipur, Siraganj, for their administrative, and logistic support and hospitality too. I would also like to thank Md.

Ruhul Amin, UNO of Char Fashion, Bhola and Muntasir Jahan, UNO of Kaptai, Rangamati, for their administrative and logistic assistance. It would be hard to reach the remote schools in these areas without their cordial support.

I would like to thank the Ph.D. committee of the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, for their support in this academic research.

I am grateful to Professor Dr. Mijanur Rahman, honourable former Vice-Chancellor of Jagannath University, for permitting me to do the Ph.D. study and granting my leave with encouragement. I would like to thank Professor Dr. Md. Imdadul Hoque, honourable Vice-Chancellor of Jagannath University, for granting my study leave for consecutive years with the inspiration for successful completion. I am also thankful to Professor Dr. Kamaluddin Ahmed, treasurer of Jagannath University, for encouraging me to complete the journey with blessing.

I would also like to thank my colleagues Prof. Dr. Monira Jahan, Prof. Dr. Hosne Ara Jolly, Prof. Dr. Shamima Begum, Prof. Dr. Noor Muhammad, Kishor Roy, and Bijon Baroi at Jagannath University for their academic support that helped in my research efforts. I am thankful to colleagues in my department for their cordial support and encouragement.

I would like to thank my friend Shafaly Begum and junior fellow, Most. Nasrin Sultana, Thana Secondary Education Officer, for their support in conducting the piloting of the study in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. I would like to thank my friend



Rukshana Begum, Monitoring officer of the District Primary Education Office, Gazipur, Dhaka, for her administrative, logistics, and cordial cooperation in research fieldwork in Gazipur.

I must thank the officials of Shishu Academy, the public library, the mobile library, and the children's book publishers for their valuable contributions and cooperation in getting academic resources for the study.

I can do nothing but be grateful to my beloved mother, Ashalata Saha, who stayed with me mentally and enabled me to find my own way with her blessings under challenging moments during this research. I do remember the memory of my father, Late Anil Kumar Saha, whom I believe be happy in heaven for my every good effort. My in-law father and mother always support me and blessed me in accomplishing this research work.

I would like to thank my daughter Purbita Saha and son Pinak Rudra Saha for their time and support. They did, in fact, give up their time with me while I was conducting this research. They acknowledged my busy schedule with a smile. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to my husband, Dr. Pallab Kanti Saha, for always being an inspiration to me.

I would also like to thank my Ph.D. fellows, friends, other family members, and well-wishers for their encouragement and support throughout the research process. I am thankful to all who helped me directly or indirectly. If I missed anyone, please forgive me. I am indebted to all of you.

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## Abstract

This study used a mixed-method convergent parallel design to explore the social and cultural factors associated with the reading motivation of primary school students in various strata of society, such as family, school, and community in Bangladesh. The study was conducted in selected government primary schools from five districts in Bangladesh representing diversified geographical characteristics such as Char (a tract of land surrounded by water), Haor (a wetland in the north eastern part of Bangladesh), hilly, coastal, and plain land. A total of 437 grade four students, with an equal distribution of urban-rural and gender representation, participated in the study. Besides, the study collected the views of the concerned parents, teachers, community members, education professionals, children's book publishers, and library officials. Along with survey questionnaire, interview protocol, FDG guideline and observation checklist, the study used a reading motivation scale for students as data collection tools. The findings revealed that students had an average level of reading motivation with a mean score of 58.75 ( $SD=13.22$ , and a scale mid-point of 57.5). Girls were found to have significantly higher ( $t=1.96$ ,  $p=.05$ ) reading motivation than their male counterparts whereas the urban students had higher reading motivation than the rural ones ( $t=3.37$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, no significant differences were found among the student reading motivation scores from the five geographical locations except for the hilly and plain lands ( $F = 2.60$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

The research found that students' reading motivation is influenced by all four factors: family, school, community, and state level policies. In the socio-cultural contexts of Bangladesh, parents perceive reading as a functional tool for academic achievement and

future employability instead of a skill for enjoying or getting pleasure. The study results indicated that parents' education and occupation were positively associated with their children's reading motivation. However, the study revealed limitations in providing a conducive reading environment for students at all four levels of learners' environment namely- family, school, community and state. It was reported that the reading culture and practices prevailing in the family were not conducive to students' reading. In addition, the school environment was not found very supportive and stimulating for reading books and developing reading habits. Furthermore, there were government policies and regulations, which had been circulated to encourage reading at different institutions. However, a lack of resource mobilization at the school and community level hampered the creation of a reading-friendly environment.

The study suggested that to foster a culture of reading in society, all stakeholders must ensure a supportive reading environment and adequate facilities at home, school, and community. In addition, government policies need to be implemented especially with a stronger focus on rural areas of Bangladesh. Based on the findings this study proposed, a comprehensive model for fostering a reading culture in the society of Bangladesh by coordinating the four interconnected constituents of a child's immediate environment - family, school, community, and national-level policies and activities. The findings of this study contribute to a greater understanding of the social and cultural context of Bangladesh and help all the stakeholders to initiate relevant reading programmes, projects, and activities and ensure adequate reading facilities to build a reading-friendly society. This study paves the way for more research to be conducted on reading motivation in the future.



## Chapter One: Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

Reading is a basic skill for learning any language and understanding other domains of subject knowledge. Furthermore, it plays a critical role in developing the learning processes, connecting to lifelong learning, and addressing the demands for updated knowledge and information in this ever-changing technological era (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Geske & Ozola, 2008; Kucukoglu, 2013; McGeown, 2013; Notten & Becker, 2017). In daily life, reading is recognised as a cognitive skill leading to social development, which increases self-esteem, helps communicate with social beings, and motivates further reading to develop individuals' interests in specific topics (Hidi et al., 2002; Renninger & Hidi, 2002 as cited in Nath, 2012). Reading is an essential skill because it facilitates people's access to the vast knowledge hub that ultimately helps promote the progress and development of society as a whole and yields benefits for the individuals, nations, and the world. The association of reading with academic motivation and socio-economic success among adults is already acknowledged and underscored in research (Duncan et al., 2007; Ritchie & Timothy, 2013). It is argued that academic performance in every domain of knowledge is directly associated with the degree of reading skills attained optimally. However, having specific reading skills is not enough to be a good reader; motivation to read should also be incorporated (Wolter et al., 2015). Previously conducted researches claim that 'skill' and 'will' (motivation) work together to accomplish reading abilities (McGeown, 2013; Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Gambrell &

Codling, n.d.); without the combined application of these two, development in this critical skill would be restricted.

Reading motivation has been identified and conceptualised from a variety of perspectives by the scholars. McGeown (2013) acknowledged motivation as intrinsic and extrinsic drives while Cambria and Guthrie (2010) defined it as interest, commitment, and confidence. However, motivation for reading could be induced both inside and outside schools. In schools, inspiration comes from the teachers and peers as whereas, outside the school, it is provided by the family and community (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). When considering the school context, teachers have a crucial role to play in transmitting that inspiration to the learners. Hence, teachers must be attached to their students' interests, recognise multiple literacies, participate in literature circles and book clubs, and incorporate their own model of reading for enjoyment through diverse instructional strategies, contents, materials, and events to foster reading motivation and encourage reading for pleasure (Pitcher et al. 2007; Stenger, 2010). Along with schools, family culture plays an essential role in reading motivation by providing a supportive environment, sufficient reading materials, appropriate interactions with children, and diversified literacy practices at home (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Huang et al., 2015; Wiescholek et al., 2017).

As mentioned earlier, reading, one of the essential skills for academic achievement and other cognitive activities throughout life, requires the facilities and stimulation of several social institutions, like school, family, and community. However, studies focusing on Bangladesh revealed that the country had achieved its MDG targets, especially those

associated with gender parity, increased school enrolment, and lower drop-out rate (MDGs report, 2015). Now, quality education becomes the top priority in the education system of Bangladesh, a country with a strong commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG-4 that focuses on ensuring inclusive, equitable and quality education and also lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). However, in achieving quality education, reading skills need to be focused on at the primary level, especially in the early grades (Saha & Ehsan, 2015). Various studies conceded that reading motivation, in and outside school, broadens the horizons of achieving reading skills in multiple ways (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Huang et al., 2015; Pitcher et al., 2007; Stenger, 2010). Furthermore, supportive social, cultural, and economic contexts enable children to develop literacy skills and improve their potential to be lifelong learners in this dynamic and knowledgeable world (UNESCO, 2017).

Research focusing on the reading practices of Bangladeshi learners have so far been limited to issues like students' reading achievement status (DPE, 2017; DPE, 2019), gender differences in reading achievement (Saha & Ehsan, 2015), reading fluency of current learners (Basher et al., 2014), early grade students' reading skills (Leer et al., 2017; Shimu et al., 2016), urban-rural differences in students' reading comprehension (Saha & Khan, 2014), and classroom practices of reading (Saha, in press), etc. However, there have been hardly any research that explored the underpinning causes for achieving reading skill, which might include issues like reading environments and facilities at home, schools, and communities, parents' perceptions of reading and their interactions

with the children's reading, teachers' classrooms practices, and the cultural practices across a diverse locations and populations of the country and the reading related policy planning and implementations. It is known from the literature that social and cultural environments are more important in encouraging students to foster the skills necessary to become independent readers and effective lifelong learners (Yang et al., 2016; Kirchner & Mostert, 2017). Therefore, this study intends to explore the practices and facilities provided by different social organisations like families, schools, communities, and national-level policies to identify the social and cultural aspects that motivate students of diversified areas of Bangladesh to read.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Motivation plays a vital role in developing reading skills (Baker & Scher, 2002; Baker, 2003; Guthrie et al., 2000; Marinak & Gambrell, 2008; Takaloo & Ahmadi, 2017).

Motivation for reading may come from a multi-dimensional motivational sources and environments (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). The sources may include parents, other family members, teachers, the school environment, community members, policy plans, etc. Acknowledging the sources, Baker (2003) stated that parents' attitudes, beliefs, and practices have a critical role in students' reading motivation and the role of the family and the association with home and school are significant concerns for researchers and practitioners in reading motivation. Heaton (2016) found that parents' habits of reading in front of their children influence their reading motivation. It was opined from a sociologists' viewpoint, that a significant proportion of the academic differences between students depend on the socio-economic status of their family and the cultural resources

available at home (Park, 2007). It was also pointed out that cultural capital refers to parental reading habits, keeping away from the traditional views of parental participation in and knowledge of highbrow culture like visiting museums, live performances, or art galleries. In another study, Park (2005) argued that schools characteristics, curriculum, and instructions could influence the family's socio-cultural status regarding students' reading achievement (cited in Park, 2007). In generating a motivational learning environment in schools, Daniels (2010) discussed the importance of intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation as a means of reward and punishment. The researcher pointed out that students' feelings, thoughts, expectations, and belongingness are essential factors that stimulate intrinsic motivation in classroom practices. Recognising the importance of partnerships among schools, families, and communities, Epstein (2010) mentioned that this partnership could provide family services and support, increase parents' skills and leadership, improve the school climate, connect families with others in schools and communities, help teachers with their work, and ultimately work for the betterment of the students' academic achievement. Khan (1996) also acknowledged parents' involvement with schools for building a positive relationship with the school and community.

Despite the importance of reading motivation from every aspect of parents, family, school, and community, a minimal study has been done in this area in Bangladesh. It is found in several research reports that many primary school-going children in Bangladesh are not achieving the learning competencies in literacy specified by the national curriculum (DPE, 2018; Education Watch, 2008; Saha & Ehsan, 2015). Furthermore, the

National Student Assessment (2017) assessed students' reading abilities along with other skills in Grade III and Grade V to compare their achievements with the standard competencies as prescribed by the national curriculum. However, it is stated in the National Student Assessment (NSA) report that only 12% of grade V students achieved the band 5 level (mastery level) of reading achievement in Bangla (DPE, 2018). Therefore, a good proportion of students are not achieving the reading competencies in Bangla as per the standard set by the national curriculum of Bangladesh. Data revealed from the Annual Sector Performance Report–ASPR (2019) reveals that the pass rate in the Primary Education Completion Exam (PECE) was 97.6% in 2017, though it was 98% in 2015 (33% of marks are recognised as pass-marks in every subject). But in the NSA, achieving the required grade level of 'competencies' or 'learning outcomes' was recognised for obtaining 50% and above marks. Here, 25% of students in grade V managed to achieve these grade-level 'competency' or 'learning outcomes' (NSA, 2015). The large disparity in proportions between the ASPR, 2017 and NSA, 2017 reports indicates that most students obtained pass-marks but fell short of the expected learning outcomes (DPE-ASPR, 2017; DPE-NSA, 2017).

Moreover, according to an online newspaper called The Business Standard, about 73% of third-grade students could not read or understand the language in their textbooks. Surprisingly, 6 percent of the students could not even read Bangla words from the textbooks at all. It was also mentioned that only 9.4 percent of them could read in Bangla beyond the textbooks with correct pronunciation (Jasim, 2019: online). The report further added that, according to a National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) research

done in 2019, students performed poorly not only in reading and understanding Bangla, but their writing skills were also marked below the standard level. This article mentioned teaching techniques, assessment procedures, teacher planning, and insufficient supplementary Bangla reading materials as the causes of such under achievements in Bangla reading skills (Jasim, 2019: online).

Besides government organisations, some other non-government organisations (NGOs) like BRAC Institute of Educational Development-BRAC University (BIED-BRACU), Save the Children Bangladesh, Room to Read Bangladesh, World Vision Bangladesh, etc., worked on the present status of reading skills and comprehension ability of the primary school students. These organisations introduced some interventions on reading to improve the reading skills of early grade students in some selected primary schools in Bangladesh. These reports explored students' present reading comprehension and abilities on a small scale but did not encompass the underpinning conditions and facilities provided by their families, schools, communities, and finally, the policy instruction to motivate them to achieve reading skills in diversified areas of the country.

Reading motivation plays a pivotal role in achieving reading skills. This study examined the social and cultural practices that are prevailing in the family, school, and community across different geographical locations of Bangladesh and how these institutional practices and national-level policies influence students' motivation in reading. Finally, the research study is titled as 'A Study on the Socio-cultural Aspects of Reading Motivation among the Primary School Students in Bangladesh'.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study aimed to explore the social and cultural aspects of reading motivation among the primary school students in Bangladesh. This mixed-method convergent parallel research approach explored the social and cultural contexts of Bangladesh through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological System Theory and students' motivation for reading with Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-determination theory for human motivation.

The study aimed to understand the social and cultural environment of grade four government primary school students for reading motivation at home, school, and in the community. The purpose was to know how parents perceive reading and what family practices are prevailing for motivating students in reading. The study also aimed to investigate the reading environment in schools and communities that are linked to implement national policies and government provisions for encouraging children to read.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the research was to explore how the socio-cultural aspects influence the reading motivation of the primary school students in Bangladesh. The following objectives guided the study.

- To understand the parents' perceptions of reading
- To identify the family practices related to students' reading motivation
- To explore the school environment related to students' reading motivation
- To analyse the policies and provisions of Bangladesh to foster reading



## **1.5 Research Questions**

The principal research question of the study was: What socio-cultural aspects influence reading motivation of the primary school students in Bangladesh?

This study was further guided by the following sub-questions:

1. How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?
2. What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?
3. What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?
4. What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

It is widely acknowledged that motivation for reading is critical for academic performance and lifetime learning. A child's self-initiated interaction starts at home, and a positive environment at home provides immense inspiration for reading (Baker et al., 1997). In addition, parents' reading interactions with their children positively impact reading motivation (Baker et al., 2001). Furthermore, parents' positive beliefs significantly impact children's reading achievements (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Weigel et al., 2006b). After moving from home, a child's most interactive place is school. According to Gambrell (1996), school culture positively impacts reading motivation. Even parents' attitudes towards the school greatly influence children's reading, no matter how much they are involved (McNeal, 2012). Teachers need to motivate diversified students at schools, including those who may have a lack of reading activities before entering the school. Consequently, students' home literacy environment, social and cultural factors, and school culture were strongly associated with the motivation for

achieving reading skills (Steensel, 2006). Bansal et al. (2006) also asserted that the good quality of the home environment developed more motivated students, leading to high achievements.

Research in the context of Bangladesh showed that students who completed primary education lagged in attaining the targeted literacy standards. They were not achieving the learning competencies set by the competency-based curriculum in Bangladesh (DPE, 2018; NAPE, 2018; Salahuddin et al., 2020; Saha & Ehsan, 2015). According to the Annual Sector Performance Report (2017), in 2017 only 12% of the grade five students could achieve all the learning competencies, including reading comprehension, in Bangla language compatible with this particular level or above. The rest (88%) were below the grade level competencies (DPE, 2019). However, in Bangladesh, there have been scarcity of research focusing on reading motivation in the social and cultural features of achieving the learning competencies of the students. The existing research are mostly focused on issues like reading comprehension (Saha & Ensan, 2015), Bangla reading fluency of early grade students (Basher et al., 2014), current reading status (Shimu et al., 2016), early grade reading skills (Leer et al., 2017), socioeconomic conditions of the family and community people (Nath, 2012), teacher training (Saha & Ehsan, 2015), subject-based training (DPE, 2014), teacher-student ratio (Education Watch, 2015), urban poverty (Ardt et al., 2005), assessment procedure (Roy, 2016), etc. In addition, some non-government organisations worked on improving early grade students' reading skills and focused on some of the social areas in selected regions for some of the primary school students in Bangladesh.

However, learning achievement was linked to reading motivation, including the parents' attitude towards reading, family members' contributions, the environment, and interactions with social organisations like school, family, and community. The current study was intended to explore the social and cultural contexts of Bangladesh that link students' reading motivation to the achievement of learning competencies. The study investigated parents' perceptions of reading, reading culture at home, school environment, reading practices, community practices, national-level policy, and plans that ultimately contribute to motivation among Bangladesh's primary school students.

The study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of Bangladesh that are likely to promote or hinder reading motivation. It also will allow the stakeholders of the primary education system, specifically parents, community people, teachers, and school authorities to know their practices in the families, communities, and schools that stimulate or hinder a proper reading environment in these institutions. Finally, the social and cultural understanding of the reading environment offers valuable insights to assist the curriculum designers, educators, and policymakers in developing different plans and programmes to promote appropriate environments, facilities, and practices to motivate the primary school students to read for enjoyment as well as to learn to ensure sustainable development goals, including the quality primary education in Bangladesh.

## **1.7 Thesis Outline**

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Review of the Related Literature

Chapter Three: The Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Chapter Four: Methodology

Chapter Five: Quantitative Findings

Chapter Six: Qualitative Findings

Chapter Seven: Discussions

Chapter Eight: Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

## **1.8 Operational Definitions of the Terms Used in the Problem**

Three different terms were used in the research title that has been explored as research problems in the context of Bangladesh. The terms were: 1. socio-cultural context, 2. reading motivation, and 3. primary school students. These are explained below.

### **Socio-cultural Context**

A socio-cultural context refers to the immediate physical and social environment where people live, behave, or learn according to the related social norms, values, and expectations, including race, gender, and nationality (Barnett & Casper, 2001). In addition, context is “everything in the material, mental, personal, interactional, social, institutional, cultural, and historical situation” (Gee, 1999, p. 54) that influences people to act differently from one another (cited in Daniels & Steres, 2011). The authors also

mentioned that all these factors constitute the socio-economic context that motivate students in their learning. Therefore, the term socio-economic context encompasses features like the institutional (family, school, and community) environments, interactions with the members of different social organisations, parents, peers, teachers, and their beliefs, practices, and habits etc., which may impact students' motivation.

The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARL) descriptively mentioned culture as “shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and understanding that are learned by socialisation. Thus, it can be seen as the growth of a group identity fostered by the social patterns that are unique to the group” (Zimmermann, 2017, para. 1). It has also been pointed out that religions, foods, clothing patterns, languages, beliefs, behaviors, rituals, and other practices reflect the culture of a particular group of people. To understand a person's mental traits or abilities, Wertsch (1991) stated that social, cultural, and institutional conditions impact the person. Thus, cultural factors such as languages, social interactions, and physical environments in social institutions such as the family and school have effects on individuals' learning, idea interpretation, and cognitive development. In addition, according to Malita (1998),

Culture is represented by the world a child adapts to by a process of enculturation; culture actually assigns individual and group value. “We are what we are by the language we speak, by historical heritage, by values, traditions and customs we share, by literary, artistic and philosophical creation which formed ourselves. Culture has powerful affective vibrations. It develops feelings of social solidarity, aesthetic senses, allows emotions to emerge, encourages creativity, spontaneity, and originality”. (cited in Roman & Pinto, 2015)

Furthermore, in the Ecological System Theory, Bronfenbrenner (1977) described how individuals' development occurs in an overlapping, interdependent social and cultural

organisation. It has mentioned social and cultural organisations like family, school, and community (Baker et al., 1997). The theory describes a person's relationship with a closely related environment, like family, school, or community, and their interrelations with these institutions, followed by the beliefs and values of adults, the rules and regulations of society that structure the environment, and the development of an individual.

In response to the social and cultural contexts of individuals' learning and motivational development, this study investigated the primary school students' reading environments in their family, school, and community and their parents' perceptions of reading, attitudes towards reading, and family practices. Furthermore, the social and cultural contexts include the school reading environment, teachers' reading practices, their attitudes towards reading storybooks, in various geographical locations, including urban-rural and gender perspectives and the existing national level policies and initiatives related to reading.

### **Reading Motivation**

Motivation is a mental process, and it is a behavioral issue that cannot be seen. It motivates people to work, move, or stimulate them towards a goal. When defining reading motivation, Cambria and Guthrie (2010) described it as “the values, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding reading for an individual are the reading motivation” (p. 16). In addition, Urdan and Schoenfelder (2006) postulated motivation as “a willingness to engage in an activity and a willingness to persist in that activity, even when it becomes difficult” (cited in Malloy et al., 2013, p. 273). Again, Guay et al. (2010) referred to motivation as “the reasons underlying behavior” (p. 712, cited in Lai, 2011).

Research revealed that a student could be capable of reading to acquire the skills, but it would not be possible to become a good reader without motivation. It is associated with students' reading skills (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Gottfried, 1990; McGeown et al., 2011; Wang & Guthrie, 2004) and it provides one of the foundations for learning to read (Anderson et al., 1985). Furthermore, motivation to read is crucial for students' success or failure in elementary schools to further education (Applegate & Applegate, 2010), which ensures students' lifelong reading habits (Gambrell, 2011).

There are different ways for motivating children for reading. Children can be motivated to read as it is enjoyable for them or they value it. They may view it as an opportunity for interaction with others or as a reward. This sort of motivation comes from a person's internal or external sources of influence. From a reader's perspective, there are two types of motivations: intrinsic and extrinsic (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). These are mentioned below.

Intrinsic motivation comes from one's willingness or interest. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), "the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions" is considered intrinsic motivation (p. 56). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation depends on external factors such as stimulation. Extrinsic motivation is defined as "behavior where the reason for doing it is something other than an interest in the activity itself" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 35). Reading for pleasure or enjoyment comes from intrinsic motivation, and reading for grades or avoiding negative consequences is driven by extrinsic motivation.

This intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be stimulated inside or outside the school. Inside the school, it may come from teachers or peers, while outside the school, it may

come from parents and other community members (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). The environment encourages students to be lifelong learners in this knowledgeable world (UNESCO, 2017). This study investigated the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of the primary school students in Bangladesh's social and cultural environments from various levels and domains, such as family, school, community, and state-level policies.

### **Primary School Students**

In the education system of Bangladesh, primary education covers grades I-V. The National Education Policy (2010) mentioned the extension of primary education from grade V to grade VIII, and the extension was planned to be implemented by 2018 (MoE, 2010). However, it is yet to be implemented. Therefore, for this study, students in grades I-V are considered as the primary school students.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter gives an overview of the background, context, objectives, rationale and possible outcomes of undertaking this research. It has focused on the research problem along with its purpose and objectives and mentioned the targets of the queries of the research involving different layers of society, like family, school, community, and national perspective, to know the perceptions and practices leading to students' lesson motivation. Furthermore, the significance of the study has also been explained as the study intends to investigate the reading motivation with a view to identify the factors needed to ensure the appropriate environment, policies, and practices to cherish reading motivation. Finally, the layout of the thesis at a glance has been presented.



## **Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter attempts a review of the relevant research literature carried out in both local and international context to investigate the issues that influence learners' motivation to read. While offering a critical appreciation of the literature considered for this review, this chapter also seeks to identify the research gap in the concerned area. The chapter is divided into two major sections. The first section consists of a review of the literature on the issues of reading motivation published throughout the world while the second section focuses on reviewing the research conducted in Bangladesh relating to the research queries of this study.

### **2.2 Section One: Empirical Research on Reading Motivation**

This first section discusses the empirical studies conducted across the globe regarding reading motivation. The section presents a critical review of the research literature related to students' reading motivation, such as parents' attitudes toward reading, family reading environments, school reading environments, community participation in reading, library visits, students' reading attitudes, students' reading habits, urban-rural differences in reading, gender perspective in reading, and so on. The details of the review are presented below.

#### **Parents Attitude towards reading**

Parents' attitude is defined as how parents feel and think about the particular issue as well as how they are involved with it (Henning, 2013). Following this idea this research

attempts to explore the literature relating to parents' thoughts and feelings about reading, their involvement in activities at home and school, and their interactions with their children in promoting reading motivation. Several studies (Henning, 2013; McKenna & Kear, 1990) reported a positive correlation between parents' attitude and their children's attitude towards reading. On the other hand, if parents themselves are not motivated, students may not be motivated to read. Parents with a positive attitude enjoy reading and provide a rich literacy environment and resources for learning (McKenna & Kear, 1990). However, parents with negative attitudes do not likely to have the eagerness to boost reading for their children, and they view reading as a functional tool rather than a joyful activity (Chiu & Ko, 2007).

Studies (DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Weigel et al., 2006b) acknowledged that parents' positive beliefs significantly impact children's reading achievement. Even parents' positive attitude towards school has an affirmative influence on children's reading, no matter how much they are involved (McNeal, 2012). For children, reading books and ensuring interest in reading are encouraged by parents' activities at home like reading in front of children (Heaton, 2016; Morrow, 1983) and regular reading (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). The study conducted by Geske & Ozola (2008) also supports this claim as they pointed out that children's reading literacy achievement is higher in the families where parents spend a great deal of time reading. Again, Guthrie and Greaney (1991) pointed out another issue: valuing literacy and enrolling children in the library (cited in Baker et al., 1997) influence children's reading interests. The study also argued that

reading aloud (Geske & Ozola, 2008) with a good frequency, at least three times a week, is another way of showing a constructive attitude toward reading.

While discussing all these concerns, one other thing is essential: the value of education for parents is associated with students' learning achievement, leading them to provide support at home (Geske & Ozola, 2008). Hoyne and Egan (2019) discussed another aspect of parents' attitude. They identified that book gifting programmes or initiatives in the early years worked in western countries to encourage reading habits, even though that approach had worked in families from various socioeconomic backgrounds and effected parents' attitudes toward enhancing reading and language development. Furthermore, the PIRLS research, which included 25 nations, recognised parental attitude as a crucial component of reading achievement, early home literacy activities, and the number of books at home (Park, 2008).

### **Parents' Involvement in Reading**

Family is the closest social organisation, and parents are their children's first teachers; their participation in educational interventions is expected. In fact, parental involvement is highly valued by researchers in the field of educational research. "Parental involvement is defined as parents' active commitment to spending time to assist in the academic and general development of their children" (OECD, 2012, p.13). Researchers showed that children whose parents were more involved were more regular in school, active, good at academic achievement, and extended their studies from one level to another (Mirazchiyski & Klemencic, 2014; OECD, 2012; Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Additionally, family involvement is viewed as an investment of resources by the parents and guardians in their children's education (Carlisle et al., 2005). The present study located this involvement in two ways: at the family level; and at school level. Both types of involvement have been acknowledged by several researchers (Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Jeynes, 2005; Pomerantz et al., 2007). Yusof (2010) highlighted that parents' involvement is positively connected with children's reading achievement. This notion is also supported by Quilliams and Beran (2009) who mentioned that parents' involvement in school and activities at home ensure children's further academic development. Peterson et al. (2011) investigated an interesting issue and surveyed students to find out the responsibilities among the students themselves, parents, and teachers that take part in their learning. The study found that the students mentioned themselves in active roles and acknowledged that their parents' involvement affected their learning achievements. Recognising parents as the key social agents for acquiring reading achievement, Sangkaeo (1999) mentioned that children who did better in reading at school belonged to the families where books were available, parents read with their children, and parents, as well as siblings, spent time on reading (cited in Morni & Sahari, 2013).

Parental involvement was also addressed by Englund et al. (2004) and mentioned that it had a vast impact on younger children than older ones. Accepting parents' participation at any age, the researchers emphasised that it had more influence on young children. Alternatively, Froiland et al. (2013) found that parents' expectations are more important than other forms of parents' involvement in students' academic achievements in the early

years. However, many researchers identified two types of family variables. One was socio-economic status-SES (parents' income and education), and the other was a process variable (parental involvement). The researchers identified that this process variable had a better impact on students' reading (Hess & Holloway, 1983; Scott-Jones, 1984; Toomey, 1986; White, 1982; cited in Rubai & Yaari, 2012). Some researchers (Burger & Landerholm, 1991; Ho et al., 1996, cited in Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012) recommended that both of these variables (SES and process) were correlated with children's reading achievement. In conclusion, researchers agreed that the family environment and parents' socio-economic condition work together for boosting reading achievement. In another recent study Heyman (2016) agreed with the positive influence of parental involvement and pointed out that children of the involved parents enjoyed reading more (45%) than those of the non-involved ones.

Parents' socio-economic conditions and level of education had a huge impact on their children's reading achievement (Begum, 2007). Begum found that parents with higher education had higher expectations for their children. Several studies (Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mirazchiyski & Klemencic, 2014) also found links between parents' level of education with their children's school involvement. Another study (Melhuish et al., 2001) reported parents' socio-economic status and mother's qualification as powerful influence for students' cognitive development. Henning (2013) focused on the same issue and concluded that parents with non-high school level of education are less involved in their children's education than high school graduates. Begum (2007) further showed that parents' early involvement with literacy

had great impacts on students' future reading capacity. Heaton (2016) articulated that parents' participation in students learning process had two types of outcomes namely- behavioral and academic. The study added that parents' involvement in school activities, collaboration with teachers, and decision-making opportunities with children ensure higher academic achievement. The study also noted that parents' participation ensured teachers' attention to their children, and both parents and teachers were able to identify students' learning problems. Finally, research studies have concluded that both teachers and parents can work together to solve the learners' problems and ensure their academic success.

Though parents' involvement is found to have impacts on students' reading achievement and further academic success, their involvement is subject to some factors such as the nature of their jobs. In fact, parents' jobs might prevent them from being involved with schools, managing the time to communicate with the school and meeting the teachers during school time. The study even pointed out that the barriers of not being able to communicate adequately might be frustrating for the child, parent, and teacher (Larocque et al., 2011). Other researchers (Desforjes & Abouchaar, 2003; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011) mentioned a few more factors that act as barriers to parents' involvement such as unemployment, social class, and mental and physical health. In addition, Yoder and Lopez (2013) identified a few other factors that hinder parents' involvement in children's reading.

While highlighting the barriers to parents' involvement in children's' reading, both tangible and intangible barriers were mentioned in research. The tangible barriers were transportation, childcare, finances, time, and access to technology whereas the intangible barriers included ignorant of ways to get involved, not feeling welcome based on prior experiences, feeling of marginalisation and jumping through hoops. They also added that the parent's or school's cooperation could resolve tangible barriers. But intangible barriers are multifactorial, and many issues need to be solved by parents, teachers, and society (Larocque et al., 2011). However, another study (Fite et al., 2014) found that peer victimisation was associated with poor academic achievement, but parents' higher involvement level could reduce victimisation and improve academic performance.

### **Reading Environment and Resources at Home**

The family environment is vital for developing reading capacity, especially in the early years of a child. This study used the terms 'family environment', 'home environment', 'family reading environment', and 'family literacy' when referring to the context of the reading environment at home. Researchers have long recognised positive home environment as an important factor for children's reading motivation (Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012; Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Weigel et al., 2006). Acknowledging the importance of the home environment, DeBaryshe et al. (2000) mentioned that it gives the chance to observe, explore, and participate in reading activities (cited in Bracken & Fischel, 2008).

Several researchers (Christian et al., 1998; Park, 2008; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002) worked on family literacy environment and found significant connections between early literacy in the family and reading success. Morni and Sahari (2013) mentioned that children are encouraged as advanced readers in a home environment where parents read regularly both for functional as well as entertainment purpose. The study further noticed that those parents visited library and checked books, borrowed books from friends, received and gave books as gifts which all were considered as parents' value of education. The home environment of the students with a rich literacy environment; the freedom of choice of their own reading material, scope to share their experience of reading books, shared reading with adults with enjoyment, and seeing adults reading with pleasure had an impact on reading achievement (Collins & Svensson, 2008).

Children's reading skills improves when they have access to various activities such as singing, shared storybook reading, letter foundation activity, game playing etc. at home (Wood, 2002). Along with this, multiple exercises need to be performed regularly at home. The study also revealed that parent-child interactions such as shared-storybook reading promote subsequent independent reading skills, and daily game participation seems to enhance reading and alliteration awareness. Furthermore, this study found that parents with a higher socioeconomic status were more interested in various activities than those with a lower socioeconomic status. In another study (Aram et al., 2013), similar findings emphasised the positive and significant link between knowledge of alphabet, vocabulary, reading development, and the family's socioeconomic situation.



Studies consistently (Hess & Holloway, 1983; Scott-Jones, 1984; Toomey, 1986; White, 1982) pointed out that the home literacy environment had a greater influence on reading achievement than socio-economic status. Another group of scholars (Burger & Landerholm, 1991; Ho et al., 1996) reported positive correlation between socio-economic status and home literacy environment for reading achievement. However, recently, researchers noted that family environment, parents' education (Mullis et al., 2012; Park, 2008; Senechal, 2012), and income- all these factors collectively contributed to children's reading achievement. Another study revealed that students are intrinsically motivated in reading when parents provide home literacy activities as a source of entertainment (Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012). In a similar study that investigated home environment, Bracken and Fischel (2008) affirmed that parents' education was the most significant dimension for parent-child reading interactions as well as reading achievements. The study revealed that educated parents and children were highly interested in reading and had a more shared reading scope with one another.

In addition, the International Reading Association Commission (1994) defined a few criteria for family literacy engagement (Mathangwane & Arua, 2006). These criteria included the processes of using literacy by parents, children, and extended family members at home and in communities, maintaining the process regularly, helping children complete their tasks, and involving diversified activities related to reading. Another study (Bansal et al., 2006) revealed that 'good quality of home environment' had positive impact on students' higher-level of motivated for high achievement. The study mentioned 'Locus of control' as a personality trait that indicates beliefs upon the factors on which academic achievement depends. The locus of control was discussed using the

terms 'internal locus of control' and 'external locus of control'. 'Internal locus of control' indicates a personality trait that believes that high achievement depends on a person's inner quality. Alternatively, 'External locus of control' tends to consider external factors for high achievement. Parental behavior is also linked with the quantity of interactions in problem-solving activities and the scope of exploration for the children in the home environment (Ferguson, 1987; cited in Bansal et al., 2006).

Another study (Noah et al., 2015) identified the availability of home library and other study materials as well as support for homework as constituents of the home reading environment and has reported positive impacts of these components on students' higher achievement. A longitudinal study was conducted by Melhuish et al. (2001) to explore what contributed to the child's (3–7) development. The study focused on individual and family characteristics, respectively. Considering other development areas, one of the areas found in the study was a home characteristic. The study considered activities such as reading, library visits, playing with and teaching letters or numbers, painting and sketching, teaching shapes, songs, nursery rhymes etc. as home literacy behaviors for children's social and cognitive development. The study also found that a higher score in the home learning environment (HLE) is directly proportionate to cooperation or compliance, peer sociability, confidence, lesser antisocial behavior, and superior cognitive development. A similar study was done by Sylva et al. (2004) which concluded that the home learning environment significantly influenced children's cognitive and social development. The study also pointed out that this home learning environment factors can be easier to change through policies and practitioner initiatives than other

family environment characteristics, like parents' socio-economic condition and education. Additionally, children who saw their siblings engaged in reading with their parents were motivated to read extensively and performed better in reading (Morni & Sahari, 2013; Sangkaeo, 1999; Yusof, 2010).

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016 examined the fourth-grade children's reading achievement in their home and school experiences. One of the focused areas of the study was the home environment. The study revealed that sufficient home resources like the number of books in the home, parents' education with occupations, study supports, including internet support and separate study room, were important elements of home environment. Along with these concerns, the study also stated that children who had attended pre-primary education and engaged in early literacy activities were higher reading achievers (Mullis et al., 2017; Mullis et al., 2012). A similar finding was revealed in another study (Froiland et al., 2013) and put in the same position as Mullis et al. (2017) who conceded that parents' early involvement in home literacy activities ensures future academic success. Recognising the significance of the home learning environment in a child's reading achievement, Begum (2007) stated that parents could ensure a home environment by observing children's activities to understand their social, intellectual, emotional, and motor development, which would allow them (parents) to meet their children's needs in the best possible ways. Furthermore, another study (Anderson, 1985) emphasised the home environment very nicely and articulated that learning to read starts from home experiences. Even before entering school, children

learn sounds, letters, words, feelings, vocabulary, oral language, basic grammar, different forms of stories and knowing objects and things etc. from home.

However, Mngoma (1997) worked on the lifestyles of black families in the Umlazi area of South Africa. The study revealed that black families did not view reading as a constructive activity and strongly rejected it. The home environment was not ready for reading and it was a school-imposed activity. Despite the fact that modern African societies are becoming more print-oriented, this community's had a tradition of communicating in oral modes. Oral tradition was defined by Moto (1986, p. 285) as "the totality of messages that society considers as having been inherited from its ancestors, which is transmitted orally from generation to generation. Oral tradition is a way of communication by telling and being told" (cited in Mngoma, 1997).

In a nutshell, Abu-Rabia and Yaari (2012) discussed that three things work together to influence students' reading achievement in a family learning environment, which were parents' expectations, available reading materials, and creation of learning opportunities at home.

The European education system has taken initiatives to inform education policies on the importance of a literate home environment by creating community readers. However, both home and school can reinforce each other to promote high literacy (European Commission, 2012; cited in Araujo & Costa, 2015). The report also pointed out that schools can provide sufficient materials for parents who may not make efforts to reduce scarcity of materials and, thus, increase educational opportunities. Finally, it was evident

from research reports that reading motivation is substantially influenced by the home environment.

### **Availability of Books at Home**

The number of books possessed at home along with parental involvement was also noted as ways of creating positive home environments for achieving reading literacy (Notten & Becker, 2017; Yang et al., 2018). Several researchers (Evans et al., 2010; Notten & Becker, 2017; Wiescholek et al., 2017; Zimdars et al., 2009) recognised the number of books at home as cultural capital. According to the concept of cultural capital, 'books' at home excluding magazines, newspapers, and schoolbooks are considered as indicators of culture. Jacobson and Lundberg (2000) documented that "...the single most powerful predictor of reading skill is the number of books at home" (p. 283). Swalender and Taube (2007) stated that family cultural context is crucial for reading and learning to read. They also focused on the number of books at home including the time spent by parents on them as positive family backgrounds for reading ability. The study (Notten & Becker, 2017) indicated the parental level of education and the number of books as cultural capital and mentioned that books reflected parents' reading attitudes that are transmitted from one generation to the next. However, some other research recognised the number of books as cultural capital but the educational level and income of the parents as social capital (Fan, 2014; Zimdars et al., 2009).

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement Literacy Study also found a direct link between the number of books at home and children's

reading development (Teaneck, 2008). The study also mentioned that the home was ready for reading through these books and that the child enjoyed the reading. Another study (Roulstone et al., 2011) emphasised the importance of having a large number of books at home as a predictor of a child's expressive vocabulary at the age of two. Acknowledging the concerns about the number of books at home, Morni and Sahari (2013) suggested constructing a small library at home full of books, magazines and newspapers for children's leisure time reading to implant reading habits. A good number of books at home increase reading not only motivation and habits and three more school years for the children who do not have them, irrespective of parents' education, occupation, and class (Evans et al., 2010). On the other hand, Villiger (2012) mentioned that parents' educational background is suggestively connected with the number of books at home. The researcher also argued that the more books students had at home, the higher reading comprehension they achieved. Ultimately, they enjoyed reading and achieved good grades.

A study (Elley, 1992) conducted in 32 countries of different continents to interpret the achievement level of reading literacy found that 50% of the 9-year-old students from different countries like Canada (Bc), Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, and Sweden had more than 100 books. On the other hand, 30% of students in Botswana, Cyprus, Greece, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe had the same number of books. The study reported that the students who achieved a higher score had more books to choose from except in Hong Kong.

After a long time, in a different study (Evans et al., 2010) on 27 countries, it was noted that more books belong to the rich nations owing to the well-educated people living there. The study added that 18% of Americans had more than 500 books and the average was 112 which was similar to the world average though the average was less than expected given America's high GNP and well-educated family context. It was revealed that book ownership in Western Europe varies greatly and people growing up under Communism in Eastern Europe had neither more nor fewer books than would be expected based on their GNP and ancestors' backgrounds.

### **Shared Reading**

Reading with children is a way of developing cognitive, social, and cultural development. Shared reading has been viewed as an important means of supporting young children's literacy. Several researchers (Baker et al., 1997; Janes, 2008; Mathangwane & Arua, 2006; Miles, 2016) consistently endorsed the positive effect of shared reading on reading motivation. Researchers mentioned that shared reading could be formal or informal and could occur inside the home by parents or outside the home by teacher. It might be as simple as discussing questions or reading together as an encouraging activity for lifelong reading habits and educational development. However, some researchers (Baker, 2003; Snow, 1994) stated that parents are the most responsible and reliable people for this activity from a child's infancy. Their attitude, behavior, and practices make a difference for the child. On the other hand, another study (Hoyne & Egan, 2019) stated that it did not matter who was reading to a child. The critical factor was- regularity- an extended time for reading which encourage children's development through regular page-turning,

making them listen to stories, asking questions about the stories, and sharing experiences in terms of the stories offering stimulating activities for their engagement for cognitive development. Furthermore, shared reading has also impacted language (vocabulary, comprehension) development, socio-emotional development (secure attachment, peer relations, learning about social situations, and maternal sensitivity), school readiness, numeracy skills, and literacy instruction. In the same way, other researchers (Morni & Sahari, 2013; Snow, 1994) claimed that storybook reading is not an event as it is a situation where relevant experiences are happening. The important thing is the reader and child's conversations about the reading, their interactions, arguments, or opinions, and maintaining these as an inexpensive and enjoyable activity for reading literacy.

In addition to these, Baker et al. (1997) pointed out that there was a correlation between socio-economic conditions and facilities of reading opportunities at home, like reading a book every day or almost every day. The study further noted that when the family's socio-economic condition is good, children love to read, and reading is viewed as entertainment over skills and daily use. Gradually this joint or shared reading makes a child an independent reader. On the other hand, children from low-income families prefer considering reading as a skill rather an enjoyable activity or a daily requirement. Alternatively, a study conducted in the European countries recommended that a high frequency of shared reading before the beginning of primary education is related to higher reading achievement, both for children from high and low parental education backgrounds while considering some other social contexts too. (Araujo & Costa, 2015).



Some other researchers (Bano et al., 2018; Farver et al., 2006) reported shared reading as a significant strategy to improve children's reading habits and literacy skills. Furthermore, reading with parents enriches students' fluency in reading with due expressions and is also enjoyable for students. There is a relationship between parents' interactions with storybook reading and children's reading development (Lynch et al., 2008). The study discussed the Vygotskian social constructivist perspective related to the interactions of children and parents through reading. It was revealed that parents worked in the zone of proximal development so that children could act out more complex behaviors that might not be done on their own. Through this higher level of interaction and thinking, children developed higher-level skills like hypothesising, predicting, and understanding the relativity of their own perspectives.

### **Early Reading and Home Environment**

A good number of researchers demonstrate a correlation between the early years of a home literacy environment and children's later reading attitudes and behavior (Baker et al., 1997; Klein & Kogan, 2013; Senechal, 2006). A study showed that the transmission of cultural capital in the early home environment stimulates a child from the beginning of life in the socialisation process and their reading behavior (Notten & Becker, 2017). Moreover, another study (Yeo et al., 2014) asserted that preschool children's reading competencies and motivation depend on parents' active involvement with reading. The authors declared that '...parent-child engagement in reading is the strongest predictor of children's emerging reading abilities and their reading motivation' (p. 807).

Moreover, early exposures basically in children's preschool years through reading by their parents, improved students' reading comprehension in later grades (Aram et al., 2013). These results were previously acknowledged by Abu-Rabia (2000). A similar finding revealed that early years of reading with parents had a great impact on children's reading success in grade four (Araujo & Costa, 2015) and expressed). In the same way, Collins and Svensson (2008) also recognised the consequences of early literacy in the progress of reading abilities.

Early stimulation in the family environment is responsible for preschool literacy such as oral language, letter knowledge, reading ability, and comprehension (Bracken & Fischel, 2008). And the fluency in the early years helps to be successful in life, and they are advanced for those students who aren't fluent (Mullen, 1998). Furthermore, early literacy exposures helped children achieve higher scores in reading. The exposures could be through parents' encouragement, guidance, and access to good reading resources and environment at home (Huang et al., 2015). In addition, all these develop children's reading attitude and understanding. Children who cannot read in the early years of schooling are at severe risk of inadequate academic achievement and limited retention in school (Fletcher & Reese, 2005). According to the PIRLS 2016 report, it was found that students who had achieved higher reading abilities had three or more years of preprimary school education and also received parental encouragement in early literacy learning.

## **Library Visit**

Students' motivation for reading is stimulated by interdependent socio-cultural organisations, e.g., home, school, community, and diversified activities like library visits, shared reading, regular reading habits etc. Several researchers (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Morni & Sahari, 2013) asserted library visits as a home literacy activity that instills a positive impact on the home environment and literacy outcomes. Research also focused on parents' role in maintaining the home environment and pointed out that by making a small library at home, both parents and children could use it in their leisure time to read together to inculcate reading habits (Morni & Sahari, 2013). Furthermore, Heyman (2016) worked on influential factors in reading attitude and identified library visits as one of the important factors. The researcher mentioned that students were motivated to visit the library more frequently by families in which parents were more committed to getting involved.

However, research showed that despite parents' economic and educational deficits, library visits and other home facilities might impact students' academic skills (Bracken & Fischel, 2008). Alternatively, Baker et al. (1997) mentioned that due to the variation in economic status, frequencies of library visits vary, and library visits are more favoured by good economic families. Focusing on reading as a complicated cognitive process, Huang et al. (2015) articulated that the collections of school libraries directly influenced students' and faculty members' reading interests and reading habits. In addition, another research (Begum, 2007) noted that library visits used community resources and proclaimed that library visits were positively associated with reading performance.

A number of researchers (Evans et al., 2010; Hoyne & Egan, 2019; & Ring et al., 2016) acknowledged that libraries played a vital role in nurturing reading enjoyment. In one research (Ring et al., 2016), the importance of libraries was articulated as ‘really important ... to encourage reading and a love for reading’ (p. 83).

### **Children’s Attitude Towards Reading**

Attitudes towards reading are usually defined as feelings related to reading. Children’s attitudes toward reading can be constructive, or it can be situation-oriented. A positive attitude en route to reading refers to the love to read, willingness to read, and enjoyment of reading. On the other hand, a poor reading attitude insists children avoid reading or reject to read together or read when needed (Mullen, 1998). Parents have to be conscious and boost their children’s positive attitudes toward reading from a very early age (Lee & Yeo, 2014; Soiferman, n.d).

Regarding ‘attitude’, Henning (2013) stated that, "... ‘attitude’ refers to the way the student feels or thinks when they are in school, about how they as an individual perform in school, and how they feel about learning" (p. 5). The environment is an important factor in influencing children's positive attitudes toward reading (Lee & Yeo, 2014), which was also acknowledged by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) thought that children develop from multiple environments that can be immediate as family and wide-ranging as culture.

Many studies (Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012; Morni & Sahari, 2013) conferred on positive home experiences to build children's progressive attitudes towards reading. In families where children have the experience of working or playing with books before they start learning to read and write, the children show intrinsic motivation to read. Even if the children listen to stories from their parents or express themselves to their parents orally or read to their parents, these all enriched their language and reading skills. On this point, Jackson (2008) mentioned that in the home environment children who observed their parents as frequent readers showed a positive attitude to reading for enjoyment and became lifelong learners (cited in Morni & Sahari, 2013).

Moreover, in families where children interact with their parents every day and parents show their expectations to the children, the children display a positive attitude towards reading (Ozturk et al., 2016). Along with family and parents' involvement, several researchers expressed the importance of parent-school close partnership or better relationships, which eventually would promote children's positive attitude toward reading, attendance, and academic achievements. (George & Mensah, 2010; Miles, 2016; Oates, 2017).

However, children's interest in reading emerges from the experiences and opportunities of exploring or interacting with different kinds of printed materials from a very early age (Baker et al., 1997; Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Justice & Ezell, 2000; Makin, 2006; Roskos et al., 2003; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). Several studies (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Quilliams & Beran, 2009) stated that a positive

environment and support from family as well as the school are not always sufficient for influencing children's reading attitude; moreover, children's own interest in reading and positive approach towards learning encourage parents to provide a positive environment and ultimately achieve academic success. The studies also claimed that preschoolers' perceived interest in reading had a strong relationship to children's language and literacy outcomes (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994).

Children's reading attitudes are increased by observing their parents' reading habits of books, newspapers, and other materials (Rasinski et al., 1994). If parents inspired their children and arranged reading materials, and ensured supportive environments at home, the children's affirmative attitude toward reading would also increase with good understanding. In addition, children's exposure to reading activities, story-telling activities, and books before entering school ensures their higher scores in reading. The study also acknowledged peers' role as necessary as parents or teachers to build their positive attitude and motivation toward reading by following their attitude, behavior, and interaction processes along with their peers (Huang et al., 2015).

### **School Environment for Reading**

Schools play an important part in all facets of a child's development (Meece, 2006). Even parents' active involvement with school or any kind of programme related to school showed a positive relationship with home and school and ensured children's better performance (Heaton, 2016; Khan, 1996).

Daniels (2010) talked about the role of the school and the teacher as a contextual factor of motivation. She argued that though the inspiration comes from one's own drives, it requires a specific environment in school. The author mentioned, "Teachers cannot make someone motivated, but they can create motivating learning environments" (Daniels, 2010, p. 25). The author also mentioned that students are motivated when they feel attached to the class and school, have the skill required to complete the challenge of the school, and have the belongingness to the school and the right to choose the content themselves. Researchers discover that if the teaching-learning process influences the students to be active in the classroom and the content and the curriculum is relevant to them and their feelings, thoughts, fears, and anxieties are addressed, the students feel motivated. In company with Daniels's notion of creating a learning environment, Gambrell (1996) also pointed out that the environment teachers create in the classroom helps students enhance their reading behaviours and habits. Along with the classroom environment, parents' and teachers' cooperation plays an active role in cultivating students reading awareness and habits. Family and school can provide different facilities to encourage students' reading motivation (Yusof, 2010).

Moreover, research revealed that peers' influence has an impact on the academic achievement of children from pre-primary students to adolescents (Calvo-Armegnol et al., 2009; Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Cooc & Kim, 2016; Hanushek et al., 2003; Justice et al., 2011; Mashburn et al., 2009). It was argued that motivation for reading comes through peers' teamwork, group projects, partnership, and cooperation that increase

reading comprehension. Even struggling readers get support and inspiration from their peers (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Yang et al., 2018).

Students' reading motivation comes from family or parents and from teachers, who play a significant role. Sometimes students feel more motivated when they are encouraged by their teachers. As an example, Epstein (1995) mentioned students' eagerness in motivation and stated that "if children feel cared for and encouraged to work hard in the role of student, they are more likely to do their best to learn to read, write, calculate, and learn other skills and talents and to remain in school" (p. 82).

Along with students, parents also feel exhilarated to involve with school when the school welcomes them. Their feeling of responsibility and sufficiency of confidence in skills also matters here, which ensures a positive relationship between the school and the parents. Finally, parents are active in their duties to their children and confident about their capacities perform those duties. As a result, they contribute more in accomplishing the school goals compared to the parents who do not feel involved in that way (Henning, 2013). In conjunction with this, the study showed a remarkable impact of parents' involvement with school even more than their economic status, level of education, race, and volunteering experience when school authority showed a positive attitude and arrangements with parents (Simonds, 2012).

School as well as classroom environment foster students' multiple developments. Literature suggested that the school and classroom environment make students competent



citizens of the country and foster their academic development. Schools can provide the appropriate environment to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills and develop personalities to make students politically aware and socially responsible (Homana & Barber, 2007). The environment of the classroom requires additional attention to students' learning achievement. Research revealed that the social and interpersonal processes of the classroom ensure students outcome. Teachers' care and support ensure students' engagement and reportedly enhance their achievement (Meece, 2006). The researcher also added that schools and the family and peer group are among the most influential social drivers for learner development. School libraries and good books were also considered essential components motivating students to read (Heneveld & Craig, 1996; Huang et al., 2015).

According to ecological system theory, child development recommends the quality of interactions between the child and the elements in the child's surrounding environment, which influences the ultimate developmental outcomes (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). A classroom is one of the micro-contexts where students and teachers interact. Reyes et al. (2012) argued that "The quality of social and emotional interactions in the classroom between and among students and teachers creates the classroom emotional climate. Classroom emotional climate (CEC) is expected to influence learning outcomes for students" (p. 1). Additionally, students feel more motivated in the classroom when the classroom climate is supportive (Yang et al., 2016). In another study, Ryan and Patrick (2001) stated that students' perception of teachers' care and support acts as a significant predictor of their cognitive involvement in the classroom (cited in Yang et al., 2016).

As reading motivation varies from student to student, teachers need to take specific steps to nurture and guide students' reading motivation. It is also observed that the highly motivated students are proficient than the students with little or no motivation. Considering this issue, inspiring students to read for enjoyment and with the ambition to be a lifelong reader is a critical task of a teacher to make a successful reader (Stenger, 2010). Teachers need to use different reading activities and quality instructions in the classroom to cultivate students' reading motivation and guide them for reading with interest. Various activities and instructions influence students' engagement and learning while reading (Huang et al., 2015; Pianta et al., 2008; Yang et al., 2016). Teachers also need to remember their role in maintaining the quality and quantity of activities to improve students reading. Discussing this, the researcher also acknowledged students' lack of interest and motivation as obstacles for teachers to develop students reading skills (Huang et al., 2015).

Research revealed that students have an optimistic inspiration and learning outlines when they are encouraged to understand, learn, cultivate their talents, become skilled and study for knowledge. On the other hand, if students are focused on showing their capability and study only for gaining good grades, they feel motivated for the time being, but ultimately their motivation lessens over the time under these circumstances (Meece, 2006). Moreover, school context influences students' engagement and motivation (Daniels & Steres, 2011). The researchers added that student activities, their interactions with peers, adults, and the learning environments contribute to motivating them. Students' meaning-

making and comprehension skills are also influenced by their social and cultural variables.

### **Community Involvement in Education**

Community involvement has a significant role in education. According to research, like all other social organisations such as schools and families, the community has a dignified responsibility to educate children. No one is solely responsible for the children's education, and everyone works together to achieve the goal of education (Epstein, 2010; Uemura, 1999). Before discussing community involvement in education there is a need for exploring the definition of community and community participation as found in research literature. According to Uemura (1999), 'community' is defined as "...characteristics that the members share, such as culture, language, tradition, law, geography, class, and race" (p. 1). So, people's language, regular practices, habits, and customs are noted as community characteristics in a location.

Bray (1996) pointed out three different types of communities, 1. A geographic community to its members' places of residence, such as a village or district; 2. Ethnic, racial, and religious communities whose membership is determined by ethnic, racial, or religious identification; and 3. Communities based on shared family or educational interests, such as parent groups or similar organisations based on shared family concerns (Uemura, 1999).

In addition, another study (Shaeffer, 1994) discussed community participation clarifying different degrees or levels of it. The author mentioned seven different definitions of community involvement. These are including involvement through simple service usage, such as enrolling children in school or visiting a primary health care institution; involvement through monetary, material, and labor contributions; involvement in school-based parent-teacher meetings implies passive acceptance of decisions made by others; participation in the form of consultation on a specific problem; involvement in the delivery of a service, frequently in collaboration with other actors; involvement as assigned power implementers; and participation in actual decision making at all stages, including issue identification, opportunity assessment, planning, implementation, and assessment. Shaeffer (1994) pointed out that the first four descriptions used the word involvement and suggesting largely passive collaboration, whereas the last three items used the word participation, implying a much more active role (cited in Uemura, 1999).

Children's expectations and goals are influenced by community practices and culture, as well as family customs and beliefs (Klemencic et al., 2014). It is essential to create and maintain a constructive culture in the family and community to boost students' academic achievement. A study showed that school-community partnership is essential to building a good relationship with parents (Simonds, 2012). This collaboration between school, family, and community is referred to by a variety of terms, including parental involvement, parental partnership, school-family relations, educational partnership, and so on. However, 'partnership' is increasingly being used to shape all of these together to be presented meaningfully. And the purpose of this partnership is to work together to

support each other to contribute to students' learning, motivation, and development (Driessen et al., 2005; Klemencic et al., 2014; Smit et al., 2007; Stenger, 2010).

Research (Epstein, 2010) found that school, family, and community partnerships have multiple reasons to cooperate. These can work for improving the school programme and school climate, provide family services and support, increase parents' skills, connect families with school and with the community and help teachers in their work. Moreover, when parents, teachers, students, community members and others observe one another as partners in education, a 'caring partnership' forms around students and works for the success of the students when in school and even in future. Additionally, this partnership gives most students a positive perception of the importance of school, being hard-working and active, being helpful to one another, and the thought of imagination and hanging about in their institution. Improving students reading achievement research focused on reading habits and mentioned that all the stakeholders need to be aware of their role and had to facilitate books for reading by ensuring due environment at home as well as schools (Bano et al., 2018).

Mentioning the numerous benefits of stakeholders' participation in school, another study (Ferlazzo, 2011) relating a long history of the school for developing and extending the relationship among all-inclusive stakeholders of the community. The study noted that a school superintendent, L. J. Hanifan (1916) used the term 'social capital' about 100 years ago, highlighting the social and economic value of constructing relations with all the stakeholders (cited in Ferlazzo, 2011). Furthermore, another study (Atuhurra, 2016)

acknowledged the importance of community involvement in school operations and mentioned that,

...to achieve cognitive development through universal primary education policies in some countries of SSA, active participation of all stakeholders will be required – more critically, local communities need to be involved in school operations, at least, to ensure local ownership and effective monitoring. (p. 243)

The benefits of community participation are a strategy for increasing access to education and enhancing quality education (Ismael et al., 2016). Research findings also showed that community resources like libraries, zoos, and museums were positively associated with reading performance (Begum, 2007; Jordan et al., 2002). Furthermore, a community library helps its members improve their quality of life through sharing thoughts and ideas, developing networks, and encouraging mutual support among the family, school, and society (UNESCO, 2017).

Bray (2001) defined partnership as the heart of any education programme to make it successful while referring to the World Forum on Education for All-EFA (1990) and the Dakar Framework of Action (2000). The declarations have emphasised partnerships at all levels, including community partnerships to provide basic education to all. Furthermore, besides educational development, community participation in education also supports and upholds the community's culture, tradition, knowledge, skills, and heritage (Aref, 2010).

The study (Aref, 2010) identified barriers to community involvement in educational development as incapability to analyse the changing socio-cultural dimensions of the educational system, lack of understanding of the policy process and lack of access to information (p. 2). It is also worth noting that community participation is a process that embraces the notion of improving the environment, services, educational quality, and the

development of society. However, when family, school, and community partnership share common goals and missions for children's education and development, it is more likely to be successful than the partnership with separate goals and missions (Epstein, 1987).

### **Reading Performance: Gender Perspective**

Education research is also concerned with gender differences in students' reading abilities. In Western countries, studies reveal that girls are more competent readers than boys across different countries and languages (Elley, 1992; Mullis et al., 2012; Mullis et al., 2017; Ozturk et al., 2015). A study in the eastern education system and cultural context reported by King and Ganotice (2014) claimed that boys in the Philippines had lower motivation than girls (Yang et al., 2016) which was similar to the western perspective. The study conducted in Abu Dhabi identified gender as a significant predictor of reading motivation for achieving reading literacy. The study argued that girls performed better in reading than boys in Abu Dhabi, though the study accepted the social and cultural connotations of the country (Yang et al., 2018). Moreover, it was evident that boys have a poorer study habit than girls, which is also considered to determine the gender gap in reading achievement (Houtte, 2004).

According to another study that was conducted on 32 educational systems (Elley, 1992), girls achieved higher levels than boys in reading competencies. The study showed that girls outperformed the boys in the narrative domain and showed a modest performance in the document domain. Furthermore, the study pointed out that girls performed better than boys in countries where formal instructions begin at the age of five. Another study found

that cultural expectations are reflected in the motivational processes of the students (Baker & Scher, 2002). It is also stated that girls showed more positive attitudes than boys (Baker & Scher, 2002; Logan & Johnston, 2009; Martınez et al., 2008; Swalander & Taube, 2007; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) and performed better in reading. Furthermore, girls were found to be more positive in recreational, academic, and all other types of reading than the boys (Martınez et al., 2008). In addition, boys preferred to read comics and amusing books while girls preferred reading adventures (Xia et al., 2019).

Another study discovered that beginning readers had positive attitudes toward reading regardless of their gender, ethnicity, or income (Baker & Scher, 2002). Young students' social and behavioral skills are an essential resource for school success in terms of cognitive tests or teacher evaluation. A study showed that girls possessed advanced skills and continued their success from elementary to college-level (DiPrete, 2012).

Gender stereotypes are another concerning area of gender performance in reading achievement. The study revealed that parents, teachers, peers, and students' own beliefs about gender roles influenced students' attitudes, behaviors, and expectations about reading motivation. Gender stereotype views asserted that reading was for girls and mathematics was for boys (Jacobs & Eccles, 1992; Plante et al., 2013; Retelsdorf et al., 2015; Wolter et al., 2015). This kind of view on reading also influences students' own interests, efforts, and self-concept. Teachers are one of the key stakeholders in transmitting expectations and developing students' self-concept of abilities (Pesu et al., 2016). Their traditional beliefs demotivated boys to develop their reading abilities and,



consequently, accounted for their underachievement in reading. On the other hand, teachers' egalitarian views motivated girl students to be more competent in reading from preschool to primary school (Wolter et al., 2015). Parents' encouragement had a stronger effect on reading motivation for the boys than for the girls, whether it was motivation through self-efficacy. The study argued that girls might be vulnerable in terms of traditional socialisation practices. The study further added that in the socialisation practices girls were dependent and they had interpersonal relationship skills, whereas boys were independent, and their accomplishments were what mattered to them (Xia et al., 2019).

### **Book Gifting Programme**

Gifting books to both children and parents encourage reading, builds a positive culture of reading in the family, nurtures early reading in children, and develops children's language and emotional development. In Western countries like the United States and Europe, book gifting programmes have successfully run and effectively instigated reading habits in families with young children (Auger et al., 2014; Moore & Wade, 2003; Vanobbergen et al., 2009). Gifting books to families is recognised as a noteworthy strategy to provide an early reading environment linked to language development for toddlers and preschool children and it has a positive effect on maternal beliefs about reading (O'Farrelly et al., 2018; Wade & Moore, 2000).

Through various examples, these awareness-raising programmes encouraged parents and preschool teachers, and other people who work with children to develop a reading culture

(Fletcher & Reese, 2005). Children also realised the importance of reading and their parents' attitude to reading when they notice their parents' visiting libraries and checking out books, presenting and receiving books as gifts, and sharing and exchanging books with friends (Morni & Sahari, 2013).

Children's positive reading attitude is also motivated by receiving books as gifts (Partin & Gillespie, 2002) and purchasing or borrowing books from the libraries (Heyman, 2016). So, the book gifting process accompanied parents with the support and guidelines to interact with the children strategically and effectively to foster children's development in reading. On the other hand, children are also motivated through various means of exposures to books.

### **Amount of Time for Reading**

Spending a certain amount of time reading is also an indicator of reading motivation. A study showed that there is a relationship between the reading environment and the amount of time students spend on reading. An appropriate reading environment at home with ample reading materials and parents' positive attitude towards reading affects students' reading habits (Morni & Sahari, 2013).

Several studies (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie et al., 1999; Miyamoto et al., 2017; Troyer et al., 2018) asserted that reading motivation, reading achievement, and reading comprehension are facilitated by the time of reading. Furthermore, studies on the relationship between the reading amount and motivation revealed a positive correlation

between intrinsic motivation and reading amount (Troyer et al., 2018; Schafner & Schiefele, 2016; Schafner et al., 2013; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). In a study (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), it was mentioned by the researcher that students read a maximum of 2 hours per day on school nights and 4 hours on off nights as reading for pleasure, except school readings and homeworks. But no analysis mentioned the specific amount of time a good reader should regularly spend on reading.

### **2.3 Section Two: Literature on Reading in the Context of Bangladesh**

This section mentioned the context of the primary education system of Bangladesh, and it has also articulated the studies done in Bangladesh regarding reading from the government and non-government perspectives. In addition, the following sections discuss government policies and efforts related to reading. The whole section is divided into two major parts. Part one is about government policies and activities regarding reading; and part two is about reading projects and programmes initiated by non-government organisations.

#### **The Context of Primary Education in Bangladesh**

There are two ministries in the education system of Bangladesh. One is the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and the other is the Ministry of Education (MoE). The Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for secondary, vocational, and tertiary education in Bangladesh. On the other hand, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) is responsible for policy planning and management of primary

education while the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) is responsible for the implementation of primary education policies.

Furthermore, the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) is working for the professional development of the teachers and trainers through training and research to ensure the proper implementation of quality primary education in Bangladesh. In addition, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is working on the development and improvement of the curriculum and textbooks for primary education sector in Bangladesh. Moreover, NCTB provides instructional guidelines to the teachers to implement primary level textbooks through teachers' editions, teachers' guides, etc.

Bangladesh has been devoted to improving primary education since the country's emergence as an independent nation in 1971. In 1974, the government took over all the primary schools under the umbrella of the government which through the inception of the Primary Schools (Taking over) Act 1974. Since then, the government has drafted several acts and undertaken a number of initiatives to improve the primary education (BANBEIS, 1987). Later, in the 1990s, the government committed to various international frameworks while also taking different initiatives to implement these commitments in the educational contexts of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been committed to the Jomtien Declaration (1990), the Dakar Framework of Action (2000), and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2000). To achieve the targets of the declarations, the government has taken several initiatives. These were: the compulsory primary education act, nationalisation of primary schools, distribution of free textbooks on the first day of the school year, stipend programme for students, initiation of the national education

policy, competency-based curriculum, and ongoing professional development for teachers, to name a few (Education Watch, 2015).

However, along with all these initiatives, the Bangladesh government has made remarkable progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The government is presently focusing on the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals. According to SDG-4 2030, the goal for education is focused on quality Education. The Bangladesh government has also been committed to achieving the goal of quality education, which is also very similar to the goal of the major primary education development programme. The programme aims to provide quality education to all children in Bangladesh, from pre-primary to grade five, through an efficient, inclusive, and equitable education system working to achieve the quality education target (World Bank, 2018, p. 5). Though the government has focused on quality education, students' performance in the understanding domain (Education Watch, 2015) and the application domain (DPE, 2018) require much attention. There is no alternative to reading with comprehension for improving students' performance because they have to learn to read for first studying any subject (Schiefele et al., 2012). As a result, the focus of this study was on students' reading motivation in the social and cultural environment of Bangladesh.

### **Pre-Primary and Primary Education System of Bangladesh**

Primary education is the first stage of the formal education system, coming after one year of pre-primary education. It is free and compulsory in the government system of

Bangladesh. All 6+ years of children in Bangladesh must undergo primary education. Free and compulsory education is ensured by Article 17 of the Constitution of Bangladesh (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Bangladesh, 2019, p. 13). The duration of primary education is five years, together with a year of pre-primary education. In addition, by 2018, five years of primary education will be expanded to eight years (MoE, 2010, p. 6; World Bank, 2018). It is being implemented gradually. According to the National Education Policy 2010, 5+ years of children are enrolled in one-year pre-primary education, with an additional year planned for 4+ years (p. 4). The government declared in 2020 that the mentioned 4+ years would be extended from the beginning of 2021. In the first phase, it will start with 2,563 government primary schools. Gradually, it will cover all the schools in the next three to four years (The Financial Express, 2020). So, since 2021, two years of pre-primary education have been gradually implemented in the primary education system of Bangladesh.

## **Government Policies and Initiatives on Reading and Library Facilities**

### **The National Education Policy (NEP) 2010**

In the history of independent Bangladesh, the ‘National Education Policy 2010’ is the first education policy of the country. This policy is a milestone in the education system and a blueprint for the education system. The policy has guidelines for all education sectors, including pre-primary and primary education, following the directorial principles of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh and other documents like the UN Child Rights Convention. In developing this policy, the first education commission, the Kudrat-i-Khuda Commission (1972), of independent Bangladesh was particularly

given priority. Besides the other objectives, the education policy desires to ensure effective and accurate Bangla language teaching followed by avoiding rote learning and fostering students' thoughtfulness, imagination, and desire for inquisitiveness (MoE, 2010, pp. 2-3). To do so, students need to internalise the materials they go through which requires the habit of reading.

The NEP 2010 focused on ensuring pre-primary education to create an environment that physically and mentally prepares young children to come to school, adjust, and cultivate their inner qualities to be good souls. The policy prioritised marginalised and disadvantaged people, including girls in primary school, to ensure their rights and reduce dropout rates. In addition, the NEP 2010 recommended community participation in the development of the school environments and parents' active participation through a working committee including all other stakeholders to improve the quality of primary education (MoE, 2010, p. 55). However, reading skills and reading for pleasure were not mentioned specifically in the pre-primary and primary education chapter of the Policy except in the section on library.

### **Library facilities of Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MoWCA)**

The Shishu Academy, a leading organisation for children's development under the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs is working to develop children's talent through proper care and training. With its vision and mission, the organisation works to develop children's latent talents, including creativity and benevolence to cultivate among them the spirit of the great liberation war, love of country, moral education, discipline,

and a sense of responsibility. One of the organisation's significant tasks, among others, is to create, print, and publish children's literature. Bangladesh Shishu Academy has a library in each of the country's 64 districts, as well as six more upazilas coordinated by the central library. The academy organises several curricular activities, including the library facility. Shishu Academy has published more than 965 books so far, according to its annual report 2020–2021. In the fiscal year (2020–21), the academy sold books that were priced BDT 90,02,871 which included general books, children's magazines, and books for children about the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Bangladesh Shishu Academy, 2020). But the total number of copies sold could not be traced out.

### **Library Activities of Public Library**

The Directorate of Public Libraries (DAL) under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs is in charge of 71 government public libraries around the country (DAL, 2020–21). Each district has a library, along with divisional and central libraries. The central public library collaborates with all libraries to promote an enlightened society that includes a reading culture. All district-level public libraries receive books from the central public library which are distributed according to requirements. However, the central library does not publish books on its own. They buy and distribute books of a wide range of genres. The total number of collections of all types of books found in the National Library is more than half a million (five hundred thousand). The number of processed usable books is two hundred thousand.



### **Mobile Libraries Activities in the Society**

The World-Literature Centre (Bishwo Shahitto Kendro) is working with the goal of creating opportunities to build a sufficient number of enlightened, effective, and highly valued people all over the country. The center aspires to unite and elevate the humans as a national power, while at the same time enlightening their minds through developing a culture of reading and thus improving people's habits of reading. With these view in mind, the Centre is running mobile library service which operates all over the country with more than 3200 spots and 76 library buses. It is engaged in book delivery and promoting cultural activities among the readers. The organisation itself has published about 400 books. It was mentioned in the National Education Policy (2010) that in making books available to students, in each union, one or more than one school would be made a center for mobile libraries (NEP, 2010, p. 49).

### **Reading in the National Curriculum of Primary Education in Bangladesh**

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) is responsible for developing the curriculum and textbooks for pre-primary to secondary level education in Bangladesh, which is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education (MoE). The board is also responsible for distributing textbooks, disseminating curriculum, and training the teachers to implement the curriculum. The primary curriculum was revised in 2011 (World Bank, 2018) in light of the National Education Policy 2010. Following the curriculum, the board has also developed teachers' editions, teachers' guides, and other supplementary materials for teachers. The reading component of the curriculum for the Bangla language and in the teachers' edition is described here.

Following the spirits and directives of the National Education Policy of 2010, the national curriculum for primary education, a competency-based curriculum, was revised in 2011. The curriculum specified a set of objectives as well as competencies for all subjects which are to be achieved by learners at certain grades. For each subject, a student is required to achieve a set of competencies at the end of grade five which are defined as 'terminal competencies'. Along with other competencies, reading skill was also focused on in both the Bangla and English languages curriculum documents (NCTB, 2011).

Reading is one of the fundamental skills for learning a language. This study looked at the national curriculum to review how this specific skill was addressed in different parts of the curriculum. It was found that reading skill was defined and detailed clearly with specific, measurable terminal competencies to be achieved by the end of grade five. For example, one terminal competency is 'students will be able to read with clear, accurate, and standard pronunciation' (NCTB, 2011, p. 5). It was mentioned clearly in the content presentation method that each of the content should have four basic skills e.g. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, along with other skills, reading skills are mentioned to be evaluated in the evaluation process (NCTB, 2011).

### **Teachers' Edition**

The teachers' edition has followed a series of techniques to proceed teaching-learning in the classroom. Along with other instructions, the teaching process for reading was also mentioned in the teachers' edition (NCTB, 2016). The purpose of reading is mentioned as for both information and enjoyment. Furthermore, students are expected to be able to

communicate in the society using the specified skills in their daily lives. The relevant instructions regarding the kind of competencies and skills to be acquired as mentioned in the curriculum include relevant discussion of the content, picture description, review of the previous content, management of the lessons on prose or story, delivery of the poems, additional learning exercise and learning evaluation principle.

Furthermore, the teaching process for reading was mentioned particularly with model of approaching a reading text in three stages of activities such as before-reading activity (pre-reading), a reading activity(while-reading), and an after-reading (post-reading) activity. These three stages of dealing with a reading lesson are discussed in the teachers' edition in details. For example, in the before-reading exercise, it was indicated that teachers begin with assessing students' prior knowledge of the content, followed by an open-ended discussion of the the picture or other prompts relating to the reading text. In the reading activity, there were several steps for the teachers to follow to accomplish the various teaching processes of reading such as teachers' reading processes, the story explanation process, reading with students, support for the slow learner, group reading, etc. At the end of the process, the teachers' summarisation process and more independent and meaningful practice of the target language were emphasised (NCTB, Teachers' Edition, Bangla, 2016).

### **National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE): A Study on Reading**

National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh. It

provides training to primary school teachers and trainers for their professional development. The organisation carries out research in the field of primary education to ensure the quality of primary education. The organisation has done several studies on reading skills. A study on grade four students' reading abilities in Bangla was conducted to know the reading condition of the students at the primary level in Bangladesh. The study found that students in government primary schools of Bangladesh scored poorer (49%) in reading sentences from textbooks. They attained an even lower score (47%) in sentence reading sentences out of their textbooks. Students achieved a good score (77%) in reading poems but a had a low score (67%) in reading comprehension tasks, which was also selected from the textbook. The study further pointed out gender differences and mentioned that girls performed better in every domain of reading skills. In addition to that, urban students performed better in every domain of reading skills than rural students (NAPE, 2018).

In another study, students' demographic information was collected along with their reading fluency but the social and cultural context of reading was not addressed explicitly (Salahuddin et al., 2020).

### **Directorate of Primary Education (DPE): The National Student Assessment (NSA)**

The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) functions with the vision to ensure quality primary education for all the primary school-going children of Bangladesh (<http://www.dpe.gov.bd>). To do this, the team has designed and executed a variety of policies and programmes. In company with this, the organisation conducts training and research in the field of primary education with a view to improving the primary education

system of the country. This study discusses the National Student Assessment (NSA) report to review the Bangla language competencies of grade 3 and 5 students while focusing on reading skills particularly.

The National Student Assessment (NSA) programme was first initiated in 2006 to assess students' learning achievements in primary education by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) through the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE). The major purpose of the programme was to provide updated information to support policy implementation and plan for improving classroom instruction to enhance student learning (DPE, 2018). This programme has been conducted every two years to assess grade 3 and grade 5 students' competency in Bangla language and Mathematics. The factors associated with students' learning in Bangla language explored in this programme are reviewed as are relevant to the purpose of the study.

In the context of Bangla language, the test has been constructed covering the various domains of reading - mainly reading comprehension. The results indicated that one-fourth of the Grade 3 students (25% in 2013, 32% in 2015, and 26% in 2017) were falling below their existing grade and the rest three fourth of them were on and above the grade.

Surprisingly, among grade 5 students, more than three fourth (75% in 2013, 77% in 2015, and 88% in 2017) were below the level where they were supposed to be at (DPE, 2018).

From gender perspective, data showed overall gender parity in students' performance with very little differences found among grade 3 and 5 students in all the measured cognitive domains, including knowledge, comprehension, application, and higher-order thinking in NSA 2017, 2015, and 2013. It was also similar to another study (Das et al.,

2008) though it reported slightly better but statistically insignificant performance of girls than the boys.

This programme collected data on different demographic features associated with students learning achievement. It was found that parents' education (Das et al., 2008) and occupation, as well as the academic support provided at home by any family member or a house tutor were interlinked with students' performance. Additionally, students who spent only one to two hours in household work were demonstrating better academic performance than those who worked more than five hours (DPE, 2018). The study also found that facilities like separate study rooms, access to food, access to clean water, access to a sanitary latrine and having electricity at home had a positive correlation with students' performance (DPE, 2018).

Reading books other than texts reflected better performance in the NSA in terms of reading habits. Furthermore, when comparing study hours, the students who engaged for more hours in individual study performed better in the assessment (DPE, 2018). Urban students perform better in Bangla language than the rural students of grades three and five (DPE, 2018). Data revealed that students from Rangpur division scored the highest in Bangla language whereas Sylhet division was ranked at the bottom of the NSA 2017.

#### **The Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP4)**

The Fourth Primary Education Development Programme has intended to provide quality education to all the children of Bangladesh from pre-primary to grade five. The programme commenced from 2018/19 fiscal year and continued till 2022/23. PEDP4 is

working in three significant areas a) quality, (b) equitable access and participation, and (c) management, governance, and financing (World Bank, 2018).

This main programme aims to help children gain grade-level competencies outlined in the primary school curriculum to improve the quality of their education. The programme also works with the communities to ensure that all children have a safe and conducive learning environment to be engaged and continue their education. It has focused on providing supplementary reading materials (SRMs) to ensure reading habits to improve reading skills (World Bank, 2018). Though Professor Manzoor Ahmed recommended that PEDP 4 needs to have a special focus on reading skills, (The Daily Star, 2018: online), it was not much focused in the programme. Moreover, through this programme, approximately 13.5 million children under MoPME will be benefited directly. Before this PEDP4, three more phases were completed of the programme. Along with so many concerns about ensuring quality primary education, PEDP III has started transitioning from grade five to grade six. Furthermore, in PEDP III, students of ethnic groups received textbooks in their language from 2016 (GED, 2015).

### **Circular from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) on Reading**

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has disseminated a circular focusing on improving primary level students' reading and writing skills to ensure quality primary education as targeted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The circular emphasised regular students' practices of reading at home and school. It also emphasised different school activities like pronunciation competitions, book corners and

supplementary reading materials (SRM), one day one word, reading a paragraph at home as homework, etc. The circular of the MoPME is attached below:

একই নম্বর ও তারিখে প্রতিস্থাপিত হবে  
গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়  
বিদ্যালয় শাখা-২  
www.mopme.gov.bd

নং-৩৮.০০৮.০৩১.০০.০০.০২৩.২০১৪-৮০৫

তারিখ: ৩০ আশ্বিন, ১৪২৫  
১৫ অক্টোবর, ২০১৮

**পরিপত্র**

বিষয়: প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার গুণগতমান উন্নয়নের জন্য শিক্ষার্থীদের পঠন ও লিখন শৈলী (Reading & Writing Skills) বৃদ্ধিকরণ সংক্রান্ত নির্দেশনা।

প্রাথমিক শিক্ষাকে যুগোপযোগীকরণ সময়ের দাবি। এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নের জন্য সরকারের শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত সকল নির্দেশনা, গৃহীত কর্মসূচি এবং পরিকল্পনা বাস্তবায়ন অপরিহার্য। এজন্য প্রাথমিক শিক্ষার গুণগতমান বৃদ্ধি করতে হবে। বিভিন্ন বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনকালে দেখা গেছে, শিশুরা বাংলা ও ইংরেজি বিষয়ে যথার্থভাবে পড়তে, বলতে ও লিখতে পারে না। অথচ পরীক্ষায় তারা উত্তীর্ণ হয়ে উচ্চতর শ্রেণিতে ভর্তি হয়। কিন্তু ভাষাজ্ঞান অপরিণতই থেকে যায়। শিশুদের গুণগত শিক্ষা তথা ভাষা শিক্ষা, বাংলা ও ইংরেজি ভাষায় পঠন ও লিখন শৈলী নিশ্চিত করার জন্য নিম্নরূপ নির্দেশনা জারি করা হলো:

- ১.১ ভাষাজ্ঞান বৃদ্ধির জন্য নিয়মিত পাঠ্যভ্যাস অত্যন্ত জরুরী। প্রতিদিন বাংলা ও ইংরেজি বই থেকে একটি প্যারা/পৃষ্ঠা পঠনের (Reading) জন্য বাড়ির কাজ (Homework) দিতে হবে।
  - ১.২ প্রতিদিন এক পৃষ্ঠা হাতের লেখা বাড়ি থেকে লিখে আনার জন্য বাড়ির কাজ (Homework) দিতে হবে।
  - ১.৩ ক্লাসে প্রথমেই সংশ্লিষ্ট শ্রেণিশিক্ষক সকল শিক্ষার্থীকে আবশ্যিকভাবে পঠন (Reading) করাবেন।
  - ১.৪ শিক্ষকগণ নিজেরা শিশুদের সাথে উচ্চারণ করে পাঠদান করবেন। এতে শিক্ষার্থীদের উচ্চারণ জড়তা দূর হবে এবং প্রমিত উচ্চারণ শৈলীর সৃষ্টি হবে।
  - ১.৫ শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে উচ্চারণ প্রতিযোগিতার মাধ্যমে মনোবল বৃদ্ধির প্রয়োজনীয় উদ্যোগ নিতে হবে।
  - ১.৬ বুক কর্ণার ও এসআরএম-এর যথাযথ ব্যবহার নিশ্চিত করতে হবে।
  - ১.৭ প্রতিদিন প্রতি শিক্ষার্থীকে ন্যূনতম একটি বাংলা ও একটি ইংরেজি শব্দ পড়া, বলা ও লেখা শেখাতে হবে। এর ফলে শিক্ষার্থীদের ভাষার ভান্ডার বৃদ্ধি হবে এবং এতে শিশুরা বাংলা ও ইংরেজি ভাষায় কথা বলতে ও লিখতে পারবে।
  - ১.৮ উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসারগণ এ সংক্রান্ত প্রতিবেদন ও তথ্য-উপাত্ত সংরক্ষণ করবেন।
  - ১.৯ সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, ইন্সট্রাক্টর, জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার, বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালকগণ তাঁদের পরিদর্শন প্রতিবেদনে শিক্ষকদের বাংলা ও ইংরেজি বিষয়ে শিশুদের পাঠ্যভ্যাস সংক্রান্ত এই নির্দেশনার প্রতিপালন করবেন।
- ২। এই নির্দেশনা অবিলম্বে কার্যকর হবে।

  
মো: আকরাম-আল-হোসেন  
সচিব

**বিতরণ (কার্যার্থে):**

১. মহাপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, মিরপুর, ঢাকা।
২. মহাপরিচালক, বাধ্যতামূলক প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা বাস্তবায়ন পরিবীক্ষণ ইউনিট, শিক্ষা ভবন, ঢাকা।
৩. মহাপরিচালক, উপানুষ্ঠানিক শিক্ষা ব্যুরো, তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা।
৪. মহাপরিচালক, জাতীয় প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা একাডেমি (নেপ), ময়মনসিংহ।
৫. মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের একান্ত সচিব, প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়।
৬. জেলা প্রশাসক (সকল)।
৭. বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক (সকল)।
৮. উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসার (সকল)।
৯. জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার (সকল)।
১০. সুপারিনটেনডেন্ট, পিটিআই (সকল)।
১১. উপজেলা/থানা শিক্ষা কর্মকর্তা (সকল)।
১২. অফিস নথি।



## **Assessment of Reading**

### **National Level Examination**

The National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) prepares the question papers for the public examinations like Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE) for the grade five students (<http://www.nape.gov.bd/site/page/53d0acc1>).

For the Bangla language test of PECE, the class five test takers have to answer the first two questions by giving word meanings and answering questions based on a reading a passage taken from their textbook. Similarly, the students need to answer two additional questions based on their reading of another paragraph chosen outside the textbook.

Furthermore, students have to prepare five ‘Wh’ questions by reading a paragraph selected from the textbook or a similar context. Finally, students are to read eight lines of a poem from their textbook and answer three questions relating to the text. The structure of the question paper had the scope to answer the questions through reading passages.

However, these passages appear relevant to reading at some stage (PECE Bangla question paper, 2018), but it is unclear whether this examination could directly assess students’ reading skills. This procedure could be regarded as a summative evaluation, but reading requires formative assessment. The sample PECE Bangla question paper is attached herewith.

## প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা সমাপনী পরীক্ষা-২০১৮

বাংলা

সময়- ২ঘণ্টা ৩০মিনিট

পূর্ণমান-১০০

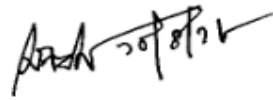
(১০০% যোগ্যতাভিত্তিক)

[প্রদত্ত অনুচ্ছেদ ( পাঠ্যবই থেকে ) পড়ে ১ ও ২ ক্রমিকের উত্তর লিখন।]

১. শব্দের অর্থ লিখন (৭টির মধ্যে ৫টি) ৫  
 ২. প্রশ্নের উত্তর লিখন (৩টি প্রশ্ন থাকবে এবং প্রতিটির উত্তর লিখতে হবে) ২+৪+৪=১০

[প্রদত্ত অনুচ্ছেদ (পাঠ্যবই বহির্ভূত) পড়ে ৩ ও ৪ ক্রমিকের উত্তর লিখন।]

৩. প্রদত্ত শব্দের অর্থ বুঝে শূন্যস্থান পূরণকরণ (৫টি শূন্যস্থান থাকবে) ১×৫=৫  
 ৪. অনুচ্ছেদ পড়ে প্রশ্নগুলোর উত্তর লিখন (৩টি প্রশ্ন থাকবে এবং প্রতিটির উত্তর লিখতে হবে) ৫×৩ = ১৫  
 ৫. ক্রিয়াপদের চলিতরূপ লিখন/ক্রিয়াপদের অতীত, বর্তমান ও ভবিষ্যত রূপ লিখন (৭টির মধ্যে ৫টি) ৫  
 ৬. অনুচ্ছেদ (পাঠ্যবই/সমমানের) পড়ে প্রশ্ন তৈরিকরণ (কে, কী, কোথায়, কীভাবে, কেন, কখন) প্রদত্ত নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী (৫টি) ৫  
 ৭. যুক্তবর্ণ বিভাজন ও বাক্য গঠন (৭টির মধ্যে ৫টি) ২×৫=১০  
 ৮. বিরাম চিহ্ন বসিয়ে অনুচ্ছেদ লিখন (পাঠ্যবইয়ের অনুচ্ছেদ) ৫  
 ৯. এক কথায় প্রকাশ (৭টির মধ্যে ৫টি) ৫  
 ১০. বিপরীত শব্দ লিখন/সমার্থক শব্দ লিখন (৭টির মধ্যে ৫টি) ৫  
 ১১. পাঠ্যবই এর কবিতা/ছড়া (যে কোন অংশ থেকে ৬-৮ লাইন) পড়ে প্রশ্নগুলোর উত্তর লিখন (৩টি প্রশ্ন থাকবে, প্রতিটি প্রশ্নের উত্তর লিখতে হবে, যার মধ্যে একটি কবিতাংশের মূলভাব থাকবে।) (২+৫+৩) = ১০  
 ১২. ফরম পূরণকরণ ৫  
 ১৩. দরখাস্ত/চিঠি লিখন ৫  
 ১৪. রচনা লিখন (৪টি বিষয় দেওয়া থাকবে। এর মধ্যে ১টির উত্তর দিতে হবে। ইঙ্গিত দেওয়া থাকবে ২০০ শব্দের মধ্যে লিখতে হবে।) ১০



**Assessment at School**

According to the national curriculum of Bangla language, reading assessment was mentioned in the curriculum for grade I to V students. Several language-based tasks and exercises have been proposed to measure reading and other skills in the classroom (NCTB, 2011). The teachers' edition of NCTB textbook was designed to ensure the children's active engagement and creativity with reading, and to do that; the learning

competencies were particularly (NCTB, 2016) focused. However, the practice can be described as an informal formative assessment as it is not recorded on the report card or anywhere else. There is no way to assess students' reading skills in the school's final exam or summative assessment. The 'pen and paper' test measures students' writing and reading skills. Still, the importance of all other language skills, specifically reading, is missing in this summative assessment (Mukut, 2012: Online). There were also a few additional reading-related activities from the MoPME, such as 'One Day One Word,' 'paragraph reading at home,' and so on. The question paper at school is developed with a similar structure to the PECE question paper. A full version of the question paper for the Bangla language in the PECE exam is attached in appendix 14.

#### **2.4 Reading Initiatives by Non-Government Organisations**

In Bangladesh, several international non-governmental organisations are working in the education sector to support the government's primary education system. This study reviewed some of the programmes undertaken by various international non-government organisations and projects and their initiatives to promote reading. The relevant NGO's programmes and projects are mentioned below:

##### **Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity (IEGRA) Project**

The BRAC Institute of Educational Development-BRAC University (BIED-BRACU) along with two other partners initiated the Innovation for Improving Early Grade Reading Activity (IEGRA) project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to improve the reading skills of grade I-III students. The project

started in June 2015 in seven Upazilas of the Khagrachori and Cox's Bazar districts in Bangladesh and continued up to December 2018. The IIGRA project aimed to improve early grade reading skills in Chittagong hill tracts by addressing issues, such as a lack of relevant and appropriate reading materials, insufficient reading assessment tools, insufficient teachers, low parental and community engagement, etc., addressed by USAID (Shimu et al., 2016). The project analysed the present reading situations of the students in early grades in the selected schools along with the background contexts of family, school, and community. The study explored parents' encouragement of children to read, reading storybooks to the children, the reading habits of family members, and the present status of reading skills to identify their relationship with reading.

The study showed in the end-line survey that the students of the experimental groups performed better in all the components (letter identification, familiar word reading, similar beginning words, decoding words, pseudowords, antonyms, sentence making, reading fluency, reading accuracy, and reading comprehension) of reading skills compared to the students of the controlled group (Shimu & Hossain, 2018). The project also initiated a student brigade to arrange reading sessions in the community and the students' home environments along with the mobile library.

### **Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ) Project**

Save the Children, a global organisation, has been working in Bangladesh to protect children's rights and help them reach their full potential. The Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ) project of Save the Children-Bangladesh, was

conducted with the collaboration of the Government of Bangladesh and supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to improve early grade reading skills from grades I-III in the Khagrachari district of the Chittagong Hills Tracts of Bangladesh from 2013–2017 (READ, 2017). The project conducted a baseline survey on primary school students' reading skills, followed by a situation analysis to understand the challenges faced by government primary school students in learning to read in 2015. The survey illustrated that language, socio-economic status, home literacy environment, especially available reading materials at home, home reading habits, and supportive literacy interactions with family members were the main sources of learning differences (Islam et al., 2018; SCI, 2018). At Chittagong Hills Tracts, students who spoke in languages other than Bangla were identified as barriers (Leer et al., 2017). The findings focus on the relationship between several components of reading skills and students' socio-economic conditions and environment. The project indicated that a positive home literacy environment (books at home; Leer et al., 2017; reading more than three family members; Islam et al., 2018) facilitated a student's becoming a competent reader.

The end-line survey found that the treatment group practised borrowing books from the library and reading with peers as their reading time increased (Islam et al., 2018). Along with other concerns, the project focused on print-rich classrooms and launched Community Reading Camps to ensure reading habits among students of the selected schools. The project used 155 supplementary reading materials approved by NCTB and provided to schools and community reading camps. The study was scaled up in different regions of Bangladesh.

### **Reading and Writing Instruction (RWI) Programme**

Room to Read is a global non-government organisation working in low-income communities to improve literacy and gender equality in education (Room to Read Bangladesh, 2018). Room to Read, Bangladesh launched the Reading and Writing Instruction (RWI) programme as a school-based intervention programme for early grades to support teachers teaching reading and writing in 2011–12. It has conducted a comparative study between primary schools under this RWI programme and other government primary schools across the country. The study revealed that both the students in the RWI programme and other students across the country were poor at reading comprehension. Controlled students were far below the target of the words read per minute compared to experimental students of the RTI programme in reading fluency. The study also found statistically significant links between parents' occupation (salaried employee) and father's literacy as factors influencing students' learning. Concerning gender differences, girls read more words and answered more questions than boys in experimental schools (Basher et al., 2014). This programme is working in four districts of Bangladesh for developing the reading habits of the early grade students. The programme also published 122 storybooks, established 5700 libraries, and distributed 1034000 copies of books to the primary schools under the programme along with the collaboration of the government of Bangladesh (Alom, 2020: online).

### **The Unlock Literacy Programme**

World Vision, an international non-government organisation, is working to help children, their families, and community members achieve a sustainable and bright future. World

Vision Bangladesh works with children aged 6 to 9 years old in the educational sector, from pre-primary through primary school. The Unlock Literacy programme of World Vision Bangladesh works with students of grades 1-3 to encourage and develop a love for reading and enhance students' reading comprehension (Room to Read Bangladesh, 2018) ability. The programme aims to improve the teaching methods used for dealing with classroom reading, including students, their parents, and community members who are following different activities outside of school. The programme focused on five reading skills to help students learn to read with comprehension. It also attempts to educate parents and teachers on their children's cognitive, social, and emotional development through various programmes (World Vision International, 2017). The project worked towards inspiring different stakeholders to create a positive learning environment in their homes and communities and thus, it sought to develop a culture of reading through a number of interventions (World Vision, n.d).

## **2.5 Gaps in the Literature**

The literature related to reading motivation in the western context found that they have done substantial studies in a diversified areas of reading motivation. On the other hand, studies in Bangladesh mostly covered the issues of reading skills and student competency in reading. The national assessment has been done in the government sector to examine students' reading competency and other aspects such as home environment and gender issues in Bangladesh. Alternatively, some non-government organisations have also covered research on reading competency to intervene in this area to improve students' reading skills.

While most non-government groups concentrated on reading skills, some looked into students' environments in their homes and communities, as well as reading facilities, to help them improve their reading habits. Similarly, in the national assessment system, the reading assessment was part of the documentation, but it was not found in the government research that there was limited or almost no scope to assess students' reading abilities in the formal assessment procedure in the regular classroom. Reading requires the motivation to be a competent and lifelong reader, and it is vital to motivate students as individuals and stimulate them through their environment. Therefore, motivation is equally important to develop a successful reader with a view to enhancing students' overall reading skills. There are minimal studies on the social and cultural perspectives of families, schools, and communities regarding the reading environment and practices. For that reason, this study explores the factors related to the family, school, and community that influence students' reading motivation and the policy concerns regarding this issue.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This section of literature review has presented a critical appreciation of the research literature available on reading motivation to deal with the issue from a global viewpoint. The chapter also offered a discussion of the published materials focusing the issue of reading motivation from the socio-cultural perspective of Bangladesh. Subsequently, the entire chapter addresses various points related to reading from both international and local perspectives attempted to discuss the gaps in the literature especially by situating the issue of motivation within the contexts of Bangladesh along with the socio-cultural realities of this soil.



## **Chapter Three: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. The theoretical framework was mentioned as the “blueprint” of a study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 12) that helps to direct the research questions, research design, planning for a literature review, and discussions of the findings (Imenda, 2014). The theoretical framework allows academicians and readers to understand the research perspective and the underlying elements researchers want to explore through research (Adom, Hussein, & Agyem, 2018). Theory supports the research to build a logical and rigorous connection among variables. As Begun (2018) mentioned, “...scientific theory is based on careful, reasonable examination of facts, and theories are tested and confirmed for their ability to explain and predict the phenomena of interest” (p. 1). Moreover, it helps to investigate the relationship between variables and explains the possible relationship of the independent and dependent variables. It deals with events where the results can be considered as possible outcomes of the independent variables (Cresswell, 2012).

This study focused on the reading motivation of the primary school students in the milieu where they live, interact with one another, and practice their regular activities concerning their cultural perspective. Since the study sought to explore the social and cultural environment of reading in various social organisations such as family, school, and community, as well as state-level policies and initiatives that are concerned with reading motivation, the present study used Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory

(1977) and Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory to develop the theoretical framework of the study.

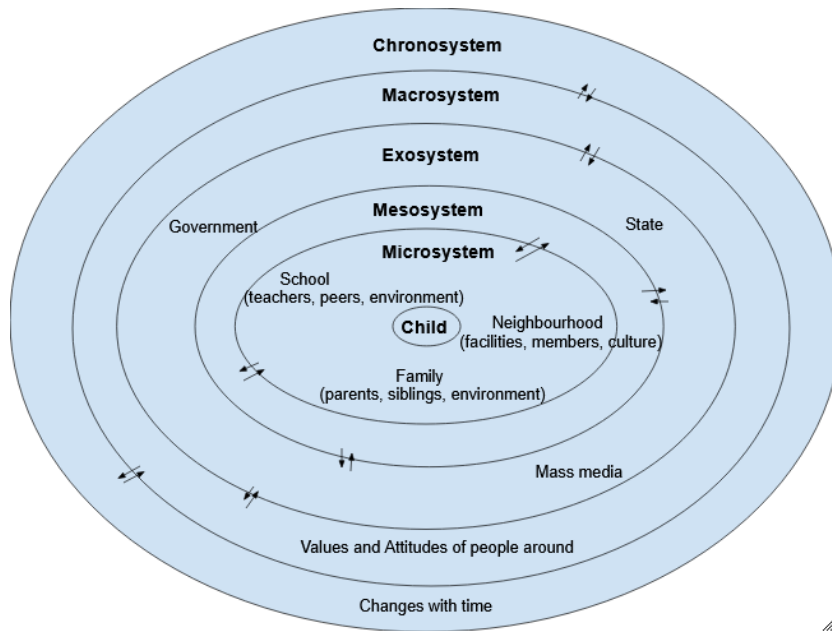
The ecological systems theory focuses on children's learning as well as cognitive development in different layers of the social setting, along with the interactions of the surrounding people and the cultural context of that environment (Begum, 2007; Darling, 2007). On the other hand, self-determination theory points out human motivation and personality that are influenced by the social and cultural environment, including inherent psychological needs as well as extrinsic motivational factors of a human being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Furthermore, certain environments and activities practiced by social organisations, such as family, school, and the community, have influenced motivation that focuses on students' choices and liberty (Lai, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The present study used these two theories to frame the study as both the theories linked with students' social environment in their surroundings, such as family, school, and community, and the interactions of these organisations, considering the cultural perspective. Furthermore, considering the positive interactions of the associated members, students' reading motivation is encouraged by their own interest and involvement (Baker, Mackler, & Serpell, 2001; Baker, Scher, & Mackler, 1997).

### **3.2 Ecological Systems Theory**

Urie Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist, described the ecological systems theory related to human development. According to this theory, a child's interactions with the environment in which they live contribute to the growth and nourishment of the child's

inner qualities. Bronfenbrenner also classified the environment into multiple layers that delineate the context of the child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). A diagram explaining the theory is presented below:

**Figure 3. 1:** *Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological Systems Theory*



Bronfenbrenner's theory categorised the context of multiple environments into five layers. These layers are organised close to the distance in interactions and influences on child development (Paquette & Ryan, 2011). The theory emphasised the culture and the current practices of society and focused on an approach where the interrelationship of different people with different layers of the environment is linked to a child's development (Darling, 2007). The layers are: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Bronfenbrenner defined these layers by considering everything from the immediate setting to the larger social context, along with the cultural circumstances of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The layers of the theory are described below:

A child's most intimate environment is a microsystem that directly impacts their development. Social organisations such as families, schools, neighborhoods, and communities are organised in this layer, and the child is closely linked to the relationships between members of these organisations. Bi-directional (Berk, 2000) communication impacts one another in this layer. Moreover, beliefs, practices, and attitudes reflected in the microsystem significantly impact children's beliefs, practices, and capacity development. In the second layer of the system, the mesosystem, a child's development occurs through the combined interactions of the different microsystem structures. Interconnections with parents, teachers, neighbors, family members, and the community influence child development considerably, with a remarkable impact.

Reading as a fundamental skill requires a positive attitude from a very early age of a child. This positive attitude develops from the stimulating environment they receive from their parents at home (Lee & Yeo, 2014; Wiescholek, Hilkenmeier, Greiner, & Buhl, 2017). Additionally, reading interest also depends on social interactions in the social context, particularly with parents in the family context (Ozturk et al., 2015). Moreover, along with child development, learning, and school success (Son & Morrison, 2010) the home environment also contributes to cognitive development, and socio-emotional development (Morrison & Cooney, 2001). In addition to the family environment, the school plays a vital role outside the home and parents. Focusing on various social contexts, school greatly influences reading motivation. The academic environment of a school, resources, and interactions with teachers and students influence reading

motivation and academic achievement (Zhang, Li, Yee, Park, Bohrnstedt, & Broer, 2020).

Furthermore, parents' involvement in schools or any school programme reflect a positive relationship between the school and home and ensure better performance (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Heaton, 2016; Janes, 2008; Khan, 1996). Family and school can provide different facilities to encourage students' reading motivation (Yusof, 2010). Even students are motivated when they feel connected to the class as well as the school; they have the skills required to compete for the school's challenge; and they have a sense of belonging to the school and the right to choose their contents (Daniels, 2010). Research revealed that partnerships among family, school and community support each other to contribute to students' learning, motivation and development (Smit et al., 2007; Driessen et al., 2005; Stenger, 2010).

The third layer, the exosystem, is a little distant from the child's intimate environment. The system may not be directly linked to the child but indirectly influences child development by impacting the microsystem. Parents' workplaces, extended family members, local government activities, etc., are the components of the exosystem. In addition, the macrosystem, the broadest layer, is a bit more outward than the child and still consists of essential principles that closely link the other three layers of the system. This system incorporates cultural values and practices of the society (Berk, 2000), which significantly impact the child.

Though the third layer is not directly linked to a child, the involvement of the extended family members and initiatives from the community contribute to the child's literacy development (Mathangwane & Arua, 2006). Moreover, it was also found that the culture, values, and customs of the family and the community influence children's expectations and aspirations (Klemencic, Mirazchiyski, & Sandoval-Hernandez, 2014). Therefore, creating and maintaining a constructive culture in family and community is essential to boosting students' academic achievement. Finally, the last layer, the chronosystem, was added on the theory later. This layer mentioned the changing of time and its effect on the whole system. The chronosystem consists of the time, developments, and policies that hold the entire system together (Härkönen, 2007). The government initiatives, policies regarding reading enhance students' interest in reading and improve their habits of reading with the demand of the time (MoE, 2010; MoPME, 2018).

Overall, this ecological systems theory mentions various interrelated societal layers directly or indirectly linked to child development in social and cultural perspectives in the frame of the changing time of different social events. All these layers have an overlapping and interdependent effect on an individual's life when considering these organisations' social and cultural context. The theory focuses on the quality and context of a child's growing environment (Härkönen, 2007). Similarly, the significant point of the theory is the interaction of a child with the members of the closest layer, which is interlinked with the multiple layers and their interactions within the system (Baker, Scher, & Mackler, 1997; Paquette & Ryan, 2011).

The framework of this study was constructed following the ecological systems theory to explore the reading practices of the primary school students from the very intimate layer, including families, schools, and communities, to the extended layer, including macrosystems and chronosystems, where the attitudes, practices, and socio-economic conditions of the parents are examined along with the implications of time. All the components of this research, which are outlined with an ecological system, have implied a widespread perspective in reconnoitering reading environment and reading motivation.

### **3.3 Self-Determination Theory**

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a theory of ‘motivation’. The theory discusses human motivation and personality which actually depend on and interact with social environment (Legault, 2017). SDT also discusses the influencing factors that facilitate or undermine the social and cultural aspects in response to people’s decisions and initiatives to foster their quality performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), “...self-determination theory has focused on the social-contextual conditions that facilitate versus forestall the natural processes of self-motivation and healthy psychological development” (p. 68). This theory is very much linked with the study as the study is aimed to explore the social and cultural environment for promoting young children’s motivation for reading.

This motivational theory was developed by the psychologists Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. Initially, it was started in 1970s and extended in 1985 and in 2000. They have extended the theory focusing on three basic psychological needs- competence,

relatedness, and autonomy. Here competence means individuals' experience of capacity on an activity. Autonomy means the freedom of an individual to take a decision by the person alone. And relatedness means the experience of emotion and secure involvements with others that are "...based on trust, caring, and mutual concern for one another's social and emotional well-being" (Sweet, 1997, p. 89).

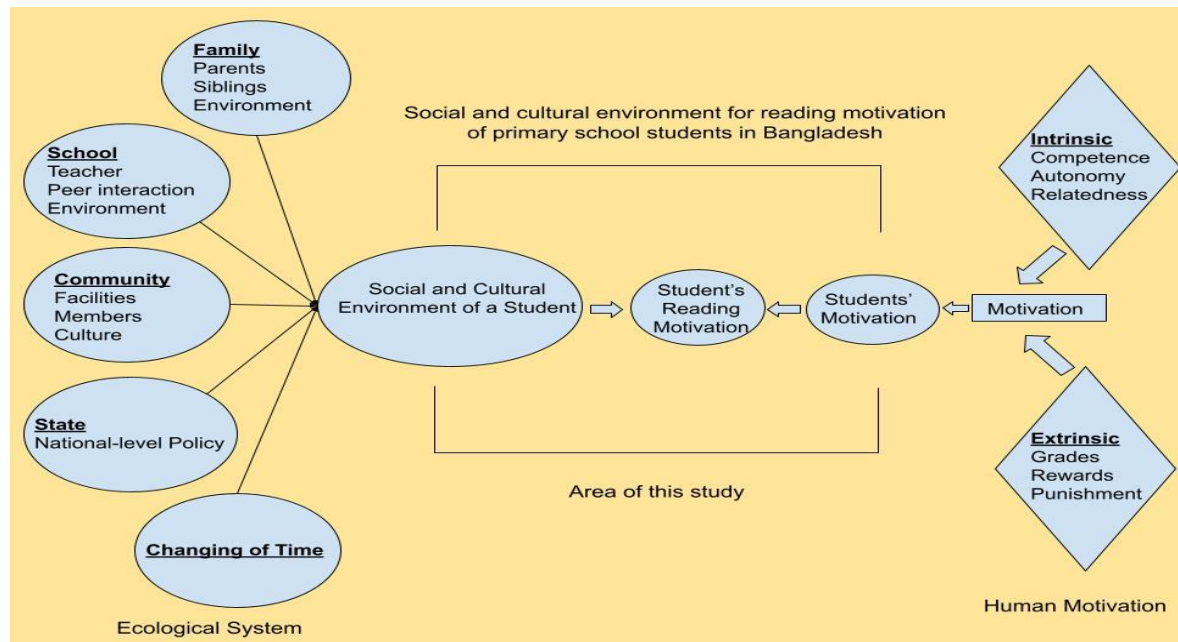
People or individual human beings involve in a dynamic interaction in the social environment where people need satisfaction (Legault, 2017). If these three psychological needs are fulfilled positively by the environment, individuals will perform with high motivation. These three psychological needs basically discuss intrinsic motivation. The theory also encompasses another type of motivation that is extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from one's mind that is individuals' own inspiration or interest. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation comes from an external source that may be a personal endorsement, a sense of choice, or complying with external control (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These forms of extrinsic motivation come from an external source that may be grades, rewards, punishments, or self-willingness to do a task. At the end, the theory focuses on human motivation, concentrating on the social and cultural context to emphasise the fulfillment of an individual's three basic psychological needs as well as other external factors to foster quality learning (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The study explored the reading environment in the social and cultural context of the primary school students, relating their intrinsic and extrinsic motivational facilities.



### 3.4 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is framed linking to both Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Self-Determination Theory aiming to investigate the reading motivation of the primary school students influenced by the social and cultural aspects of Bangladesh.

**Figure 3. 2:** *Theoretical Framework of the Study*



This study used these two theories to conceptualise the study. It investigated the aspects of family, school, community, and national-level policies that play a significant role independently and interact with one another in promoting students' cognitive development, particularly motivating children to read. Here, the culture of families, schools, and communities (Begum, 2007; Morni & Sahari, 2013) and national-level policies were considered, influencing reading motivation individually and collectively. In addition, students will be highly motivated when positive interactions in the social

environment fulfill their basic psychological needs. Even in a society that exerts external control over the child, the child will be externally motivated. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were explored as stimulation for nurturing reading in the social and cultural environment of Bangladesh. In a nutshell, the study was framed with the concepts of both Ecological Systems Theory and Self-determination Theory. The study focused on inter-related multiple social layers, addressing students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the social and cultural context of Bangladesh.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This study used two theories to frame the problem of the study to be explored. The study area was the social and cultural aspects of Bangladesh that motivate the primary school students to read. Both the theories were very relevant to the study. Both theories describe how children's surrounding social environment and interactions in that environment influence children's development and motivate them. If the environment and interactions with the members of this closer-to-distant environment could create a positive environment with a positive culture for reading, and children had the scope to be involved with the liberty to choose their reading materials, they would be more enthusiastic about reading. Along with the internal psychological needs, each individual is subjected to external forces or pressures used as motivational factors. As a result, both theories have an impact on the social and cultural perspectives of students to motivate them intrinsically or extrinsically in various layers of the social environment in which they live.

## **Chapter Four: Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Research methodology deals with the plans and procedures (Creswell, 2009) of research. These plans and procedures follow a set of steps which is known as the "scientific method" of inquiry (Kerlinger, 1972; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, as cited in Creswell, 2012, p. 7). Following this scientific method this chapter describes the research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods, sampling method and other methodological considerations employed for planning and carrying out the current research. The current research study aimed to explore the socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh. Hence, this methodology chapter is intended to give an overview of the overall research plans and detailed procedures to address the research objectives within the context of Bangladesh where the intervention has been carried out. Russell (2006) mentioned that the study of humans' behavioral elements depends not only on sample size or the correct measurement but also on ethical issues. Therefore, the chapter also presents and explains the ethical issues, trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the research.

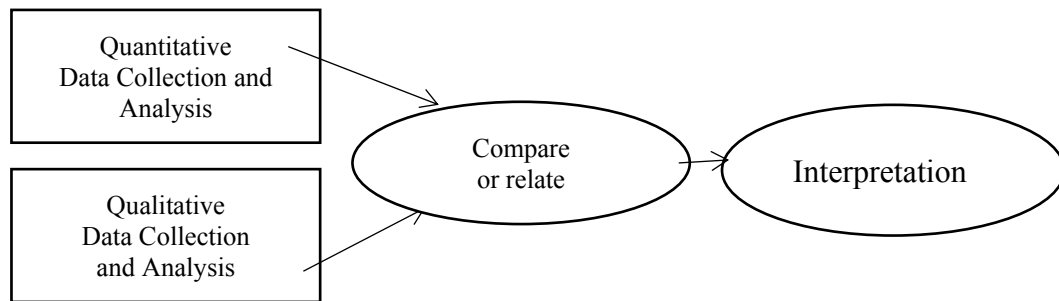
### **4.2 Research Approach**

There are different paradigms and approaches in educational research namely quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research. This research followed a mixed methods approach. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2005) argued in favour of mixed-method research claiming that it might combine the strengths of qualitative and quantitative

methods while minimizing their limitations in a single study. In a mixed methods approach the quantitative part supports investigating the frequency and extent of trends while the qualitative part explores the views, feelings, and practices surrounding the phenomenon. Thus, one helps get a good volume of information to generalize the milieu, and the other helps explain the context in detail (Cresswell, 2012).

There are different ways of conducting mixed-method research. For this study a convergent parallel design of the mixed-method research approach (Cresswell, 2012) is adapted. The model of Convergent Parallel Design is shown below (Creswell, 2012, p. 541).

**Figure 4. 1:** *Framework of Convergent Parallel Design*



In the convergent parallel design, the researcher simultaneously collects qualitative and quantitative data. Both sources carried equal importance in this study design, which was executed through the QUAL+QUAN method. Capital letters denote the dominant paradigm. At this point, both qualitative and quantitative methods dominate to decode the sense of their equal importance. There are two other ways of expressing the dominance of one form expressed by Quan+qual or Qual+quan (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Lee and

Greene (2007) termed convergent parallel design a complementarity mixed-method where one kind of data complemented another (cited in Cresswell, 2012, p. 542).

Quantitative research helps measure the cause-and-effect relationship, whereas qualitative research measures the diversified dimensions of that phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

This study investigated the factors of reading motivation in social and cultural contexts among primary-level students in Bangladesh. Hence, the study employed a quantitative method to determine the frequency and extent of factors related to students' reading motivation, including the participants' practices towards this spur in their social and cultural context. Conversely, the qualitative method involved a detailed explanation of the complex picture of different social and cultural organisations and their procedures for supporting the reading environment to motivate the students to read.

A limited number of research has been conducted with a focus on reading motivation based on the social and cultural context of Bangladesh. Most of the research that have been conducted in this area were focused on issues like students' learning achievement, developing reading skills, reading comprehension capacity, etc. Most of these research studies have not adequately addressed the underlying conditions of reading motivation within the given context. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate the veracity and magnitude of reading motivation by exploring the feelings, attitudes, perceptions and practices of concerned stakeholders. The research also aims to explore the issue of reading motivation from the social and cultural perspectives of Bangladesh to suggest

ways of promoting reading environment and boosting up reading motivation. In conclusion, the mixed-method approach adapted for this research immerses a convergent parallel design to gather and triangulate the data simultaneously while combining them for best possible understanding of the issues under investigation.

### **4.3 Sampling Procedure**

The study was designed to gather information from primary school students of Bangladesh as well as other stakeholders who might have some sort of involvements in the matter of reading motivation, which was the core focus of the study. In doing so a systematic procedure was followed to determine the target population and chose the respondents who participated in this study. This section is intended to give a detailed explanation of the procedures involved in choosing the target population and the sampling methods employed for this study.

#### *4.3.1 Targeted Population*

The major focus of the study was to explore the socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation of primary school students in Bangladesh. According to the concern of the study, all primary school-going students from grades I to V comprised the target population of the study. A total of 21.55 million students (2,15,51691) were enrolled in the primary education system of Bangladesh in 2020, (DPE- APSC 2020). Among them, government primary schools accommodated 12.42 million (1,24.21782) students (DPE- APSC 2020), which actually covered 58% of total primary school enrolled students (DPE, 2020). For this research only government primary school (GPS) students were

considered as they constitute the largest category of the primary school students in Bangladesh. Along with the government primary schools' students, their teachers, parents, family members, and community members as well as government personnel related to government primary schools were also considered as the target population of the study. Moreover, officials working in different government organisations related to library facilities for children and the general public at the national and local levels and children book publishers were also included as part of this study population.

#### *4.3.2 Participants*

The study selected grade IV students of Government Primary schools as research participants as per the demands of the research objectives and research questions. Only grade IV students were selected because they had more than three years of experience in reading and they were able to participate in all aspects of the study. Therefore, grade IV students constituted the focal point of the study. The study noted that this was the transition point for children's development as readers. The study further added, "Typically, at this point, students have learned how to read and are now reading to learn" (Mullis et al., 2009, p. 8). Another important point was in the country context of Bangladesh that Grade V students sat for Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE), and they were too busy with their preparation. At the same time, teachers had to do so many academic works related to the PECE. So, this was another reason to select grade IV students as research participants. It was also found from an international perspective that organisations like Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) selected fourth-grade students as research participants for their study. Others

(Grade I- Grade III) were too minor to participate in all the concerns of the study. The central focus of the study was primary level students reading motivation in the social and cultural context of Bangladesh. That is why grade IV students were the main research participants of the study to share their experiences, opinions, and expectations.

Additionally, parents of the students were supposed to communicate, interact, and maintain the family reading environment. Therefore, listening to their voices was practically useful for exploring their children's reading habits, their interaction with children and the overall reading environment provided by them. Finally, grade IV students, their parents, subject teachers, and their neighbors as community members were selected as participants to know every possible dimension of the socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation. Officials from government organisations working in this field were also included in the study as participants which helped gathering valuable data regarding government-initiated policies and practices concerning reading motivation. Officials who worked with children's books at government libraries, published children's books, and advocated for children's development at the national and local levels were also considered as research participants. Finally, children's book publishers were also included as research participants in order to explore more about the current realities, prospects and challenges of publishing and marketing children's literature.

The table (Table 4.1) shows the various groups of population targeted for this study.



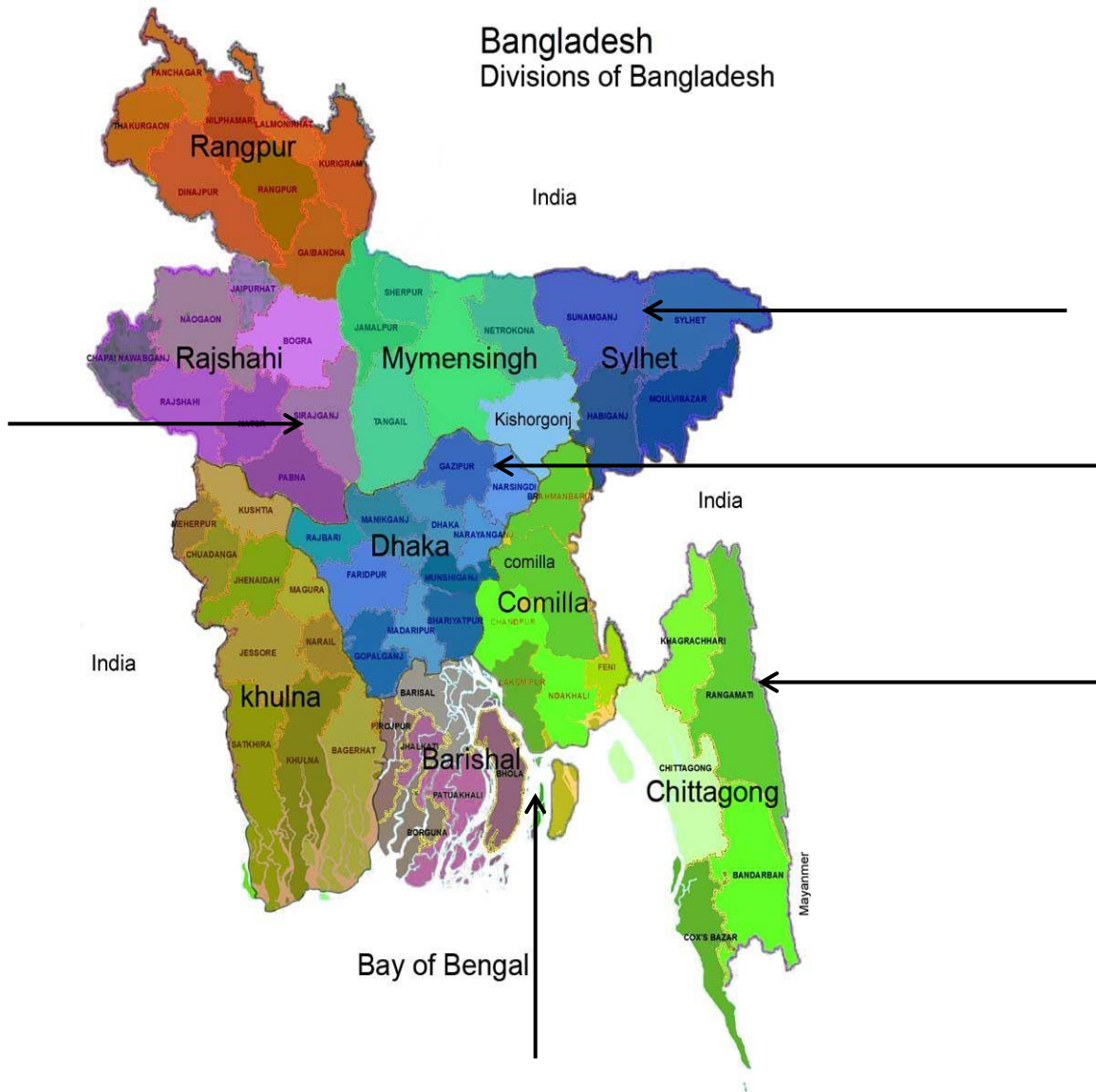
**Table 4. 1:** *Participants of the Study*

<b>SI No</b>	<b>Category of Participants</b>
01.	Students in Grade IV
02.	Parents of grade four students
03.	Teachers teaching Bangla as a subject in the selected schools
04.	Community members of the selected schools
05.	Personnel related to primary education
06.	Library officials at national and local levels
07.	Children's book publishers

#### *4.3.3 Research Site*

As the research was conducted on government primary school students, a total of fifty government primary schools were selected through multistage cluster sampling from diverse geographical areas of Bangladesh that included Char (sand and slit land), Haor (marshy land), hilly, coastal, and plain land. In doing so one district from each distinct geographical area was chosen randomly. The five districts chosen as the study site were Sirajganj, Sunamganj, Rangamati, Bhola, and Gazipur (See Figure 4.2). For demographic purpose the Sadar Upazila (administrative sub-district) of each district was considered an urban area while another Upazila (sub-district) located outside the Sadar was randomly chosen as a rural area. Five schools from each of urban and rural area were selected through a random sampling method. In this way, ten government primary schools were chosen from each district. Thus, a total of fifty schools were chosen from the five above-mentioned districts, which were located across variety of geographical regions in Bangladesh (see Table 4.2).

**Figure 4. 2:** Five Geographical Areas of Bangladesh



#### 4.3.4 Sampling

##### Sample Size Calculation for Quantitative Data

The idea sample size for this study was calculated using Cochran's formula (1977)

(International Journal of Applied Mathematics and Statistical Sciences, 2013).

The formula for Cochran's is:

$$Z^2pq$$

$$n = \frac{Z^2pq}{e^2}$$

$$e^2$$

n denotes the desired sample size.

Z = It is the selected critical value of the desired confidence level. At a 95% level of certainty

(5% level of significance), the selected critical value of Z is constant, and it is 1.96.

e = It is the desired level of precision (the margin of error). The 'degree of precision' is the margin of permissible error between the estimated and population values. The allowable level of error is usually set at 5% (0.05).

p = As there is no reasonable estimation of the influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh, 50% (0.5) is used for calculating the sample size. For unknown estimation, 50% (0.5) is assumed conventionally.

$$q = (1-p) = (1-0.5) = 0.5$$

$$(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5$$

Therefore, n =  $\frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0.05)^2}$

$$(0.05)^2$$

$$= 384$$

On the other hand, the study population numbered 17338100 (ASPR, 2019). According to the formula adapted from R. V. Krejcie and D. W. Morgan (1970) to calculate sample size at a 95% confidence level for quantitative data (cited in Johnson & Christensen,

2004, p, 218), the recommended sample size for the population mentioned above was 384. The number is similar to the calculated sample size.

When the sample size was distributed evenly across five locations, the number 384 were coming up with results in fractions. The study considered 80 students from each site to avoid fractions (76.8 people) and invited them for participating in the study. However, in the end, a total of 437 students turned up to participate in the study with much enthusiasm as the schools' resumed classes after a long closure caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Sampling for Quantitative Data**

The quantitative sample was chosen using a probability sampling technique. The study considered having sampling from multistage clusters based on diversified geographical areas of Bangladesh representing Char, Haor, hilly, coastal, and plain lands. The study aimed to look into the social and cultural aspects of reading motivation in Bangladesh. Though Bangladesh is a small country, it has a diverse geographical terrain that includes hilly areas, plain land, coastal areas, Char, and Haor, all of which are thought to have distinct socio-cultural characteristics. As a result, these areas were chosen as research sites in order to portray a harmonized picture of the social and cultural factors influencing reading motivation.

According to Cresswell (2012), "In multistage cluster sampling, the researcher chooses a sample in two or more stages because either the researchers cannot easily identify the population or the population is extremely large" (p. 145). Linking this statement to the current context, especially considering the large size and diversity of the population a

multistage cluster sampling method was followed. An area wise distribution of the sample participants for the quantitative data is been presented in Table 4.2 below:

**Table 4. 2:** *Student Participants of the Study for Quantitative Data*

Geographical Location	Name of the District	No. of District	No. of school from each District		Total number of schools	Total no. of Participants in each District
			Urban	Rural		
Char area	Sirajganj	1	5	5	10	92
Haor area	Sunamganj	1	5	5	10	100
Hilly area	Rangamati	1	5	5	10	80
Coastal area	Bhola	1	5	5	10	79
Plain land	Gazipur	1	5	5	10	86
Total		5	25	25	50	437

A total of 50 government primary schools were chosen from five selected districts in Bangladesh. The study used probability sampling for selecting districts and schools, considering the opinion of Cresswell (2009) that “... a random sample, in which each individual in the population has an equal probability of being selected (a systematic or probabilistic sample)” (p. 148).

After that, students of each nominated school were selected by systematic random sampling, preceded by dividing them into boys’ and girls’ students to maintain gender equality. Regarding systematic random sampling, Johnson and Christensen (2004) stated,

A systematic random sampling is defined as a sample that is obtained by determining the sampling interval (i. e., the population size divided by the desired sample size,  $N/n$ , which is symbolized by  $k$ ), selecting at random a starting point (a number between 1 and  $k$ , including 1 and  $k$ ), and then selecting every  $k$ th element in the sampling frame. (p. 204)

From each school, a total of eight students were selected, keeping equal number of girls

and boys through systematic random sampling from each gender group, four students from each group were taken. In this way, 80 students were selected from one district in each geographical area. However, the total number of students from the mentioned geographical areas was not the same; nevertheless, an equal number of students were taken from each location. This feature allowed the study to undergo a disproportionate stratified sampling technique (Daniel, 2012) while selecting the students as research participants. It was also supported by Johnson and Christensen (2004), “A type of stratified sampling in which the sample proportions are made to be different from the population proportions on the stratification variable” (p. 209).

### **Sampling method for Qualitative Data**

In order to choose the participants for qualitative data, a maximum variation sampling technique was used. Johnson & Christensen (2004) articulated maximum variation sampling as a technique in which, “a wide range of cases (individuals, groups, settings, or other phenomena) are purposively selected so that all types of cases along with one or more dimensions are included in the research” (p. 220). Additionally, according to Saldana (2009), “Qualitative method investigates the *why* and *how* of decision making, not just *what*, *where*, *when*. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed than large samples” (cited in Fisher, 2013). The current study explored the social and cultural context of reading motivation of primary school students of Bangladesh.

Therefore, this phenomenon under study (reading motivation) is addressed by different individuals, groups, and social settings. In order to generate a detailed understanding of the phenomenon, the opinions, beliefs, habits, and plans concerned parents, teachers and

community members were sought. Furthermore, education officials of each geographical area, like the District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) and the Superintendent of Primary Teachers Training Institute (PTI Super) of each site were considered to know their practical views on this phenomenon. In addition, officials from national and local libraries, such as the public library, Shishu Academy's library, mobile library (Vrammoman library), as well as children's book publishers, were also interviewed as part of the study to learn more about their experiences on the study phenomenon. The purpose of the qualitative part of this study is to gather in-depth information on participants' various views regarding the perceptions, practices, experiences, and policy implications that have been extended from observations on reading motivation. A detailed distribution of the sample participants for qualitative data is shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4. 3:** *Participants of the Study for Qualitative Data*

Geographical Location	No. of District	No. of school from each District		Parents' FGD		Teachers' Interview		Community members FGD		Experts and Others Interview
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Char	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	DPEOs 5 PTI Super
Haor	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	2	1	5
Hilly	1	5	5	2	1	2	1	1	1	Shishu Academy
Coastal	1	5	5	1	1	1	2	1	1	2 Public library
Plain	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1 Mobile library 1 Book Publishers 2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>

Two focus groups with parents and community members were held in each district, with

equal distributions from urban and rural regions based on convenient sampling. Altogether, 20 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in five selected districts, 10 for the parents and 10 for the community representatives. It is important to note that one additional focus group with parents and community members was held in each of the hilly and Haor areas. The participants enthusiastically shared their opinions and thoughts on cultural diversity and practices in the hilly and Haor areas. As a result, 22 FGDs were conducted with parents and community members altogether. At the same time, two teachers from every district, one from urban and one from rural areas, were selected purposively to for interview. Overall, the interviews with 10 selected teachers were conducted across the five districts. In addition, two additional interviews with teachers from remote areas of the hilly and the coastal regions were conducted to enrich the data source.

Again, purposive sampling was used to interview personnel from the District Primary Education Office (DPEO) and the superintendent of the Primary Teachers' Training Institute (PTI super) as research participants. One DPEO and one PTI superintendent participated as education experts from each geographical area. A total of 5 DPEOs and 5 PTI superintendent participated in the study. It is further noted that due to transfer from workplaces, two of the DPEOs participated from the Haor areas. The researcher visited the place twice, and the officer who participated first was transferred from this area during the second visit. So, the officer was interviewed instead of the transferred one. On the other hand, one DPEO from plain area finally withdrew from attending the interview session due to his busy schedule, though the interview was pre-scheduled with the



officer's consent. Furthermore, one officer each from the national public library, Bishwa Sahitto Kendra, and two officials from the head office and local office of Shishu Academy were chosen conveniently to share their ideas on the relevant issues of the study. Altogether, four library related officials participated from different offices. In addition to that, two publishers who produce books for children participated in the study as research participants. The participating public library officer and the children's book publishers were selected using snowball sampling. Relevantly, Cohen et al. (2007) were ascertained about purposive sampling as stated below are reflected in this study.

In purposive sampling, often (but by no means exclusively) a feature of qualitative research, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample based on their judgment of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs. (pp. 114–115)

To sum up, unlike for quantitative data, all the participants for qualitative data collection were chosen using nonprobability sampling techniques such as purposive, convenient, and snowball sampling.

#### **4.4 Data Collection Methods**

Mixed methods research uses both qualitative and quantitative methods using multiple data collection tools. This study used six different data collection instruments considering the purpose of the study. The instrument used for qualitative and quantitative data collection are mentioned in the table 4.4.

**Table 4. 4:** *Data Collection Instrument for This Study*

<b>Quantitative Methods</b>	<b>Qualitative Methods</b>
Survey checklist	Interview guideline
Observation checklist	Focus Group Interview guideline
Reading Motivation Scale	Document review

The characteristics and detailed procedures for administering those instruments and methods are maintained in the following sections.

### **Qualitative Methods**

Three distinct instruments were used, including an interview guideline, a focus group interview guideline and a document review to collect qualitative data for this study. The importance of using these instruments and the data collection procedure employing these instruments are discussed below.

#### *4.4.1. Interview*

Qualitative data relies extensively on in-depth interviewing considering a certain purpose (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). At the same time, interview method is generally used to understand the individuals' or groups' thoughts, feelings, views, and perceptions and it helps the researcher find out the story behind the conversation. The researcher could use probes to get a prompt response or seek clarity on additional information (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Through probes, interviewers can explore more detailed information about the interviewee's experiences, feelings, and attitudes.

This study used a one-on-one interview guideline for teachers about the school environment and reading facilities; the classroom environment for reading; challenges teachers faced in implementing different reading practices; and suggestions to promote a reading environment and to motivate students to read in school. The interview guideline allowed the researcher to listen to their best voices through open-ended questions without being constrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings (Creswell, 2012). Along with this, another interview guideline was designed to learn about national-level experts' ideas, programme practices, policies, challenges to policy implementation, plans, and proposals for motivating future generations to read. The targeted experts were government personnel who were involved with schools and policy execution for reading in school. Both these guidelines helped examine the feelings, interests, values and practices of the participants (Gay & Airasian, 2003). The interview guidelines were prepared in English and then translated into the Bangla language. Sample interview guidelines for teachers and experts are attached in Appendices 16 & 17.

#### *4.4.2 Focus Groups Interview*

Focus group interview is another form of interview method. The previously discussed interview method was a one-on-one interview with the participants. The focus group method was applied to collect data through group interviews. Here the interviewer asks a question, and all the participants discuss among them in a group. One of the essential tasks of the interviewer is to "...encourage all the participants to talk and take their turns talking" (Cresswell, 2012, p. 218). Focus group interview helps to know about a particular group of people's views, attitudes, and practices of a specific phenomenon. It

was also agreed by Anderson and Arsenault (1998). The author mentioned focus groups interview as,

A focus group is a carefully planned and moderated informal discussion where one person's ideas bounce off another's creating a chain reaction of informative dialogue. Its purpose is to address a specific topic, in-depth, in a comfortable environment to elicit a wide range of opinions, attitudes, feelings or perceptions from a group of individuals who share some common experience relative to the dimension under study. (p. 212)

This study used FGD guidelines to know the parents' and community members' perceptions, attitudes, and involvement with reading in school and home, reading practices, supports, limitations, and suggestions to create an environment for reading and encourage students to read in families and communities. Interviewing these two groups also allowed the researcher to triangulate with more traditional forms of questioning, or observation (Cohen et al., 2007).

After deciding on a focus group interview, group members or the number of participants needed to be defined. While selecting the number of group members for a focus group interview, Morgan (1988) recommended four to twelve persons in a group (cited in Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, Johnson and Christensen (2004) mentioned that there should be six to eight members in a focus group interview. Similarly, Cresswell (2009) also said six to eight interviewees in each group. Later, Cresswell (2012) indicated four to six persons are typically needed for a focus group interview. This study used five to six persons in an FGD for interviews with parents and community members.

In deciding on the number of focus groups interviewed for a study, Morgan (1988) argued that one group is insufficient, but he did not mention the specific number (cited in Cohen et al., 2007). On the other hand, Johnson and Christensen (2004) mentioned that it required two to four focus groups interview for a single study. However, the focus group interview guideline was prepared in English and then translated into Bangla. The sample guideline for parents and community members were attached in Appendices 18 & 19.

#### *4.4.3 Document Review*

In qualitative research researchers look up documents from several sources as they are good data sources and help understand a phenomenon or an issue. These documents could be personal documents such as diaries or letters, official documents from state or non-government organisations, or mass-media or internet sources (Bryman, 2012). About document review, Ary et al. (2010) said,

Qualitative researchers may use written documents or other artifacts to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under study. ...Documents may be personal, such as autobiographies, diaries, and letters; official, such as files, reports, memoranda, or minutes; or documents of popular culture, such as books, films, and videos (p. 442).

The present study used government policies, circulars, published reports, and other documents, including some of the non-government organisations' projects, programmes, or reports on the relevant areas of the study. However, in using documents from a government or non-government organisation wherever they are, they should be authentic to be used in academic research (Jacobs et al., 2010). Emphasizing the importance of state-level sources Bryman (2012) mentioned, "...the state is the source of a great deal of textual material of potential interest, such as Acts of Parliament and official reports" (p.

549). On the other hand, documents of non-government organisations were known as a ‘heterogeneous group of sources’ (Bryman, 2012, p. 550). Still, some of those are for public purposes, like annual reports, mission statements, press releases, and the World Wide Web, which could also be used if collected from authentic sources. This study reviewed some non-government organisations’ materials collected from authentic sources and websites such as published documents and annual reports. A detailed of data collection procedure mentioned in table 4.5 at a glance.

**Table 4. 5: Instruments with Participants**

Sl	RQ	Participants	Instrument	Types of Data
1.	How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?	Parents	FGD guideline	Qualitative
2.	What are the family practices that influence students’ reading motivation?	Student Parents	Survey checklist Motivation scale FGD guideline	Quantitative Qualitative
3.	What aspects of the school environment influence students’ reading motivation?	Teachers	Interview Guideline Education officials School Observation Checklist	Qualitative Quantitative
4.	What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?	Experts Community members	Interview Guideline Document review	Qualitative

### **Quantitative Instrument**

To obtain quantitative data for this investigation, three different tools were used. The Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS), a survey questionnaire, and an observation checklist are the instruments on the list. The relevance

of these instruments and the data collection procedure using these instruments are discussed below.

#### *4.4.4 The Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS)*

This study reviewed major and contemporary reading motivation scales and adapted the 'Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS)' to measure the participating students' reading motivation. The RMSPLS was adapted from three of the most commonly used motivation scales, including the (1). (3) the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) scale, revised by Malloy et al. (2013) originally developed by Gambrell et al. (1996), (2) the Children's Motivations for Reading Scale (CMRS) developed by Baker and Scher in 2002; and (3) the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) scale of Wang and Guthrie (2004).

These three reading motivation scales measured reading motivation through several components. from which five components have been adapted for this study considering the cultural context of Bangladesh. In adapting the Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS) the following five components were selected: enjoyment (7 items), the value of reading (3 items), competence (4 items), recognition (3 items), and involvement (6 items).

A total of twenty-three items were generated for the Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS). It was based on the three reading motivation scales and five components, which were subdivided into twenty-three (23) items. For example,

one of the items of RMSPLS was 'I am a good reader' which was linked with the component of competence. Similarly, another item 'I like to read new things' refer to the component of enjoyment. However, initially, the scale included 24 items; after piloting, one of the items was omitted from the scale for not being easily for students to understand. The study used a four points Likert scale as the researcher (Feuerborn et al., 2015) did not want to use a 'neutral' or 'uncertain' category as usually found in the five or seven-point Likert scale. In fact, a scale with the 'neutral' or 'uncertain' category may give a chance for respondents to both agree and disagree with a given statement (Bond & Fox, 2001; DeVellis, 2011; Malak et al., 2017). That is why this study used a four-point Likert scale consisting of options such as 'totally agree', 'agree', 'partially agree', and 'do not agree at all'. The least favourable reaction (e.g., 'do not agree at all') was assigned a value of 1, and the most positive response ('totally agree') was awarded with a value of 4. The Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS) is attached in Appendix 20.

#### *4.4.5 Survey Questionnaire*

A survey questionnaire is a quantitative data collection instrument. Students who participated in the study filled out this self-reported data collection instrument. Survey questionnaires gather data from a large number of participants during a particular period (Best, 1995; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). This instrument is used in educational research on the selected sample to generalise the targeted or whole population (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998; Best, 1995). Best (1995) pointed out, "In analysing political, social, or economic conditions, one of the first steps is to get the facts about the situation -or a



picture of conditions that prevail or that are developing” (p. 108). Moreover, Johnson and Christensen (2004) also asserted concerns about using questionnaires as a research instrument. They expressed,

Researchers use questionnaires so that they can obtain information about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioral intentions of research participants. In other words, researchers attempt to measure many different kinds of characteristics using questionnaire. (p. 164)

In this regard Gable and Wolf (1993) also mentioned, “Questionnaires and survey instruments, such as Likert scales and semantic differential are designed to collect and measure a participant’s values, attitudes, and beliefs about selected subjects” (cited in Saldana, 2009, p. 92). The current study used a survey questionnaire for students to investigate the family practices along with the socio-cultural environment for motivating students in school and community to read. The quantitative data gathered for this study examined the facts and intensity of the concerning matter. Therefore, the family practices and their environment, parents’ involvement with schools, school facilities, community facilities, and students’ reading perceptions were the concerns of the survey questionnaire. This instrument was built using a number of guidelines for creating an ideal questionnaire. The language of the questionnaire was also easily understandable for the students. For example, ‘Do you have your reading table at home?’ Or, ‘How many books do you have at your home?’ These types of questions were used in this instrument because they were simple and easy to understand. This self-reported survey questionnaire consists of 33 items accompanied by some demographic questions. The survey questionnaire is attached in Appendix 21.

#### 4.4.6 Observation checklist

The study used an observation checklist to collect quantitative data. Semi-structured observations helped researchers generate a hypothesis. According to Cohen et al. (2007),

...a structured observation will already have its hypotheses decided and will use the observational data to confirm or refute these hypotheses. On the other hand, a semi-structured and, more particularly, an unstructured observation, will be hypothesis-generating rather hypothesis testing. The semi-structured and unstructured observations will review observational data before suggesting an explanation for the phenomena being observed. (p. 397)

This research study aimed to determine the environment, organisational structure, and physical setting of government primary schools in supporting and stimulating reading motivation through a semi-structured observation checklist (Cohen et al., 2007). The observation checklist had focused on the physical environment, i. e., library facilities, reading corners in classrooms, number of books in library, etc., for encouraging and promoting a culture of reading in the fifty government primary schools selected from five districts in Bangladesh. A sample questionnaire is attached in Appendix 22.

**Table 4. 6:** *Research Methodology at a Glance*

SL	Research Questions	Methods	Tools	Participants
1.	How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of grade IV students</li> </ul>
2.	What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?	Quantitative Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Questionnaire</li> <li>• Motivation scale</li> <li>• FGD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students of grade IV</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community members</li> </ul>
3.	What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?	Qualitative + Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• School Observation checklist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers of selected schools</li> <li>• Selected schools</li> </ul>
4.	What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experts (Government and Non-government)</li> </ul>

## 4.5 Ethical Concerns

Ethical issues should be considered meticulously in conducting any research. There are various ethical issues to be taken into account. A number of authors (Best, 1995; Bryman, 2012; Cresswell, 2009; Fontana & Fray, 1994; Gay & Airasian, 2003; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Punch, 1994; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) illustrated various dimensions of ethical matters. Diener and Crandall (1978) looked at the issue of ethical concerns in four domains which are:

1. Harm to participants
2. Failing to recognise informed consent
3. Invasion of privacy
4. Deception of involvement (cited in Bryman, 2012, p. 135).

In order to access government primary schools around the country, the first step was to obtain permission from the school authorities (Cresswell, 2009). In order to address this ethical concern, this study obtained permission from the Director-General (DG) of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) who was informed of the researchers' backgrounds as well as the study's nature, goal and implications (Appendix 1). Once the DG's permission was acquired the relevant office order (Appendix 2) was distributed to the District Primary Education Officers (DPEOs) of the five districts (Appendix 3–7) and the Head Teachers of the schools (Appendix 8) for providing the researcher due administrative and logistical support for data collection.

The participant's right to participate voluntarily or withdraw their participation at any time without any explanation was mentioned in their informed written consent form. Students, teachers, parents, community members, and experts were among those who took part in the study. The goal of the study, and the participants' independence, safety, and confidentiality, were documented in the informed written consent. As students were minors, the consent form was counter-signed by the Head teacher as a guardian, and approval from their parents was also obtained.

To maintain research participants' confidentiality, the researcher used pseudonyms throughout the study (Holmes, 2004; Sieber, 1998) and kept the transcripts in a locked cabinet for a certain period required for the study (Holmes, 2004; Sieber, 1998; cited in Alan, 2012; Cresswell, 2009). The researcher made an effort to maintain a smooth relationship and rapport with the participants while communicating with them during the data collection procedure. Research description letter and participants' consent form are attached in appendix (9-13).

#### **4.6 Piloting of the Instruments**

In the piloting phase the instruments were administered among students, parents, and other participants of two primary schools in the Dhaka district who had similar characteristics of the sample participants for this study. It is essential to mention that the participants who participated in the piloting were not part of the main research. After piloting, each instrument was reviewed based on the feedback. For example, it was found in the piloting that students quickly understood the word 'library' rather '*pathagar*' (the

Bengali word for library). Therefore, after piloting, the researcher used the word ‘library’ instead of the word ‘*pathagar*’. On the basis of the piloting results similar issues were addressed by changing terms like ‘*pothon* (reading)’ to ‘*pora* (read)’ or ‘electronic device’ to ‘mobile, computer’ etc. Moreover, time management, item necessity, language concerns, parents’ comments; teachers’ comments were all considered and addressed in finalizing the instruments after piloting.

The social and cultural contexts of the participants were also taken into account while developing and piloting the instruments. Furthermore, the piloting phase aided the researcher by demonstrating the entire plan of action for the final data collection procedure, including time management, event management, the amount of equipment required for fieldwork, and so on.

#### **4.7 Tool Validation**

The instruments were reviewed by the experts and the supervisor in terms of the language, age appropriateness, and relevance of the items with regard to the socio-cultural contexts of the country and the objectives of the study. The Bangla versions of all the instruments were sent to the experts for their review and feedback. After that, all the feedback was duly addressed. In addition, the researcher organised a workshop to solicit the opinions of a group of education research students of the University of Dhaka for reviewing the instruments. The workshop was held at the Institute of Education and Research (IER) of the University of Dhaka. The workshop participants have reviewed all the instruments for the study, along with the research questions and purpose of the study. The participants have given their feedback on the number of items, the wording of the

items, the appropriateness of the items with research questions, the inclusion, and exclusion of items, etc. Finally, the researcher incorporated the feedback of the workshop participants in finalizing the instruments. The workshop details are attached in Appendix 14.

#### **4.8 Data Collection Procedure**

With a qualitative and quantitative data collection plan, the researcher allocated a whole day to administering instruments in two schools. Therefore, a total of three days were allocated for each of the five schools from any of the urban or rural areas. Altogether, six days were allocated for a particular district, including urban and rural areas. In the data collection process, the researcher explained the purpose and the outlines of the motivation scale, along with the survey questionnaire, separately to the students. Along with the researcher, one of the data collectors worked to administer both the tools. The researcher explained the items of the instruments to the students, and the data collector observed the students if they needed any assistance. The questionnaire took approximately 30–50 minutes to fill out although the time varies from school to school according to the students' needs. After finishing these instruments, the researcher used an observation checklist for collecting data on the reading environment of the school. Through fulfilling the checklist, the researcher also talked with the head teacher about the required questions and took detailed notes of them.

Additionally, with the teacher's concern in mind, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers in a secure and peaceful environment on the

school grounds. While interviewing, the researcher took permission from the teacher to record his or her voice. So, the interview was recorded, and the researcher took notes simultaneously. It was approximately a 60-90 minutes long discussion with the teacher.

Finally, on day 3, the researcher conducted a group discussion with parents and community members separately, describing the purpose of the research and administering semi-structured interview guidelines in a safe and secure environment on the school grounds. The participants themselves recommended the venue, and the meeting lasted approximately 60–70 minutes for both groups. A sample transcription of an interview is attached in Appendix 24.

#### **4.9 Trustworthiness**

According to Cresswell (2012), “Validating findings in qualitative research means that the researcher determines the accuracy or credibility of the findings through strategies such as member checking or triangulation” (p. 630). The present study maintained these steps in the following procedure.

**Triangulation:** The findings were triangulated utilizing multiple participants and data collection instruments (Cresswell, 2012, p. 259). The researcher collected data from students at government primary schools and teachers, parents, and community members for this study. On the other hand, interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) were administered to collect data from parents, teachers, and community members about their perspectives and practices on reading motivation. Similarly, survey questionnaires were

utilized to collect data from students on their reading practices at school, at home, and in the community. The triangulation criteria were met using a variety of data collection tools and sources. The study triangulated data sources in this way to validate the qualitative findings. This triangulation approach was used to determine the descriptive validity of this qualitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2004).

**Member Checking:** After data collection through interviews and FGD the researcher presented the findings to the participants orally and asked them if what they stated reflected appropriately in the findings. The data was considered final only after participants confirmed that what they said was accurately recorded. Thus, the researcher applied the concept of interpretive validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2004) through participant feedback.

**Peer debriefer:** Peer debriefers for the instrument development process included the study supervisor, Prof. Dr. Md. Ahsan Habib and an external resource person, Prof. Dr. Saiful Malak, Professor of the Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Their advice and suggestions were incorporated into the construction of the research instrument.

#### **4.10 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability of a test refers to a measurement that provides consistent results (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998; Chakrabartty, 2013). The 'Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS)' used in the present study was applied to 437 government primary



school students in Bangladesh. The reliability score of the full scale was  $\alpha = .91$ . The lowest reliability of the test items was .20 (Item 11), and the highest reliability was .77 (Item 12). The Cronbach's Alpha, if all items were deleted, was all above .91. The individual item scores attested the test's internal consistency (Creswell, 2012) and the scale's reliability level was satisfactory. The reading motivation scale showed a positive correlation when compared to the reading motivation sub-scale of enjoyable ( $r = .93$ ), the value of reading ( $r = .78$ ), competence ( $r = .81$ ), recognition ( $r = .68$ ), and involvement ( $r = .85$ ). All of the values were significant at  $p = <.01$ .

Validity refers to the accuracy of the research. Maintaining the validity of a study requires careful sampling, using appropriate instruments and statistical measurement of the data (Cohen et al., 2007). The research methodology used for the current study applied various sampling methods for choosing research sites and participants. Probability sampling was employed to select study locations and students as participants for quantitative data collection. The study used a multi-cluster sampling to identify the geographical locations. After that, each district was selected by using simple random sampling. Furthermore, disproportionate stratified sampling was chosen to select the students as research participants from the diversified geographical locations of Bangladesh.

In addition, for data triangulation, several instruments were used to collect data from participants. A reading motivation scale, survey questionnaire, observation checklist was used to investigate the reading environment in every layer of society. The content of the

study phenomenon was covered in broader contexts, such as family, school, and community environments and facilities, and these were explored as reading environments for motivating students to read.

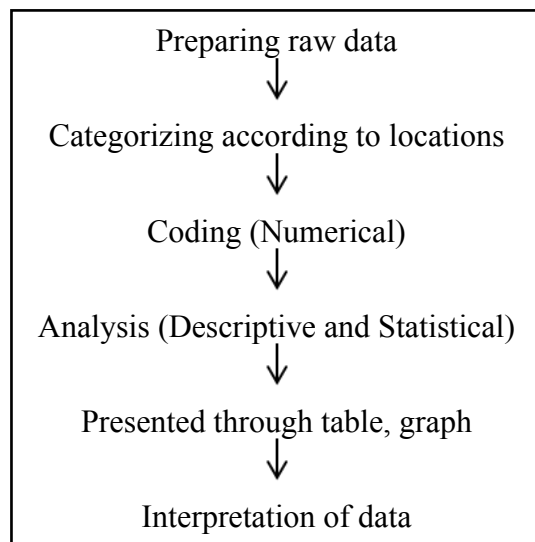
The reading motivation scale was adapted by considering three contemporary reading motivation scales to measure the participating students' reading motivation. Moreover, the motivational scale was reviewed by the experts along with the supervisor. The expert was selected in the field of education with a research background and experience in developing scales. The experts provided their suggestions on language appropriateness for primary school students, the country's cultural background, and the clarity and arrangement of the questionnaire. The scale was revised and finalized following all these steps and by incorporating feedback from the experts and fellows, with view to ensure its construct validity.

#### **4.11 Data Processing and Analysis**

This mixed-method research followed several steps for analysing both quantitative and qualitative data. Two different kinds of data analysis steps are discussed here separately. Multiple interconnected processes are available for analysis (Creswell, 2012) quantitative data. At first the raw data were organised for analysis. In the preparation stage, each data set was categorized according to the geographical location and organised by putting them under numerical codes for analysis. The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS 20) to compute the numerical analysis. Descriptive analysis was first conducted to determine the frequency, central tendency, and variations of the data

set. Following that, inferential analysis was used to assess the statistical association between reading motivation among different study participants, such as urban and rural students, girls and boys, or other geographical areas, while also taking the education and occupation of the participant parents into account. The study also used the Microsoft Excel programme to use tables and figures for presenting the key findings. Finally, both descriptive and inferential statistical data outputs were organised according to the research questions and purpose of the study. The various steps followed for quantitative data analysis process are mentioned in the figure below.

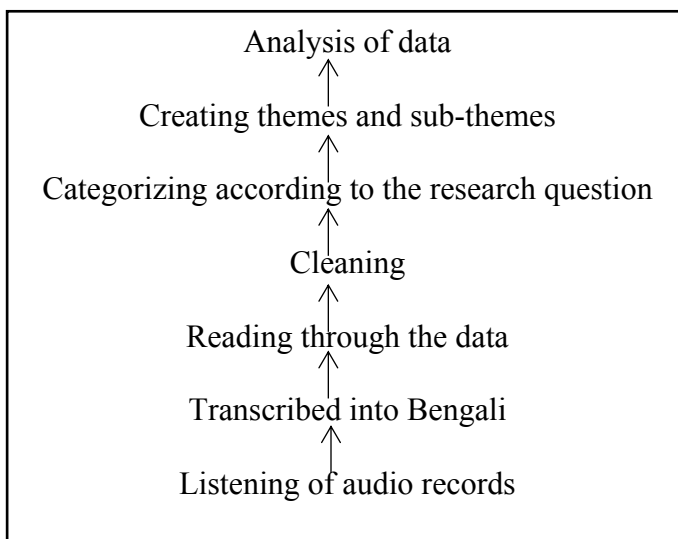
**Figure 4. 3:** *Steps Followed in Quantitative Data Analysis*



On the other hand, qualitative data analysis involved several steps (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) just like the quantitative analysis. The audio recordings were listened to by the researcher and transcribed into Bengali as they were gathered and recorded in Bengali. The data were read aloud several times from the transcriptions for cleaning and coding in accordance

with study objectives. The data was classified for the study and emerging themes were also identified. In this step, emerging themes and quotations were also noted for qualitative interpretation. After following all these steps, the data was translated to English to write the report. Finally, both types of qualitative and quantitative data were analysed together for triangulation and were interpreted by mixing both the findings to view new dimensions. The qualitative data analysis steps are illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 4. 4:** *Steps Followed in Qualitative Data Analysis*



#### **4.12 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this mixed-method convergent parallel design research used six different qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and/or instruments namely, interviews, FGD, document reviews, survey questionnaires, observation checklists, and reading motivation scales to carry out the study. As the study aimed to explore the social

and cultural context for the reading motivation of primary school students in five diversified geographical locations, grade four students were one of the research participants in the study. Furthermore, parents, teachers, community members, educational officials, and other relevant government officials also included as research participants. A total of 437 students participated in the study. In addition, a total of 50 schools were chosen, followed by simple random sampling from five districts, considering an equal representation of urban and rural schools. Moreover, the research methodology considered ethical matters in conducting this study and took various steps to ensure the reliability and validity of the study.

## Chapter Five: Quantitative Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

The findings of the results have been divided into two chapters. This chapter presents the quantitative data, while the next one (chapter six) presents the qualitative ones. The quantitative data were derived from a total of 437 students who participated in the study from five districts representing diverse geographical features namely- Char (sand and slit land), Haor (marshy land), hilly area, coastal land and plain land across the country. The data were collected from both urban and rural areas from each of the districts. The Sadar upazila (administrative sub-district) was considered as an urban area, and peripheral upazila (sub-district) was selected randomly as a rural area.

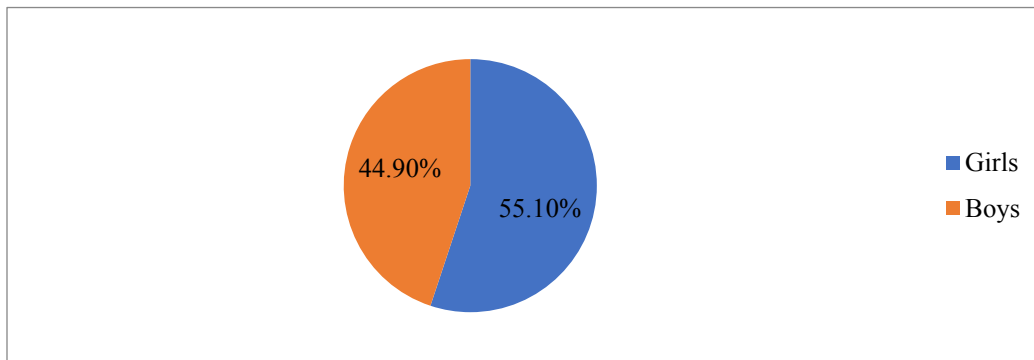
The quantitative data was obtained through three major tools: a) a student survey questionnaire b) a reading motivation scale for students, and c) an observation checklist for determining reading environment at family, school, and community. The quantitative data are presented in this chapter have been organised under six sub headings s which include, demographic findings, students' reading habits, reading environment in (students') family, reading environment in school, reading environment in the community and, reading motivation of students.

## 5.2 Demographic Findings

### 5.2.1 Participants by Gender

A total of 437 primary school students from Grade IV of fifty schools participated in this study. The representation of the girl participants was moderately higher than the boy participants as there were 241 girl's respondent (55.10%) compared to 196 boys (see Table 5.1).

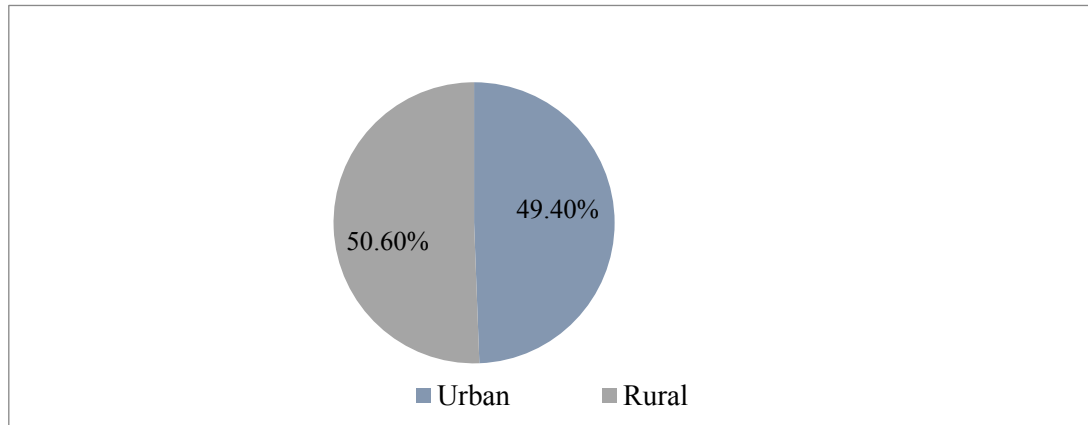
**Figure 5. 1:** *Percentage of Students Participants by Gender*



### 5.2.2 Students' Participation by Urban/Rural location

Students from both urban and rural areas participated in this study and their representation was distributed equally. From each district, Sadar upazila (administrative sub-district) was selected as an urban area and another upazila was randomly chosen from the district as a rural area (sub-district). It was found from the data that a total of 221 (50.6%) students from urban areas and 216 (49.4%) students from rural areas participated in the study (see Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5. 2:** *Percentage of Students Participated by Urban-Rural Location*



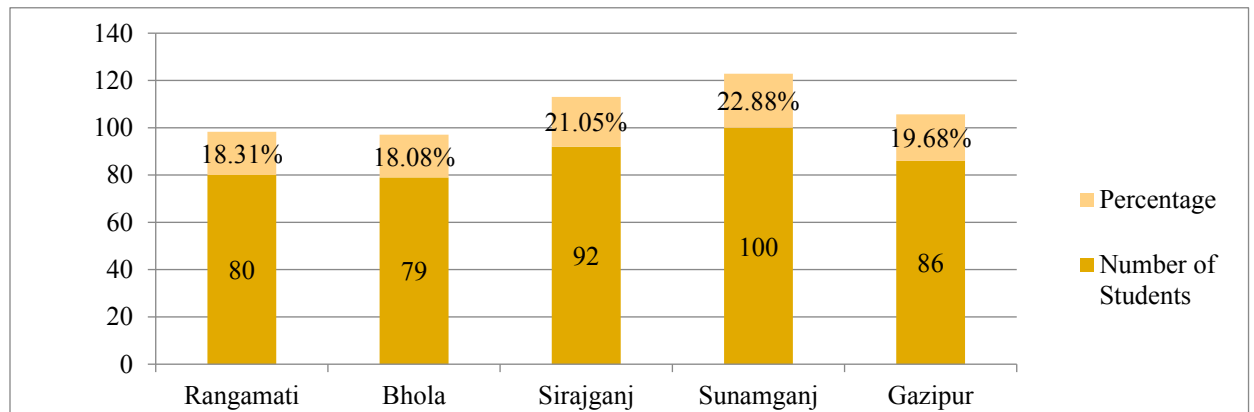
### 5.2.3 *Students' Participation by Geographical Locations*

One of the purposes of this study was to look into whether students' reading motivation had any correlation with their social, cultural background as well as geographical backgrounds. That is why this study covered five different districts with distinct geographical diversity. To cover the sample size, a total of 77 students from each district were required to participate from each location. It was found from the data that in most districts, students participated in equal or more than the expected number. Students were enthusiastic to participate, as they were bored due to a long vacation caused by the COVID-19. Therefore, the number of participants was high in some schools. There were 80, 79, 92, 100, and 86 student participants respectively from hilly (Rangamati), coastal (Bhola), Char (Sirajganj), Haor (Sunamganj), and plain (Gazipur) areas. Table 5.3 illustrates the percentage of the representation of the students and the total number of students from each geographical location.



**Figure 5. 3: Percentage and Number of Students' Participants by Geographical**

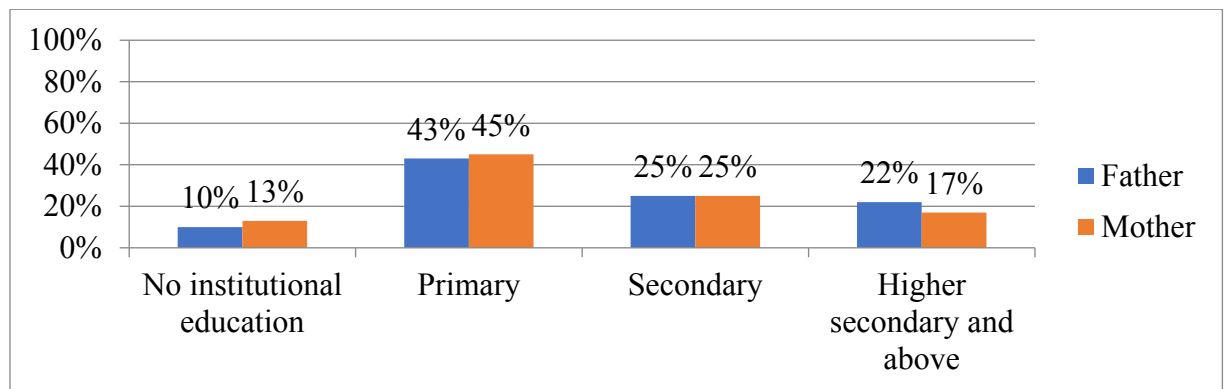
*Locations*



#### *5.2.4 Educational Qualification of Parents/Guardians*

The study looked into the educational qualifications of the parents including the father and mother of the students who participated. It was found from the data that a large number of fathers (78%) attained secondary level education or less (no institutional education - 10.1%, primary education- 43%, secondary education - 24.5%). In contrary, around 22% fathers had higher secondary or above education. It was noted that more than half of the fathers (53%) who participated in the study attained maximum primary level education where some of them (10.1%) never attained any institution education. On the other hand, data regarding mothers' education level found that 13.3% of mothers did not have access to any type of formal education. Furthermore, a large percentage of mothers (45.1%) only had primary education. Only 17.2% of mothers had higher secondary level or above education (see Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5. 4: Percentage of Parents' Educational Qualifications**



In comparison to fathers from different regions, participants' fathers living in rural areas possess no institutional education (12.2 %) compared to urban fathers (7.9 %). However, urban fathers outperformed the rural ones in terms of educational qualifications at all levels (see Table 5.1).

**Table 5. 1 Percentage of Fathers' Educational Qualification by Urban-Rural Location**

Upazila	Father's educational qualification			
	No institutional education	Primary	Secondary	Higher secondary and above
Urban	7.9%	40.2%	25.5%	26.4%
Rural	12.2%	47%	23.5%	17.2%
Average	10.1%	43.7%	24.5%	21.7%

It was found that rural area mothers were lagging behind the urban mothers regarding educational qualifications. Like urban fathers, mothers were outperformed in terms of

educational qualifications except secondary level education. Data revealed that 21.3% of mothers from urban areas got higher secondary education and above, which was 13.1% for rural mothers. Data shows that more than half of the mothers in urban (57.4%) and rural areas (59.3%) were in the position of having primary level education or no institutional education as the highest level of attained education (see Table 5.2).

**Table 5. 2:** *Percentage of Mothers' Educational Qualification by Urban-Rural Areas*

Upazila	Mother's educational qualification			
	No institutional education	Primary	Secondary	Higher secondary and above
Urban	10.2%	47.2%	21.3%	21.3%
Rural	16.3%	43.0%	27.6%	13.1%
Total	13.3%	45.1%	24.5%	17.2%

By geographic location, a good number of fathers from Haor (19%) and Char (16.3%) areas were not having any institutional education. The findings showed that irrespective of five geographic areas, more than half or around half of the fathers did not even attain secondary education, which was 66%, 54% 48%, 47%, and 45% respectively in Haor, plain land, Char, coastal areas, and hilly areas (see Table 5.3).

**Table 5. 3:** *Percentage of Fathers' Educational Qualification by Geographical Locations*

Locations	No Institutional education	Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary and above
Hilly	8.8%	36.3%	36.2%	18.8%
Coastal	0.0%	46.8%	22.8%	30.4%

Char	16.3%	43.5%	18.5%	21.7%
Haor	19.0%	47.0%	16.0%	18.0%
Plain land	3.5%	44.2%	31.4%	20.9%
Average	10.1%	43.7%	24.5%	21.7%

The majority of mothers were found only having a primary education or no institutional education, which was 44% to around 67% irrespective of all geographical areas. In addition, a notable number of mothers in Char (21%), Haor (20%), and hilly areas (13%) did not have even any institutional education (see Table 5.4).

**Table 5. 4:** *Percentage of Mothers' Educational Qualification by Geographical*

*Locations*

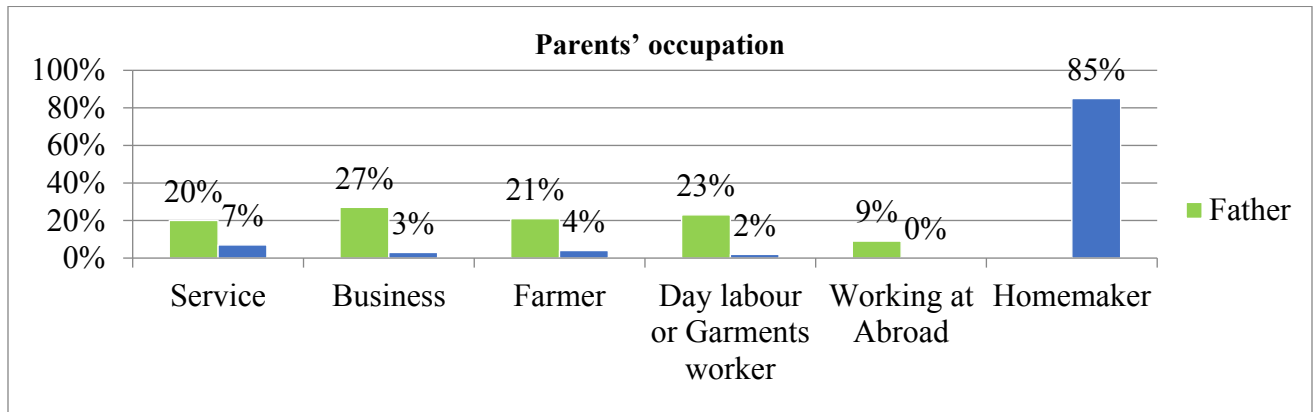
Locations	No institutional education	Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary and Above
Hilly	12.5%	43.8%	30.0%	13.8%
Coastal	5.1%	39.2%	32.9%	22.8%
Char	20.7%	45.7%	19.6%	14.1%
Haor	20.0%	47.0%	15.0%	18.0%
Plain	5.8%	48.8%	27.9%	17.4%

*5.2.5 Parents' /Guardians' Occupation*

The findings showed the parents of the participating students were involved in different types of work as their occupation (see Figure 5.5). Interestingly several occupations were found with almost equal percentages of fathers, e. g. service (20%), farming (21%), and day laborer (23%). However, a good number of fathers (27%) were involved in several businesses. A small portion (9%) of the participants' fathers works abroad. On the other

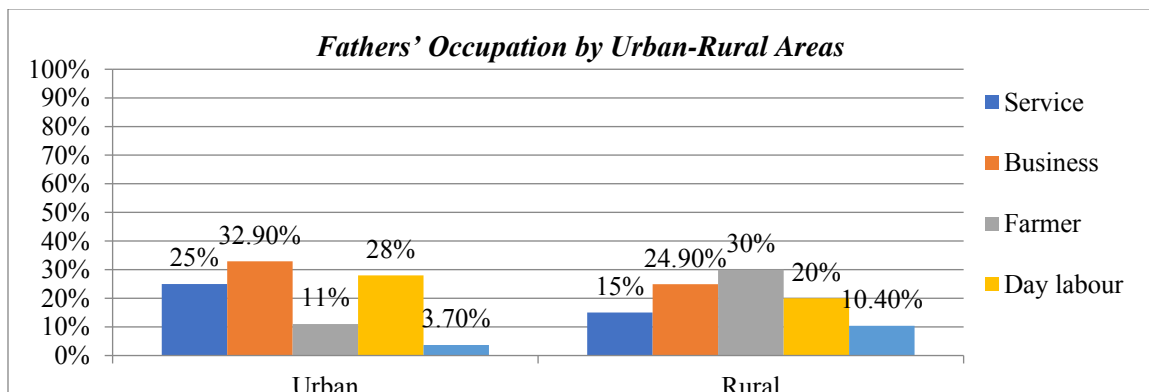
hand, most mothers were mainly homemakers (85%) and a limited number of mothers were involved in services (7%) compared to fathers (20%).

**Figure 5. 5:** *Percentage of Parents' Occupation*



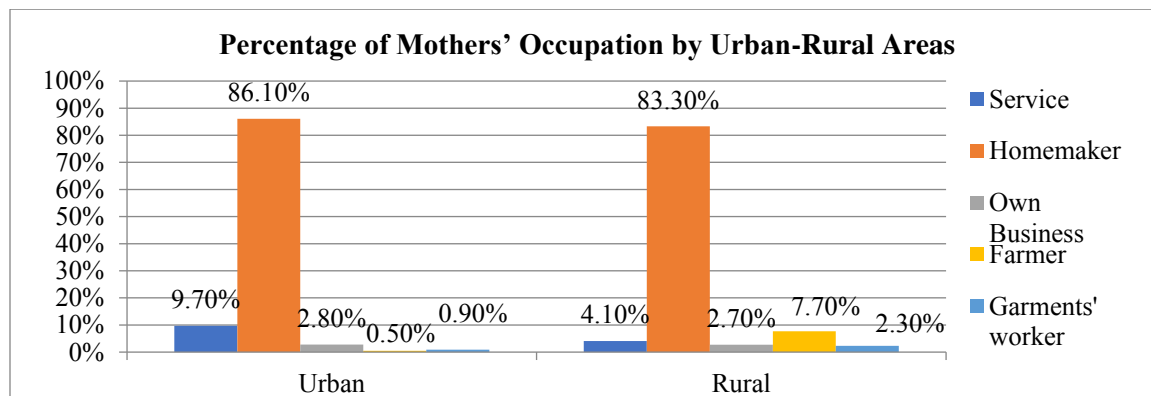
It can be found from data (see Figure 5.6) that fathers from urban areas (24.5%) were more involved in services than rural fathers (15.4%). Similar picture was found for fathers involved in businesses and day laborers. On the other hand, fathers in rural areas were more involved in farming (30%), and overseas works (10.4%) compared to the urban father areas.

**Figure 5. 6:** *Percentage of Fathers' Occupation by Urban-Rural Areas*



In terms of urban-rural differences, mothers from rural areas (4%) were less involved in services compared to the mother of urban areas (10%). Alternatively, mothers from rural areas were more involved in farming (7.7%) compared to the urban mother (0.5%) (see Figure 5.7).

**Figure 5. 7:** *Percentage of Mothers' Occupation by Urban-Rural Areas*



Though almost equal percentages of fathers were involved in different professions, fathers from coastal areas were mostly involved in business (43%). On the other hand, most fathers in Char areas were day laborers (45%). A good number of fathers were involved in farming in Haor (30%) and hilly (29%) areas (see Table 5.5).

**Table 5. 5:** *Percentage of Fathers' Occupation by Geographical Locations*

Name of the District	Service	Business	Farmer	Day labor	Working at abroad
Hilly	21%	28%	29%	20%	2%
Coastal	28%	43%	6%	21%	2%
Char	13%	24%	17%	45%	1%
Haor	20%	28%	30%	11%	11%
Plain	19%	23%	19%	22%	17%

Total	20%	29%	20%	24%	7%
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However, while 85% to 92% of mothers from four other geographical locations were homemakers, a notable number of mothers from the hilly areas were engaged either in services (11%) or farming (21.2%). Further, the percentage of garments workers was higher (5.4%) among the mothers from Char areas (see Table 5.6).

**Table 5. 6:** *Percentage of Mothers' Occupation by Geographical Locations*

Locations	Mothers' occupation				
	Service	Homemaker	Self employed	Farmer	Garments' worker
Hilly	11.2%	63.8%	3.8%	21.2%	0.0%
Coastal	5.1%	92.4%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Char	6.5%	84.8%	3.3%	0.0%	5.4%
Haor	6.0%	90.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Plain	5.8%	90.7%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Average	6.9%	84.7%	2.7%	4.1%	1.6%

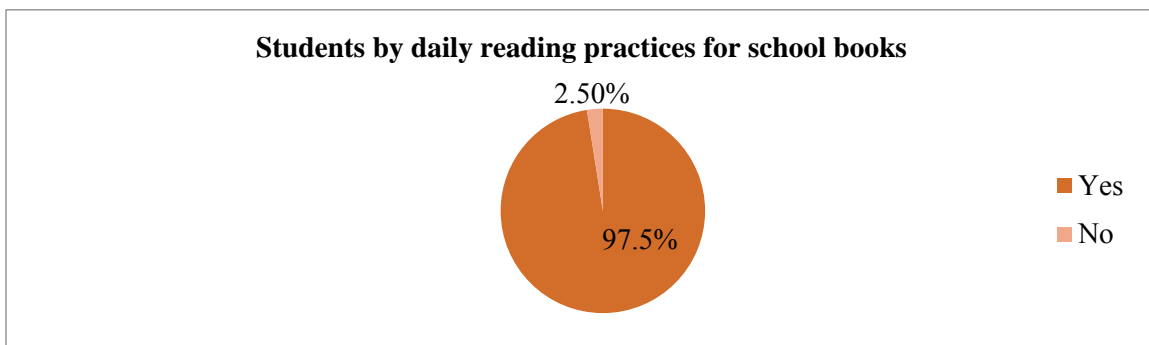
### 5.3 Students' Reading Habits and Practices

The study attempted to explore students' reading habits and practices of both school books and storybooks at home. The study employed a survey checklist which focused on both academic and non-academic reading practices including the students daily reading hours.

#### 5.3.1 Daily Reading Habits of Textbooks and Storybooks

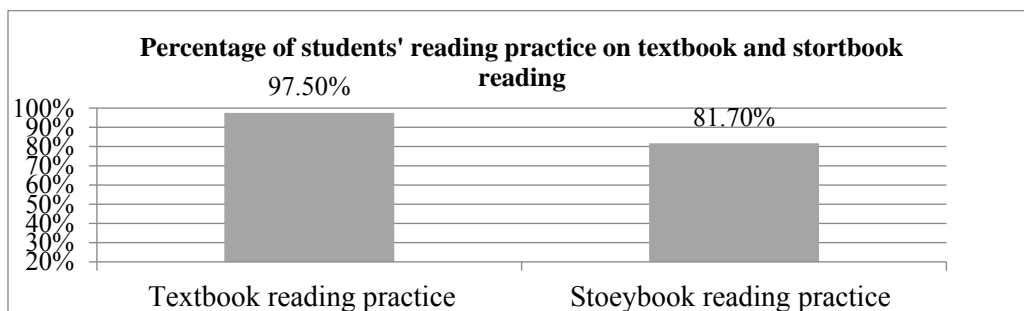
The study revealed that 97.5% (N=426) of the participants read their school books regularly. However, only 2.5% (N=11) of them reported that they did not read the textbooks daily (see Figure 5.8).

**Figure 5. 8:** *Percentage of Students Who Read Textbooks Daily*



Students’ storybook reading practices were also investigated in the study. Findings showed that out of 437 students, 357 (81.7%) read storybooks while 18.3% (80) of students do not read storybooks. It was found that there were differences between textbook and storybook reading practices. Though around 3% of students did not read textbooks, a good number of students (18%) did not read storybooks (see Figure 5.9).

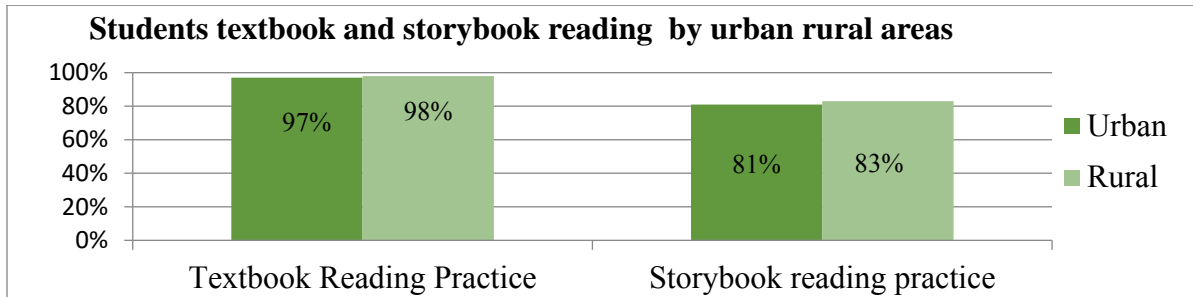
**Figure 5. 9:** *Percentage of Students Reading Textbooks and Storybooks*



The percentage of urban and rural students who regularly read textbooks were roughly the same, which was around 97% for the urban and 98% for rural students. Like textbooks, the percentage of rural students (82.8%) were slightly higher than the urban ones (80.6%) when their storybook reading pattern were compared (see Figure 5.10).

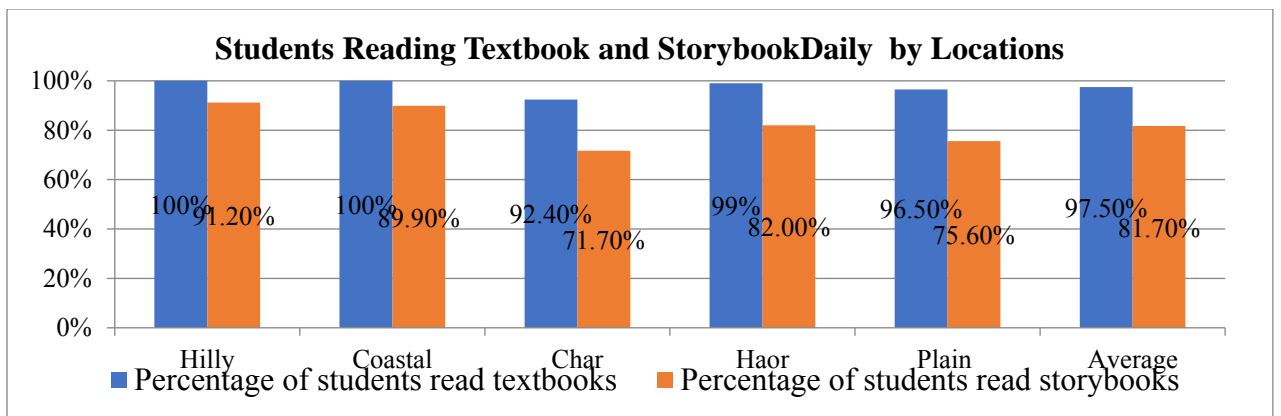


**Figure 5. 10: Percentage of Students Reading Textbook and Storybook by Locations**



It was revealed that a good number of students from all locations read textbooks every day, and the rate was 92% to 100%. On the other hand, the rate of storybook reading in all locations was comparatively low and it had a range within 72% to 91% (see Figure 5.11).

**Figure 5. 11: Percentage of Students Reading Textbook and Storybook Daily by Locations**



Looking at students' textbook reading practice from gender perspective, it was found that about 2% boy and 3% girl students do not read their textbooks regularly. On the other

hand, the percentage of girl students (about 84%) was higher than the boy students (79%) who read storybooks.

### 5.3.2 Daily Reading Time for Textbooks and Storybooks

Data regarding the amount of daily reading time was collected for four different time durations. Those were: reading more than four hours, three hours, two hours, and less than two hours. It was revealed that more than one third (about 35%) of the students spent more than four hours a day in reading school materials. Only 6.6% of students reported reading less than two hours (see Table 5.7).

**Table 5. 7:** *Percentage of Students' Daily Reading Time of School Books*

Daily reading time for school books	Frequency	Percentage
more than four hours	151	34.6
3 hours	123	28.1
2 hours	134	30.7
less than 2 hours	29	6.6
Total	437	100.0

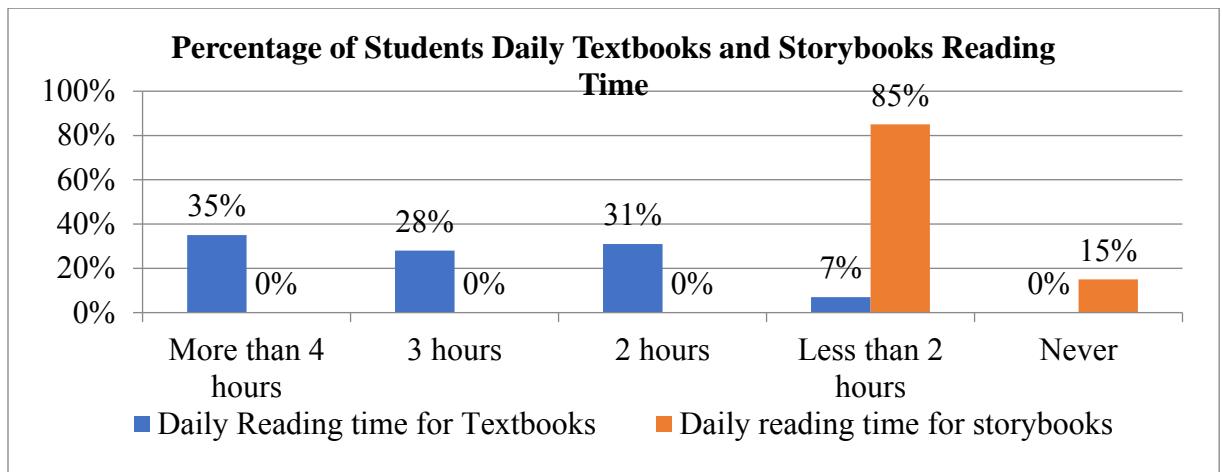
Conversely, data found that students read textbooks more often, logging more hours a day than storybooks. The majority of the students (94%) read textbooks for an average of three hours a day. On the other hand, 34% of the students read storybooks for two hours a week and a small portion (10%) of students read storybooks for more than four hours in a week. However, 18% of the students reported never reading storybooks (see Table 5.8).

**Table 5. 8:** *Percentage of Students' Weekly Reading Time of Storybooks*

Storybooks reading time in a week	Frequency	Percent
more than 4 hours	42	9.6
3 hours	55	12.2
2 hours	147	34.3
less than 2 hours	112	25.6
Does not read	81	18.3

The proportion of urban and rural students was about the same while comparing the time spent on reading storybooks per day. If data is converted from weekly reading time to daily reading time, it was found that 60% of urban students read storybooks for 17 minutes or less in a day, which was found among 61% of students in rural areas. Furthermore, there were more urban students (19.2%) who never read storybooks compared to the rural students reporting the same tendency (17.4%).

**Figure 5. 12:** *Percentage of Students' Daily Textbooks and Storybooks Reading Time*



From a geographical perspective, students in the coastal areas read textbooks for more extended periods than in other regions. Almost 60% of students read textbooks more than

four hours in the coastal areas, compared to around 23% to 37% in other areas. On the other hand, a small group of students (2.3% to 8.7%) read less than two hours in all the districts except coastal areas. Interestingly, students who read more than four hours were more in numbers in the coastal areas, and even students who read less than two hours (14%) were more evident in the coastal areas. In the end, the data showed that students spent a good amount of time on academic reading (see Table 5.9).

**Table 5. 9:** *Percentage of Students' Daily Reading Time of School Books by Geographical Locations*

Name of the Locations	Daily Reading Time for Textbooks			
	more than four hours	3 hours	2 hours	less than 2 hours
Hilly	25.0%	36.2%	36.2%	2.5%
Coastal	59.5%	13.9%	12.7%	13.9%
Char	22.8%	28.3%	40.2%	8.7%
Haor	37.0%	32.0%	25.0%	6.0%
Plain	30.2%	29.1%	38.4%	2.3%
Total	34.6%	28.1%	30.7%	6.6%

Conversely, when it came to the time spent on storybook reading in a day, the majority of students (60%), irrespective of regions, read storybooks for two hours or less in a week. Moreover, a good number of students from Char (25.8%), Haor (20.0%), and plain land (26.2%) had never read storybooks.

**Table 5. 10:** *Percentage of Students' Weekly Reading Time of Storybooks by Geographical Locations*

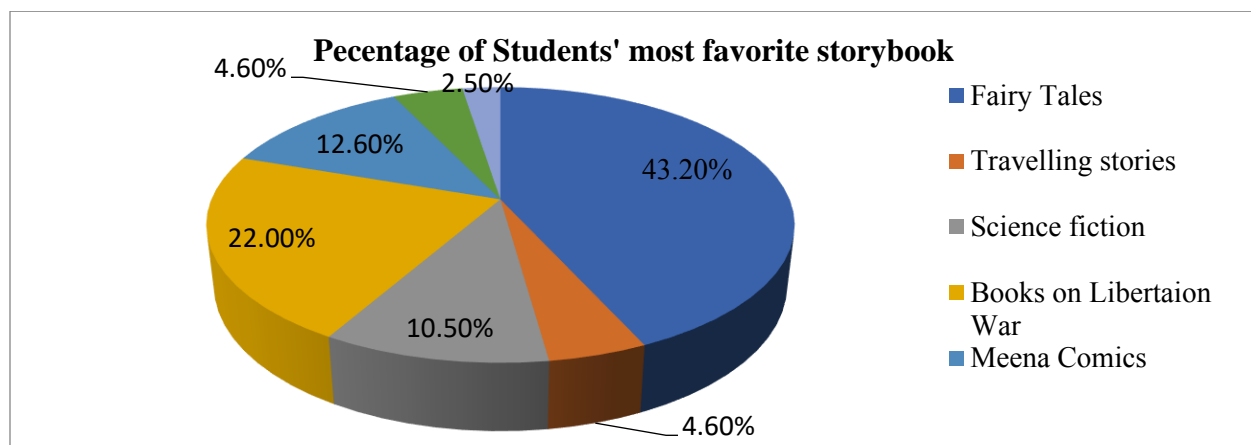
Locations	Weekly Storybooks reading Time				
	more than 4 hours	3 hours	2 hours	less than 2 hours	Does not read
Hilly	7.5%	13.0%	45.0%	25.0%	9.5%
Coastal	7.6%	5.6%	33.4%	46.8%	6.6%
Char	9.8%	15.4%	27.3%	21.7%	25.8%
Haor	13.0%	21.0%	32.0%	14.0%	20.0%
Plain	9.3%	6.1%	34.0%	24.4%	26.2%
Average	9.6%	12.2%	34.3%	25.6%	18.3%

Furthermore, there was no difference in the amount of time boy and girl students spent reading storybooks. Nonetheless, there were more boy students (18%) who never read a storybook in a week compared to the girl students (13%) showing the same trend.

### 5.3.3 *Students' Most Favorite Storybooks*

The study presented seven different types of books for students to choose their favorite book types. The list of book types included both fictions and non-fictions. Data found that the majority of students (43.2%) liked fairy tales. In addition, nearly a quarter of the students selected books on the liberation war (22%). On the other hand, the books on Meena comics were chosen by 12.6% of students as their favorite books (see Figure 5.13).

**Figure 5. 13:** *Students' Most Favorite Storybook*



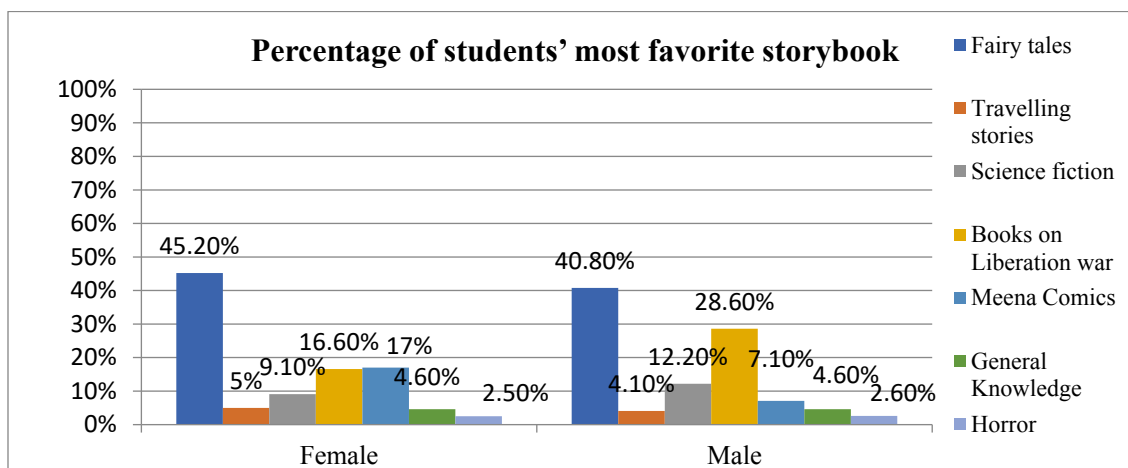
In addition to that, data found that urban girl students favoured Meena comics and books on the liberation war (20.7%) more than the rural girl students 12.5% and 13.3% respectively. Girl students from rural areas, on the other hand, preferred fairy tales (45.8%), science fictions (14.2%), and general knowledge (6.7%) over the girls from urban areas (44.6%, 4.1%, and 2.5% respectively). On the contrary, urban boy students preferred books about the liberation war (around 31%), whereas the rural boys preferred science fictions (approximately 15%). Furthermore, compared to gender differences, girl students mostly preferred fairy tales (45.2%) and Meena comics (17.2%) when compared to boy students who choose books about the Liberation War (28.6%) and science fictions (12.2%).

**Table 5. 11:** *Percentage of Students' Most Favorite Storybooks by Urban-Rural Areas*

Location	Fairy tales	Travelling stories	Science fictions	Books on Liberation War	Meena comics	General Knowledge	Horror
Urban	43.1%	5.1%	6.5%	25.0%	15.3%	3.2%	1.9%

Rural	43.4%	4.1%	14.5%	19.0%	10.0%	5.9%	3.2%
Average	43.2%	4.6%	10.5%	22.0%	12.6%	4.6%	2.5%

**Figure 5. 14:** *Percentage of Students’ Most Favorite Storybooks by Gender*



Students’ choices of storybooks in terms of their geographical locations did not vary largely. Regardless of location, a good chunk of students (34–49%) preferred fairy tales as their favorite book. Along with this, students also indicated liberation war books as their favorite books. Though Meena comics were selected as the favorite books by the hilly, coastal, and Haor area students (14% - 23%), the Char and plain land students expressed their likings for reading science fictions (21% & 13%).

**Table 5. 12:** *Percentage of Students’ Favorite Storybooks by Geographical Locations*

Students’ Favorite Storybooks by Geographical Locations							
Locations	Fairy tales	Travelling stories	Science fictions	Books on Liberation War	Meena Cartoon	General Knowledge	Horror
Rangamati	43.8%	2.5%	2.5%	26.2%	22.5%	2.5%	0.0%

Bhola	34.2%	2.5%	6.3%	32.9%	15.2%	5.1%	3.8%
Sirajganj	43.5%	5.4%	20.7%	17.4%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%
Sunamganj	45.0%	5.0%	9.0%	19.0%	14.0%	5.0%	3.0%
Gazipur	48.8%	7.0%	12.8%	16.3%	8.1%	5.8%	1.2%
Average	43.2%	4.6%	10.5%	22.0%	12.6%	4.6%	2.5%

## 5.4 Family Reading Environment

This section presents data regarding students' family practices and the facilities available at home for motivating reading at home. The section is divided into two parts: 'Family practices and supports' and 'Reading facilities at home'.

### 5.4.1 Family Practices for Reading

Students' interactions with their parents and other family members regarding reading practices and facilities at home were investigated in the present study. Data was collected on participants' experiences of shared reading with parents, parents' involvement in textbook reading at home, available support of purchasing books, library visits, and early reading experiences. The detailed findings are presented below.

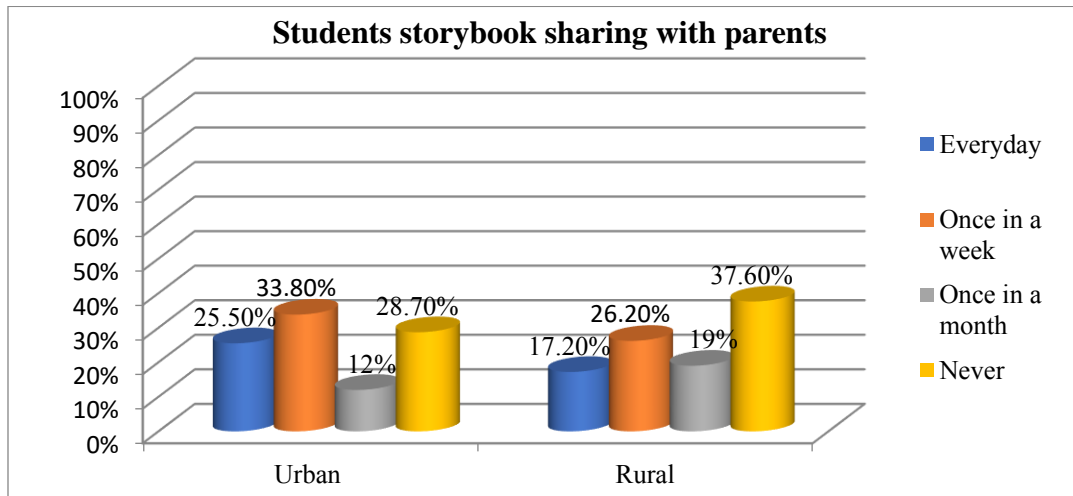
#### Shared Reading with Parents

Regarding sharing storybooks with parents, it was found that 33% of the students never shared storybooks with their parents. On the other hand, another 15.5% of students reported sharing storybooks once in a month with their parents. Furthermore, it was revealed that more than one-thirds (38%) of the rural students never did this type of sharing with their parents, compared to 29% of urban students. On the other hand, rural



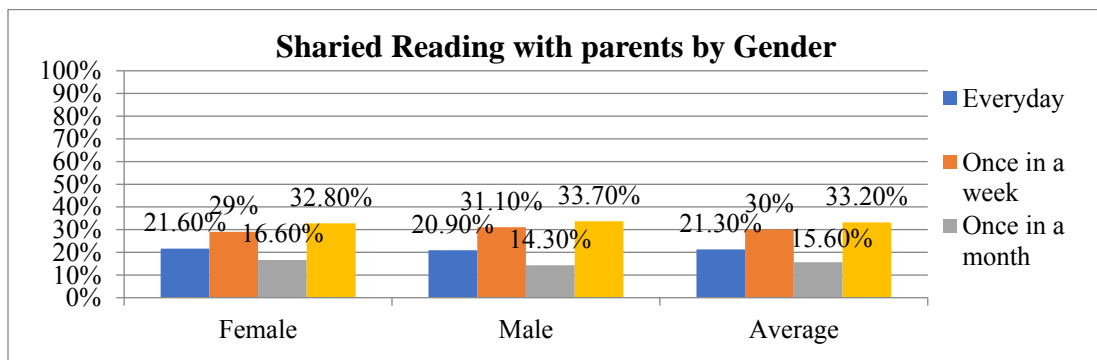
students (17%) also had limited experiences of sharing reading with parents every day than the urban students (26%).

**Figure 5. 15:** *Shared Reading with Parents by Urban-Rural Areas*



Gender differences in the matter of sharing reading were not much evident. For instance, girl students had little more opportunities than boy students in sharing reading with their parents. In the same way, more boy students (around 34%) than girls (about 33%) never get this scope of shared reading with their parents.

**Figure 5. 16:** *Shared Reading with Parents by Gender*



When the issue of sharing reading experiences was looked at from the perspective of students' geographical locations, students from coastal areas, hilly areas, and Haor areas reported less shared reading experiences with their parents compared to students from other areas. On the other hand, nearly half of the students in the plain land (48%) and Char area (45%) reported never sharing any reading with their parents (see Table 5.13).

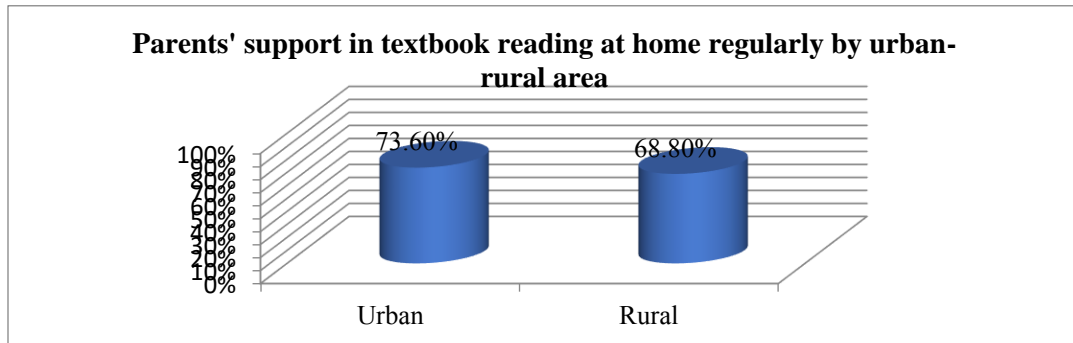
**Table 5. 13:** *Percentage of students' Shared Reading with their parents by Geographical Locations*

Locations	Shared Reading with parents			
	everyday	once in a week	once in a month	never
Hilly	33.8%	25.0%	12.5%	28.8%
Coastal	15.2%	36.7%	34.2%	13.9%
Char	22.8%	21.7%	10.9%	44.6%
Haor	23.0%	32.0%	16.0%	29.0%
Plain	11.6%	34.9%	5.8%	47.7%
Average	21.3%	30.0%	15.6%	33.2%

### **Parents' Support in Textbook Reading at Home**

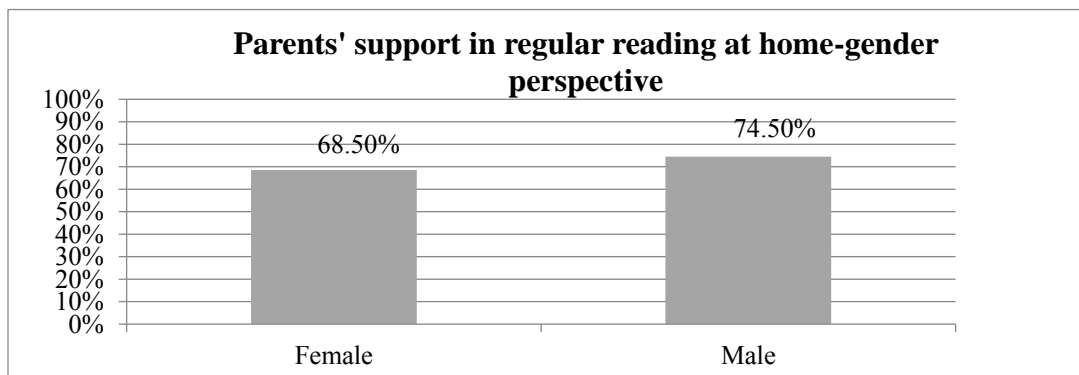
A majority of participants (71%) experienced parental involvement in their school textbook reading practice at home regularly. Data showed that more urban student experienced parental support in their daily reading at home. Having parental support was reported by three-quarters (74%) of urban students, compared to which two-thirds (69%) of rural students. There were more rural students (14%) who never got parental support for their home reading activities, compared to urban 12% urban students having similar experiences.

**Figure 5. 17: Parents' Support in Textbook Reading at Home Regularly by Urban-Rural Areas**



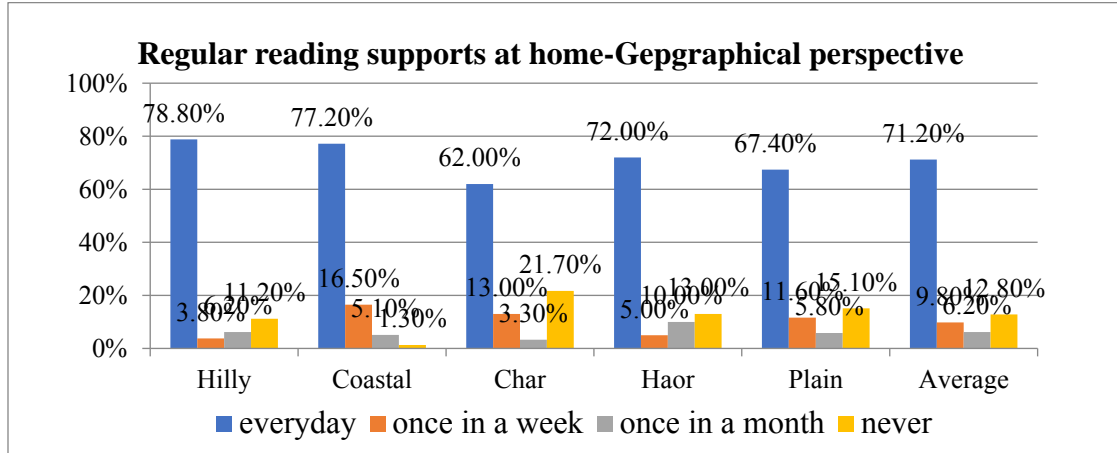
In addition, like rural area students, girl students (68.5%) had less support in their regular reading activities than boy students (75%).

**Figure 5. 18: Parents' Support in Regular Reading at Home by students' Gender**



Data showed that most parents (71.2%) supported their children's reading at home regardless of their geographical location. However, parents from Char areas were the most reluctant group (21.7%) to provide reading support to their children.

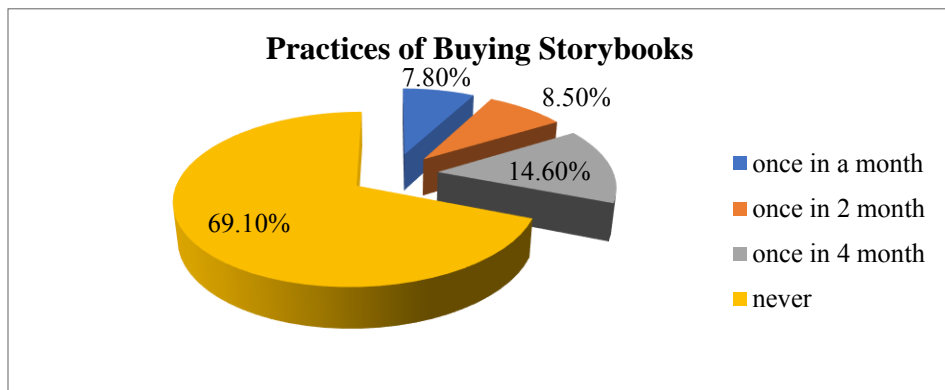
**Figure 5. 19:** Regular Reading Supports at Home by Geographical region



**Practices of purchasing storybook**

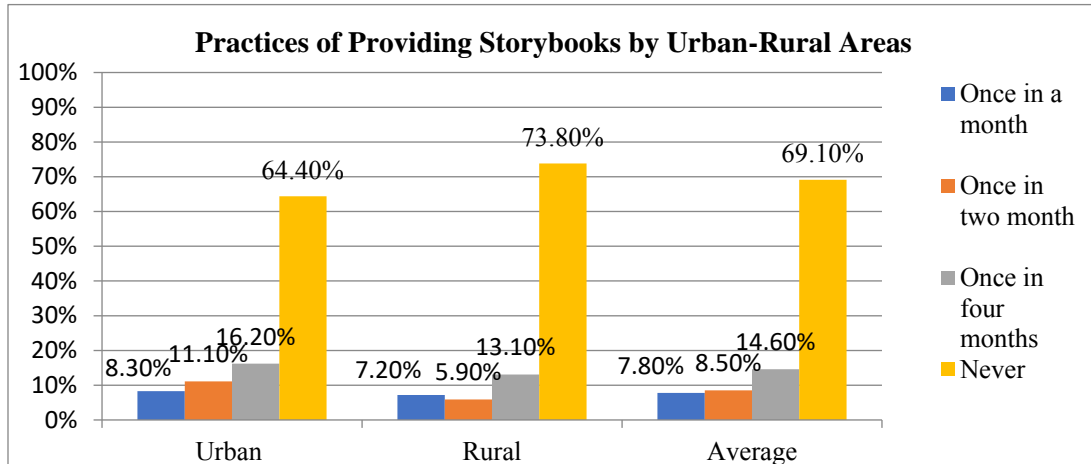
Data from students' experiences revealed that more than two-thirds of their parents (69.1%) never bought them storybooks. On the other hand, a small proportion (7.8%) of parents bought storybooks for their children once a month.

**Figure 5. 20:** Practices of Purchasing Storybooks



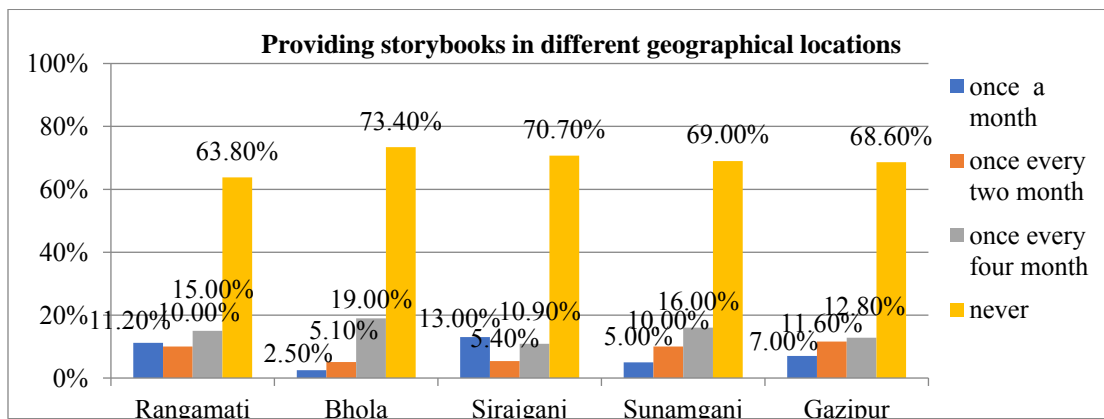
Rural students (74%) lagged behind their urban peers (64.4%) while considering their parents' storybooks purchasing practices. However, it was reported that only 7% to 8% of both urban and rural parents bought storybooks for their children.

**Figure 5. 21: Practices of Purchasing Storybooks by Urban-Rural Areas**



Furthermore, regardless of geographical locations majority of the parents (64%-73%) from all the regions never bought storybooks for their children.

**Figure 5. 22: Practices of Purchasing Storybooks by Geographical Locations**



It was also evident that boy students (70%) received slightly fewer books from their parents than the girl ones (69%) although the difference is a narrow one.

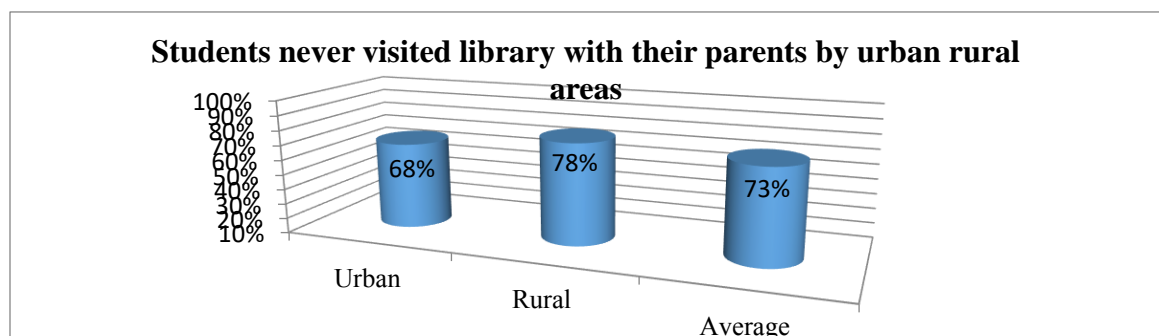
**Table 5. 14:** *Practices of Buying Storybooks by Gender*

Gender	Purchasing Storybooks			
	once in a month	once in every 2 months	once in every 4 months	never
Girl	9.1%	6.2%	16.2%	68.5%
Boy	6.1%	11.2%	12.8%	69.9%

**Available Family Supports to Visit Libraries with Parents**

This study explored students’ experiences of visiting the library with their parents, referring to four different frequency of time such as: ‘once a week’, ‘once a month’, ‘once every two months’, and ‘never’. It was revealed that almost three-quarters of students (73%) had never been to a library with their parents. In contrast, a small percentage (10%) of students had that experience once a week.

**Figure 5. 23:** *Percentage of Students’ Never Visited Library with Parents by Urban-Rural Areas*

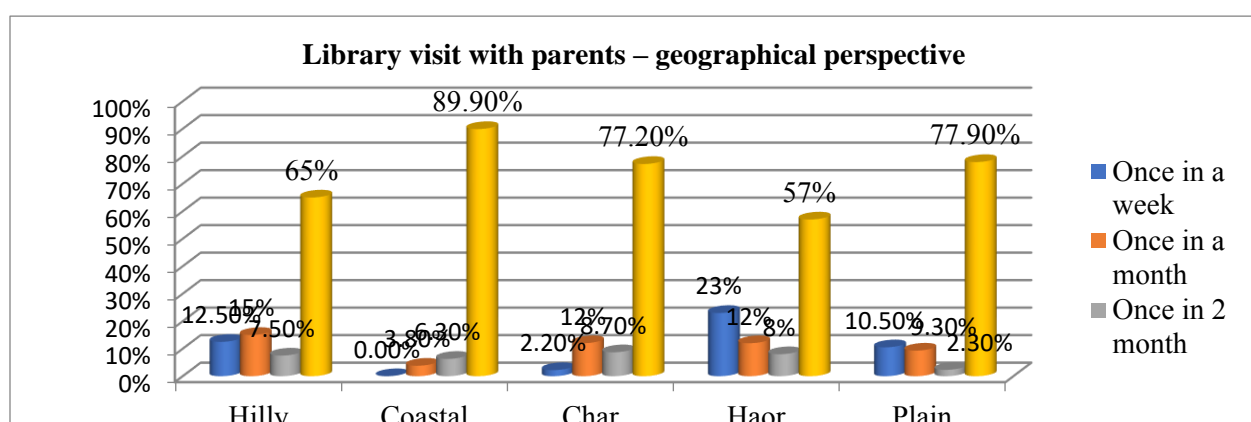


Moreover, rural students were found falling behind the urban ones in frequency of visiting the library with their parents. Data showed that about three-quarters (about 73%) of rural students had never been to a library, whereas more than two-thirds of urban

students (68%) did not get the same. In addition, like urban-rural areas, a vast majority of students (57%-90%) from all the geographical locations had never visited the library with their parents. However, that 'never visited' response was the highest for coastal area students (90%) while the lowest was for the Haor area students (57%).

**Figure 5. 24:** *Percentage of Students' Library Visit with Parents by Geographical*

*Locations*



The boys were ahead of the girls in terms of frequency of visiting libraries. It was found that three quarters of the girl students (75.1%) had never been to the library compared to 70% of the boy ones.

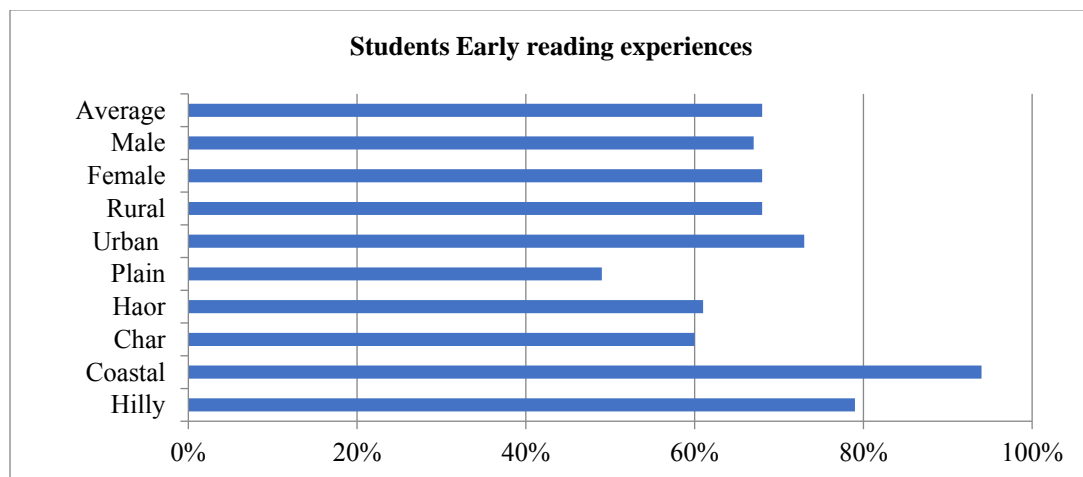
**Table 5. 15:** *Percentage of Students' Library Visit with Parents by Gender*

Gender	Library Visit with parents			
	once a week	once a month	once every two months	never
Girl	10.4%	9.1%	5.4%	75.1%
Boy	9.7%	12.2%	8.2%	69.9%

## Students' Early Reading Practices

The study investigated students' reading habits in the early years to determine the stimulation and experience of reading in the early years. Data revealed from the participants' experiences that almost one-third of the students (32.5%) did not read storybooks in their early years. However, urban students (73.1%) had more experience of reading storybooks in their early years than the rural students (62.0%). In the same way, girl students (68.0%) read storybooks in their early years more often than boy students (67%). Surprisingly, when compared to other geographical locations, half of the students (51.2%) from plain land did not have the experience of reading stories in their early years. However, it was also a substantial number for Char (40.2%), Haor (39%), and hilly areas (21%).

**Figure 5. 25:** *Percentage of Students' Early Reading Practices*



### 5.4.2 Family Facilities for Reading

The physical facilities that students receive at home were considered as reading environment that motivates them to read. The provisions of a reading table, the number of



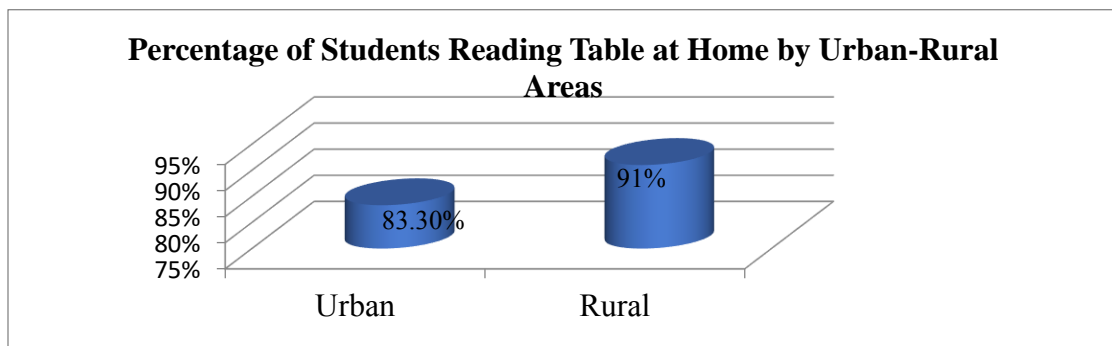
storybooks at home, the provision of using an electronic device and its time duration -all these factors were considered as indicators of reading facilities at home. These findings on these issues are given in details below.

### **Reading Table at Home**

The majority of students (87.2%) had a reading table at their homes. Data revealed from a gender viewpoint that only 89.2% of girl students had a reading table, which was 84.7% for boy students. At the same time, in terms of geographical perspective, almost 98% of students from coastal areas had this facility. On the other hand, the lowest rate of students with a table in their household (77.2%) was for the char area students. These figures for the rest of the regions were very close to one another ranging from 85% to 90%.

However, the urban-rural difference was relatively high in this regard as 91% of rural students had a reading tables compared to 83.3% of urban students having the same facility.

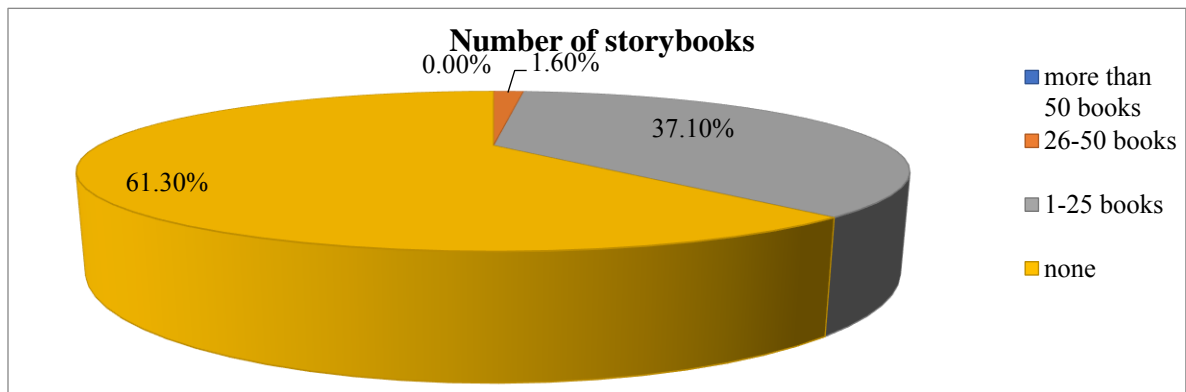
**Figure 5. 26:** *Percentage of Students Reading Table at Home by Urban-Rural Areas*



### Number of Storybooks at Home

This study looked into the number of storybooks belonging to the students at their homes to find out more about their home reading environment. The study investigated the number of storybooks against four categories: have 1-25 books, 26-50 books, more than 50 books, and no storybooks. Data revealed that no students had more than 50 storybooks at home. On the other hand, data also revealed that most of the students (61.3%) had no storybooks at their homes.

**Figure 5. 27:** *Percentage of Students Number of Storybooks at Home*



Girl students had more storybooks than boy students at their homes. Data showed that only 1% of boy students and 2.1% of girl students indicated having 26-50 storybooks at their homes. Furthermore, more boy students (66.3%) than girl students (57.3%) reported having no storybooks at their homes.

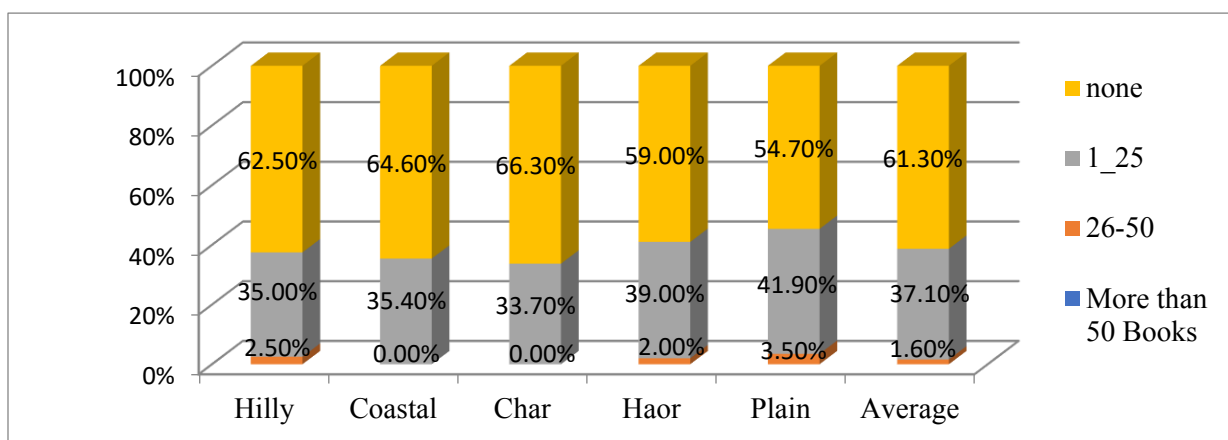
**Table 5. 16:** *Percentage of Students' Number of Storybooks at Home by Gender*

Gender	Storybooks at home			
	more than 50	26-50	1-25	none

Girl	0.0%	2.1%	40.7%	57.3%
Boy	0.0%	1.0%	32.7%	66.3%

Like boy students, rural students were a little behind the urban students regarding the number of storybooks belonging to them. Data showed that 63% of rural students had no storybooks, whereas around 60% of urban students had the experience. On the other hand, only 1.9% and 1.4% of urban and rural students respectively had 26-50 storybooks at home. However, there were no students who had more than 50 books in any of the regions covered in this study.

**Figure 5. 28:** *Percentage of Students' Number of Storybooks at Home by Geographical Locations*

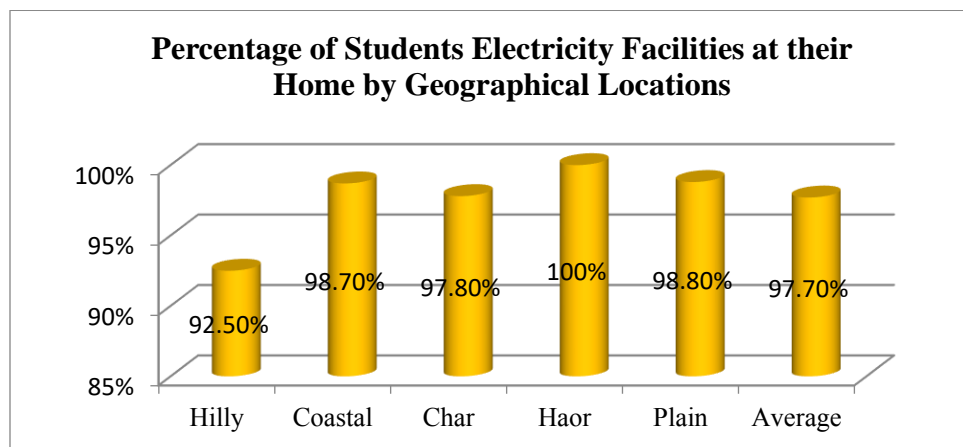


### Electricity Facilities at Home

The Bangladesh government was committed to fulfilling all the targets to develop the country as 'Digital Bangladesh by 2021'. This study looked at the facilities of electricity at students' homes, which is linked with students' reading environment at home. The

findings revealed that, about 98% of students had electricity facilities at their homes. In particular, 99.5% of students from urban areas had access to electricity. On the other hand, 96% of rural area students had that facility. However, out of five geographical locations, only hilly area students had less access to electricity than other locations as 93% of students from hilly areas could avail that facility. In contrast, 98-100% of students get electricity facilities in all other regions.

**Figure 5. 29:** *Percentage of Students' Electricity Facilities at their Home by Geographical Locations*

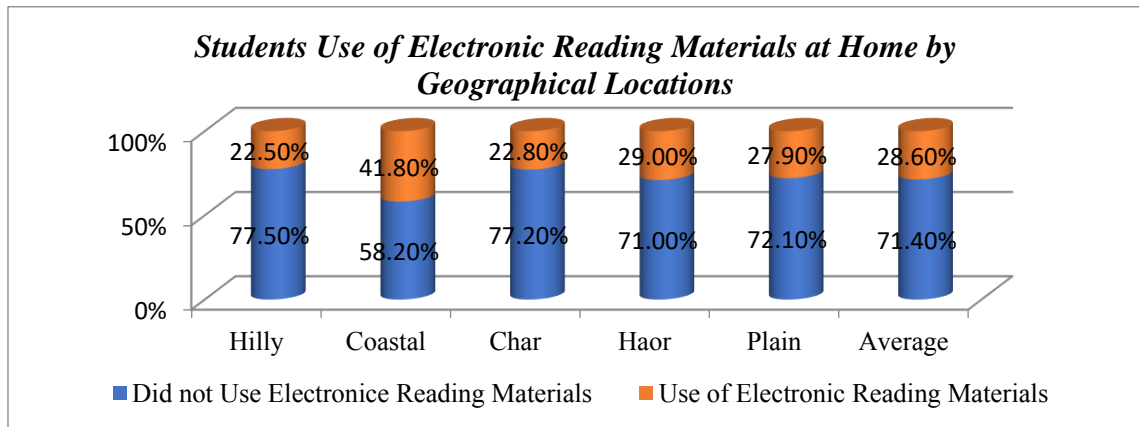


### **Electronic Devices for Reading**

In the era of technology, electronic devices are used as reading materials. In the Covid-19 lockdown period, the government of Bangladesh also introduced online classes for primary school students. This study also investigated the scope of using electronic devices, particularly mobile and laptops, as reading resources. Data revealed that 28.6% of students used electronic devices as reading for accessing reading materials. Alternatively, about 71.4% of students did not use electronic devices as reading

materials. The data also pointed out that, in this regard, the rural student (23%) had fewer opportunities than urban students (34%). However, in terms of using electronic devices as reading materials in different geographical locations, data showed that compared to other areas, students in the coastal areas (41.8%) reported more uses of electronic devices as reading materials and the rate was around 23%-29% for other regions.

**Figure 5. 30:** *Percentage of Students' use of Electronic Reading Materials at Home by Locations*



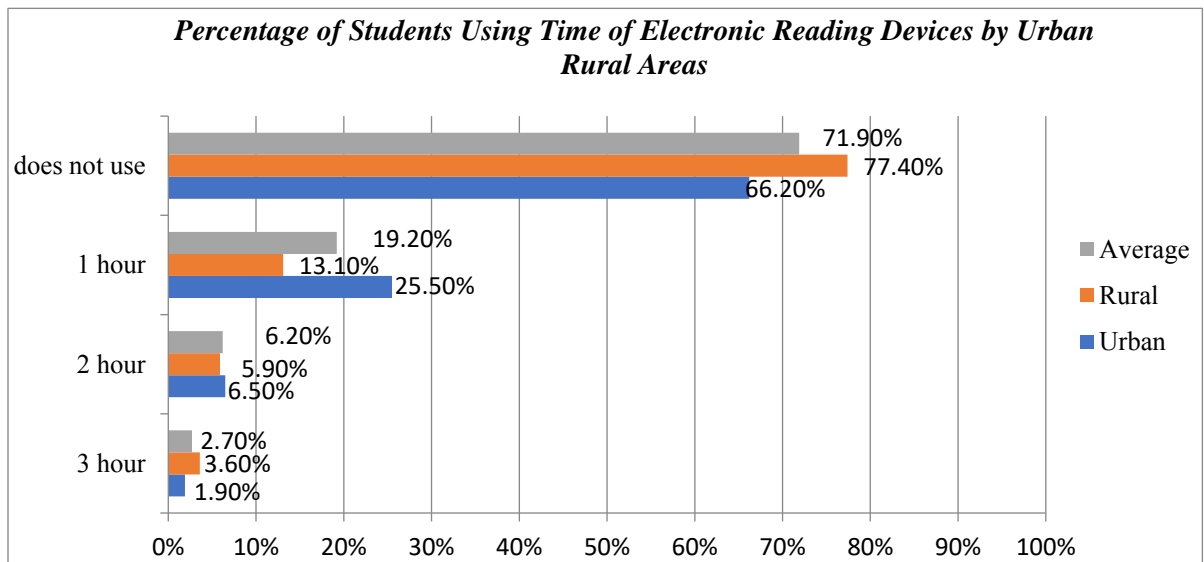
A different scenario was revealed from a gender perspective. The data showed that the same percentage of boy and girl students (29%) used electronic devices for accessing reading materials.

### **Duration of using Electronic Devices for Reading**

Students who used electronic reading devices mentioned the time they spent on these with the help of four different periods indicators such as- 3 hours, 2 hours, 1 hour, and not using it. According to the data, around 72% of students did not use mobile or laptops as an electronic device for reading. On the other hand, 19.2% of students who used

electronic devices as reading materials did it for one hour. Rural students were lagging in using electronic devices as reading material compared to the urban students. Data revealed that 77.4% of rural students did not use electronic devices for reading purposes, and alternatively, 66.2% of urban ones did not do that. Rural students used it longer than urban students in terms of the amount of time spent. Moreover, most of the students from urban (25.5%) and rural areas (13.1%) used these devices as reading materials for one hour only.

**Figure 5. 31:** *Percentage of Students Using Time of Electronic Reading Devices by Urban Rural Areas*



In using electronic devices as reading materials, most students (58%-78%) from all the locations did not report using those materials. Only a good number of students from coastal areas (42%) used those gadgets as reading resources.

**Table 5. 17:** *Using Time of Electronic Reading Devices by Geographical Locations*

Name of the District	3 hours	2 hours	1 hour	none
Hilly	3.8%	6.2%	12.5%	77.5%
Coastal	3.8%	6.3%	31.6%	58.2%
Char	1.1%	8.7%	13.0%	77.2%
Haor	4.0%	3.0%	22.0%	71.0%
Plain	1.2%	7.0%	17.4%	74.4%
Total	2.7%	6.2%	19.2%	71.9%

## 5.5 Reading Environment at School

Students spent a significant amount of time at school. The study examined to identify the extent in which school environment had effects on students reading motivation. The reading environment at school is discussed considering two major aspects. These are:

1. School infrastructure and facilities
2. Classroom environment and facilities

### 5.5.1 School Infrastructure and Facilities

The study attempted to find the types of facilities at school in relation to reading motivation and promotion. A total of five aspects of school reading environment were explored through students' survey and observation checklist which focused on issues like school library facilities, Bangabandhu Corner, school reading competitions, reading programs with external organizations, and provisions of Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM).

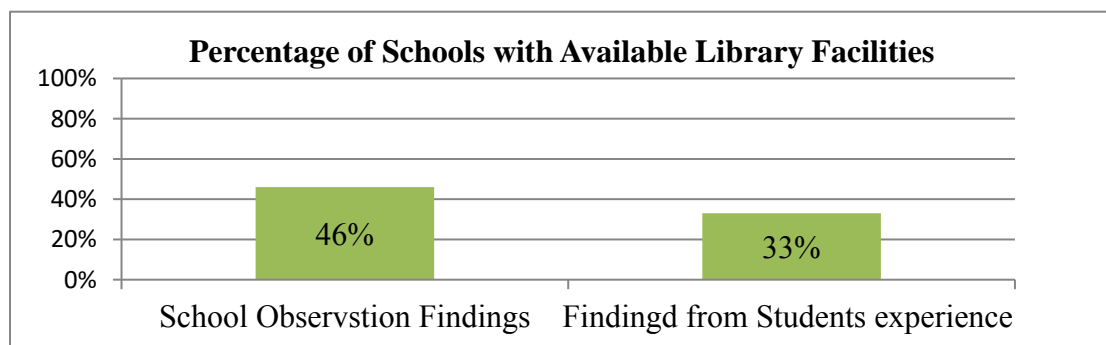
## Library at School and Its Uses

The study explored the library facilities available at school considering them as an infrastructure that supports the reading environment at school. The findings on the library facilities are presented under five separate sections namely-availability of library at school, the location of the library, students' opportunity to use the library, the permission to take books from the school library to home, and the types of books students like to take from the school library.

### Availability of Library Service at School

Students were asked about the availability of a library at their school. Data revealed that out of 437 students 293 (67%) mentioned that they did not have any library in their school. On the other hand, the remaining one-third of the students (33%) acknowledged having a library in their schools. In the same way, data revealed from the school (total of 50 schools) reported that more than half of the schools (54%) had no library in their school. However, both the findings indicated that fact that there was scarcity of library facilities at most schools.

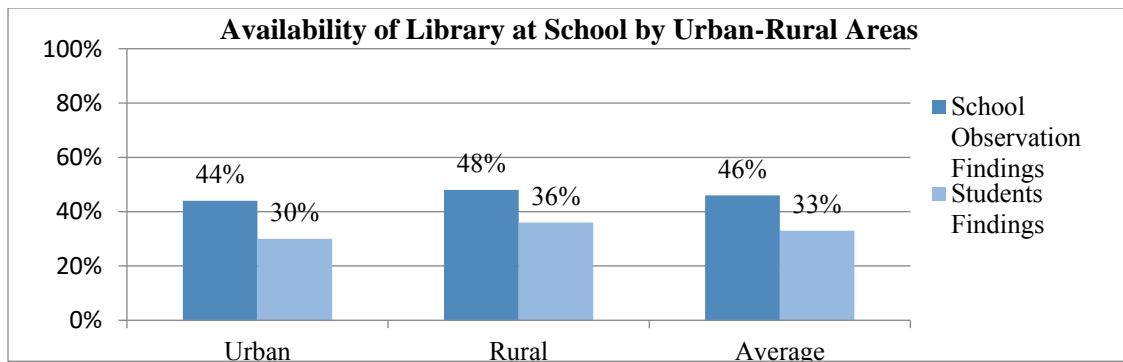
**Figure 5. 32:** *Percentage of Schools with Available Library Facilities*





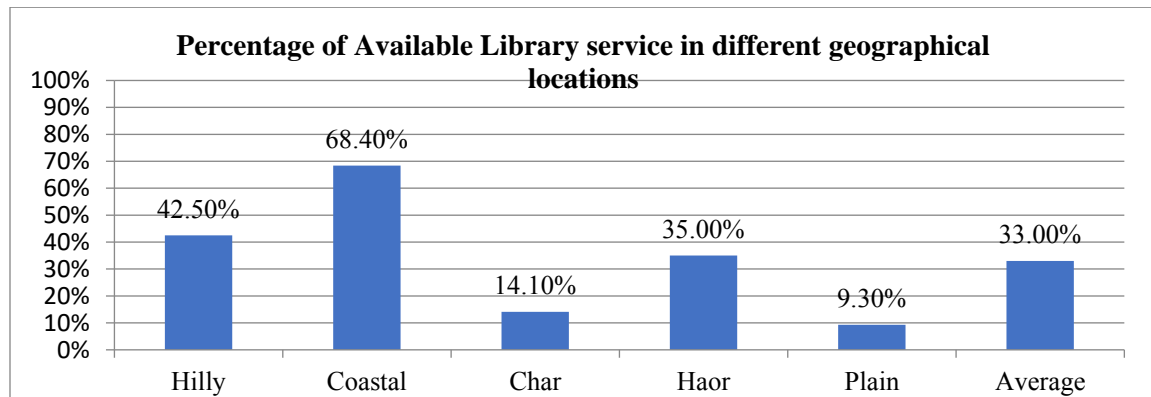
Though a small percentage of students acknowledged having library facilities at school, urban schools had fewer library facilities than rural schools. 36% of the students in rural areas indicated that they had libraries in their schools. compared to 30% of urban students reporting the same. However, findings from the school environment scale were similar to the findings from students' data. It was found from the school environment scal that urban areas had fewer library facilities at schools. In fact, 44% of urban schools had library facilities, compared to 48% of rural schools.

**Figure 5. 33:** *Percentage of Library Facilities at School by Urban-Rural Areas*



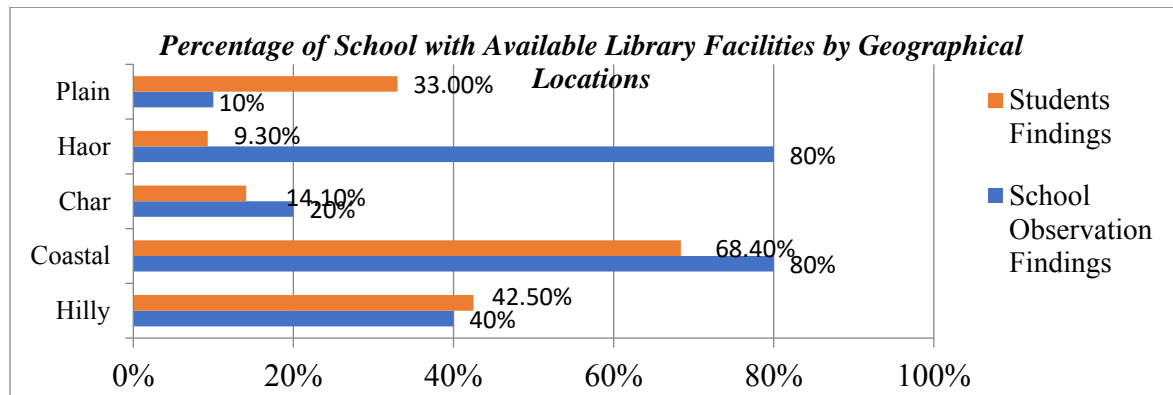
However, most of the students from diverse geographical locations conveyed that their schools did not have a library except those from the coastal areas. A good number of students from coastal regions (68%) compared to other reported having a library in their schools. In contrast, the unavailability of the school library was high for char (86%) and plain (91%) land students, respectively.

**Figure 5. 34:** *Percentage of School with Available Library Facilities by Geographical Locations*



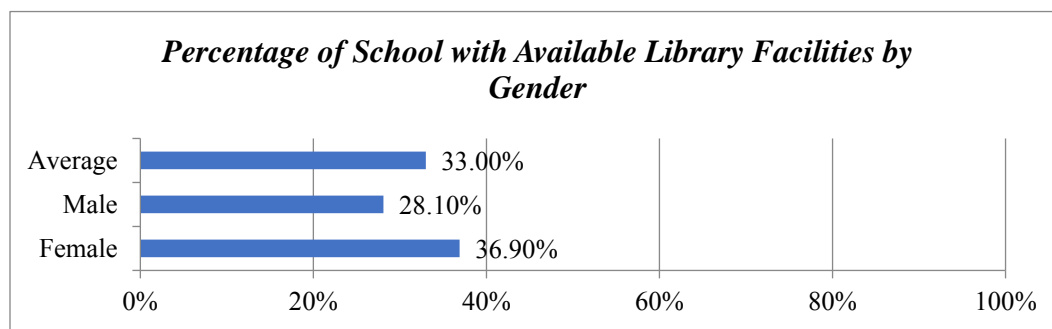
Moreover, the findings revealed from the observation regarding the school library were quite mixed. It was found that the majority of the schools of plain land (90%), Char (80%), and hilly areas (60%) had no library in the schools and these findings were similar with that of students' findings. The finding of coastal areas was also similar to the students' findings, but the number was quite high in the head teacher's findings. On the other hand, alternative findings were revealed for Haor areas. The majority of the schools of Haor areas found that they had libraries in their schools, but a good number of students' report did not endorse the fact.

**Figure 5. 35:** *Percentage of School with Available Library Facilities by Geographical Locations*



Despite the fact that a big number of girl and boy students (63% and 72%, respectively) identified that their schools did not have a library, girl students were more inclined (37%) to acknowledge that their schools did have a library.

**Figure 5. 36:** *Percentage of School with Available Library Facilities by Gender*

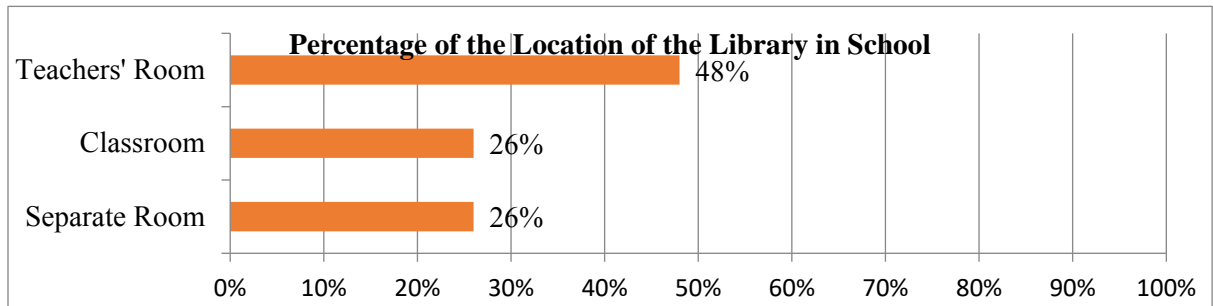


### **Location of the Library at School**

Data revealed from the school observation checklist for reading environment at school that the school library was located in the teachers' room in almost half of the schools (48%), including the head teacher and assistant teachers' room. Along with this, around a

quarter (26%) of the libraries were located in the classroom. In addition, only about a quarter (26%) of the libraries were situated in separate rooms.

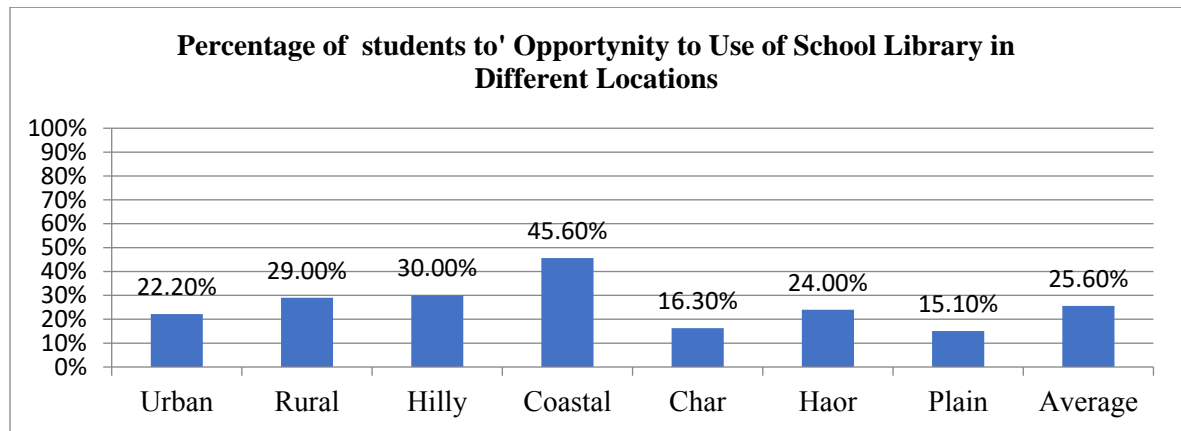
**Figure 5. 37:** *Percentage of the Location of the Library in School*



### **The Opportunity to Use of School Library**

This study explored students' use of the school library in terms of borrowing books from the library, reading at the library, exploring the library at leisure time as a reading culture in the school. Data revealed that out of 437 students, 325 students (74.4%) did not visit the school library. Furthermore, they also did not explore the book collection in the library. Compared to rural students, urban students were lagging in terms of borrowing books from the school library. Moreover, it was found that 29% of rural students visited the library and borrowed books from the school library, which was 22% for urban students. Like the urban area students, students in different geographical locations had limited opportunities to use school library, which came to 26% on an average for all the locations. However, the opportunity was little higher for coastal area students (46%) who had a chance to use the library at school.

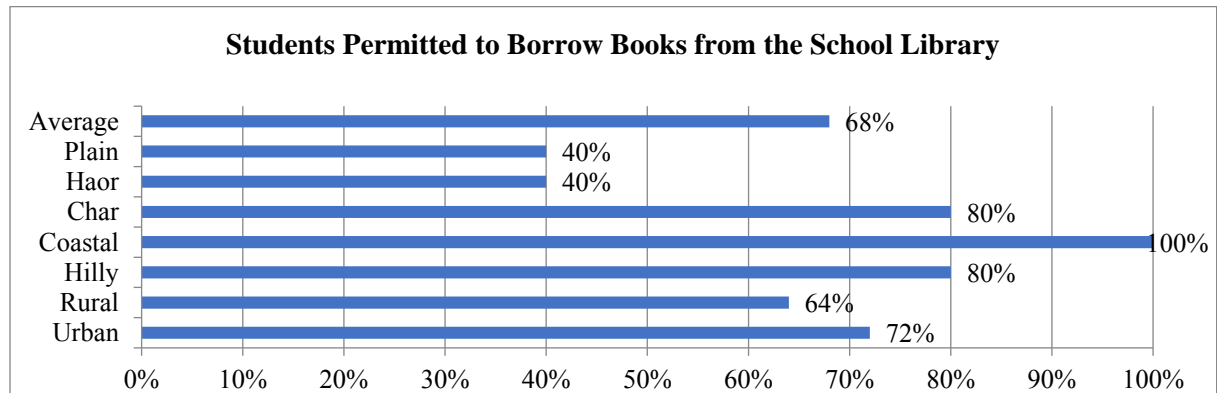
**Figure 5. 38:** *Percentage of Students' Opportunity to Use of School Library in Different Locations*



### **Permission of Borrowing Books from the School Library**

Due to COVID-19, regular school activities had been interrupted; therefore, some practices were not observed on the school observations date and were addressed by the head teacher. It was found from the head teachers' responses that almost one-third (32%) of students were not permitted to borrow books from the school library. Though one-third of the students did not get permission to borrow books from the school library, rural area students experienced this (36%) more than the urban areas ones (28%). Moreover, the percentage of the students having no permission to borrow books from library was high for Haor (60%) and plain land (60%) respectively. Conversely, all the students (100%) from coastal areas get the chance to borrow books from the school library.

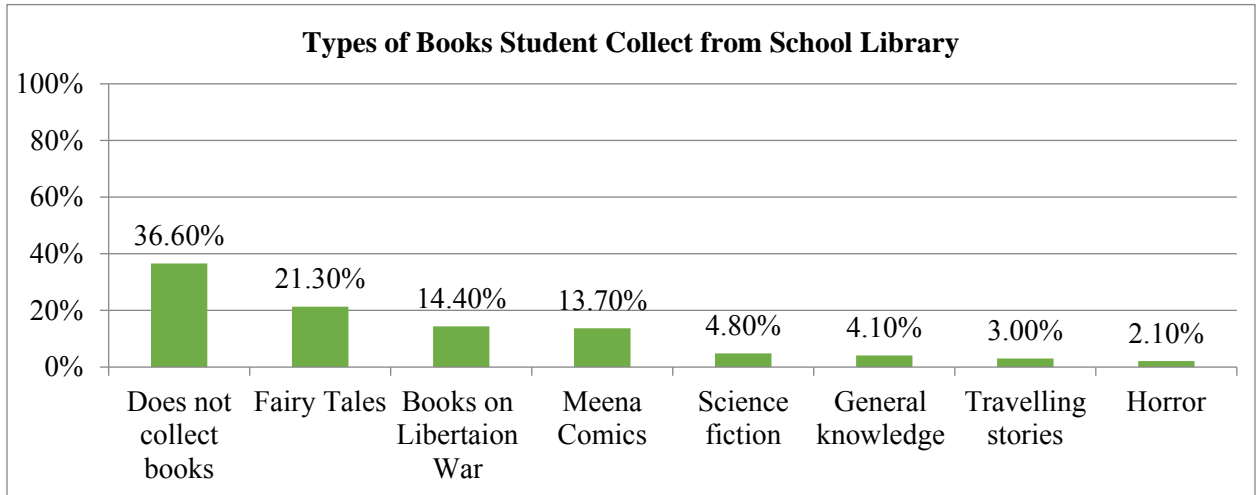
**Figure 5. 39:** *Percentage of Students Permitted to Borrow Books from the School Library*



### **Types of Books Students Collect from the School Library**

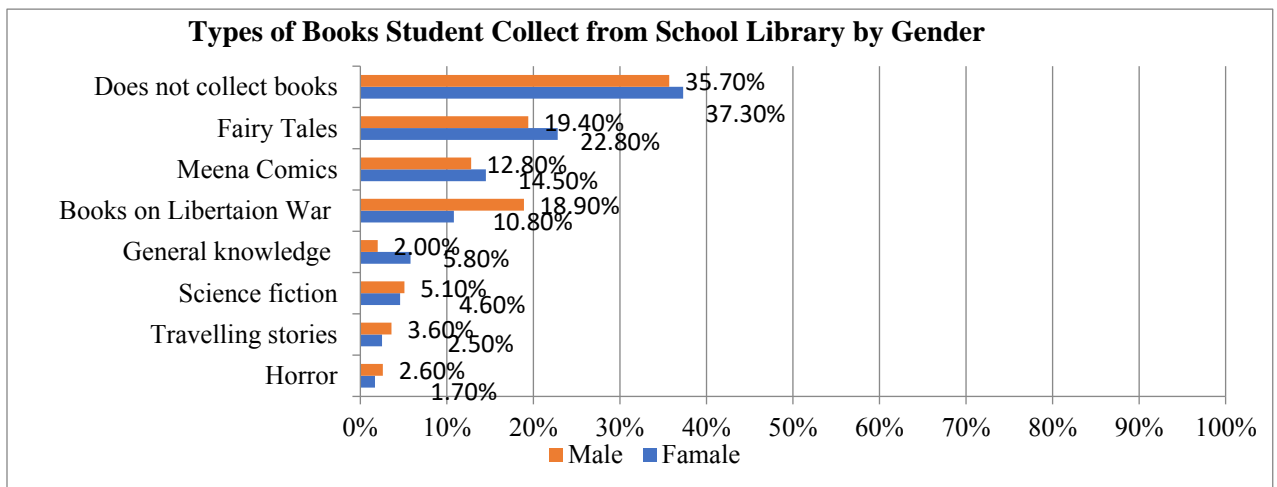
There was a list of books on the survey checklist from which students had to identify the sorts of books they had collected from the school library. They were asked to choose any from the list of books. Data revealed that almost 37% of students did not collect any book from the school library. On the other hand, nearly half of the students (49.4%) collected three types of books from the library such as: fairy tales (21.3%), books about the Liberation War (14.4%), and Meena comic series (13.4%). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) established Meena as a fictional character for the children of South Asia. Meena educates South Asian children with her comic books, animated films (Meena Cartoon), posters, and radio stories, which are available in five languages, including Bangla. This research focused solely on the Meena character from the comic books.

**Figure 5. 40:** *Distribution of Types of Books Collected from the School Library*



Though many students did not collect books from the school library, there were differences in book selection between boy and girl students. Girl students preferred fairy tales, Meena comics, and general knowledge more than the boy students. On the other hand, boy students showed their preferences for the books about the liberation war, science fictions, travel stories, and horror stories.

**Figure 5. 41:** *Distribution of Types of Books Student Collect from School Library by Gender*



It was also found that a smaller number of urban students collected books from the school library than the rural students. Data showed that around 40% of students from urban areas did not take books from the library, compared to around 34% of rural students. Again, the urban students responded more to the Meena comics (17%) compared to less rural (10%) students. On the other hand, rural students indicated their likings for fairy tales (23%), books about the Liberation war (16%), and science fictions (6%) more than the urban ones.

**Table 5. 18:** *Distribution of Types of Books Student Collect from School Library by Urban Rural Areas*

Locations	Fairy tales	Meena comics	travelling stories	Science fictions	books on Liberation on War	general knowledge	Horror	Does not collect books
Urban	19.9%	17.1%	3.2%	3.2%	12.5%	2.3%	1.9%	39.8%
Rural	22.6%	10.4%	2.7%	6.3%	16.3%	5.9%	2.3%	33.5%
Average	21.3%	13.7%	3.0%	4.8%	14.4%	4.1%	2.1%	36.6%

Students from Char areas and plain land were lagging behind in collecting books from the school library. Around half of the students from Char areas (53.3%) and plain land (44.2%) did not collect books from the school library. However, a good number of students from coastal areas reported collecting books mostly about the Liberation war (34.2%).



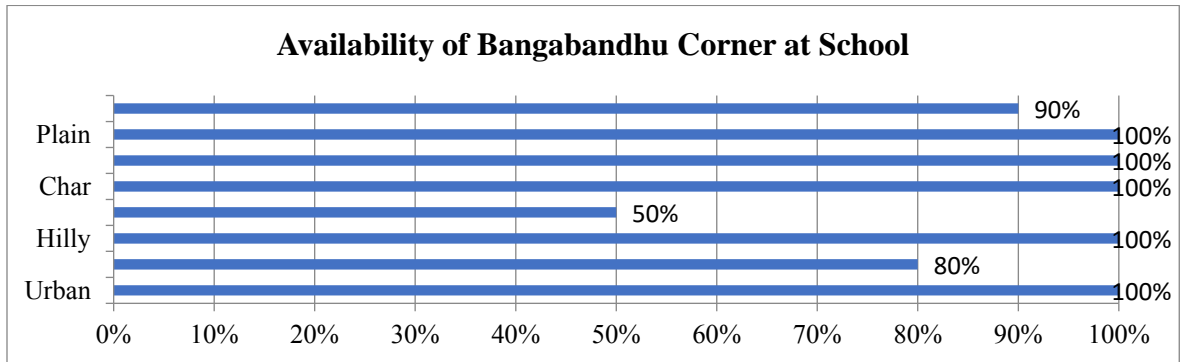
**Table 5. 19:** *Distribution of Types of Books Student Collect from School Library by Geographical Locations*

	Fairy tales	Meena comics	Travelling stories	Science fictions	Books on Liberation War	General knowledge	Horror	Does not collect books
Hilly	30.0%	16.2%	2.5%	3.8%	17.5%	0.0%	0.0%	30.0%
Coastal	16.5%	12.7%	1.3%	6.3%	34.2%	2.5%	0.0%	26.6%
Char	12.0%	8.7%	1.1%	8.7%	5.4%	6.5%	4.3%	53.3%
Haor	25.0%	17.0%	8.0%	3.0%	8.0%	7.0%	4.0%	28.0%
Plain	23.3%	14.0%	1.2%	2.3%	10.5%	3.5%	1.2%	44.2%
Average	21.3%	13.7%	3.0%	4.8%	14.4%	4.1%	2.1%	36.6%

#### **Availability of Bangabandhu Corner at School**

The government of Bangladesh announced the establishment of a 'Bangabandhu Corner' in every primary school to improve reading capacity of students from class III to class V on the occasion of 'Mujib Borsha' (Mujib Year) to commemorate the 100th birthday of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The directive was circulated in the government primary schools in 2018. This study looked into the availability of the Bangabandhu corner in the sampled government primary schools. Data revealed that about 90% of the schools had the Bangabandhu Corner in the school. It was also found that all the schools (100%) in urban areas had the facilities of Bangabandhu Corner. On the other hand, 80% of schools in rural areas had this facility. Furthermore, all the schools (100%) of Char, Haor, hilly and plain land had this facility except the schools in the coastal regions. In fact, 50% of the schools in coastal areas did not have the facilities of Bangabandhu Corner at school.

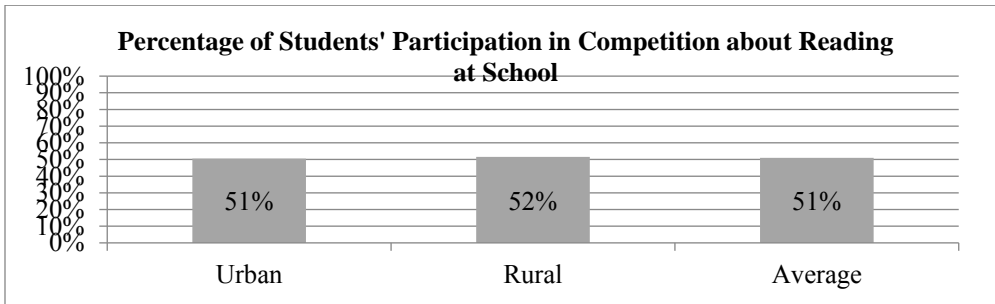
**Figure 5. 42:** *Availability of Bangabandhu Corner at School*



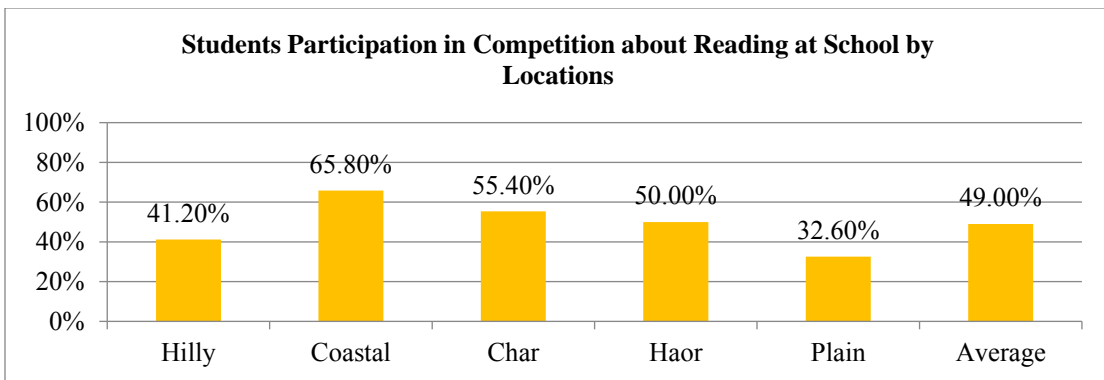
### **Reading Competition at School**

The study looked at the government's directives to organize reading competitions in schools. Data showed that 51% of students did not participate in any competition on reading at school. However, this data was collected from the head teachers' opinion and slightly differed from the students' views; the majority of the head teachers (70%) acknowledged that the school arranged competitions on reading. In addition, around half of the students from urban and rural (50.5% & 52%) areas did not participate in any reading contests in school. Along with urban-rural regions, a good number of students of hilly areas (59%) and plain land (67%) did not participate in any reading competitions in school. In contrast, a good number of students from coastal areas (66%) and Char areas (55%) participated in this competition. However, Haor the area students were found in a neutral position as half of them (50%) participated in the competition, and another half (50%) did not.

**Figure 5. 43:** *Percentage of Students' Participation in Competition about Reading at School by Locations*



**Figure 5. 44:** *Percentage of Students' Participation in Competition about Reading at School by Locations*

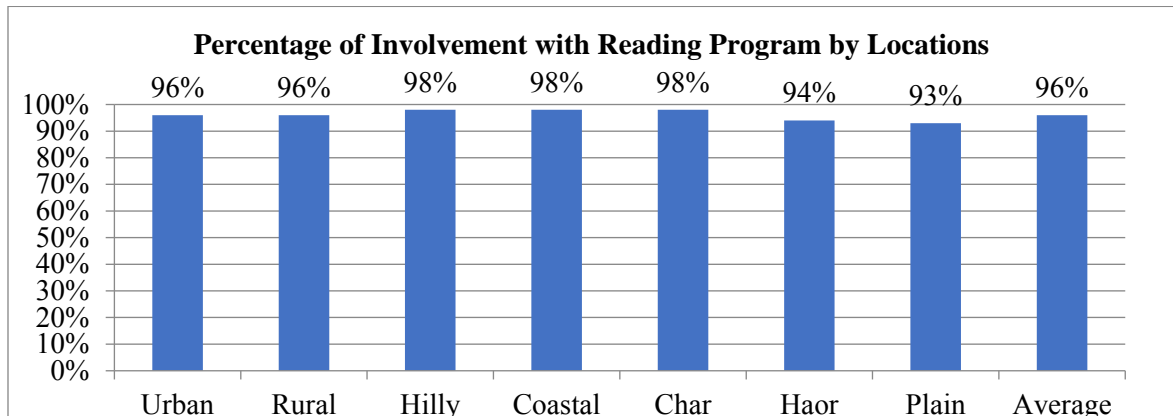


### **Involvement with Reading Program**

The study examined students' involvement with any reading program with any other organisation through school. Data revealed that 96% of the students from urban and rural areas were not involved in any reading programmes of any other organisation. Similarly, 93% to 98% of students did not participate in anything similar regardless of their geographic location. In addition, the findings from the students, head teachers also revealed the same picture. Out of 50 head teachers, 48 (96%) responded that their students had no involvement with reading programs of any other organisation. The rest of

the two teachers (4%) from the urban and hilly area schools mentioned their students' participation in reading activities offered by other organisations.

**Figure 5. 45:** *Percentage of Involvement with Reading Program by Locations*



### **Provisions of Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM) at School**

The study explored availability of the Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM) at school from head teachers' responses. All the participated head teachers (100%) acknowledged that they had selected Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM) at school which were provided by the government.

#### **5.5.2 Classroom Environment and Facilities**

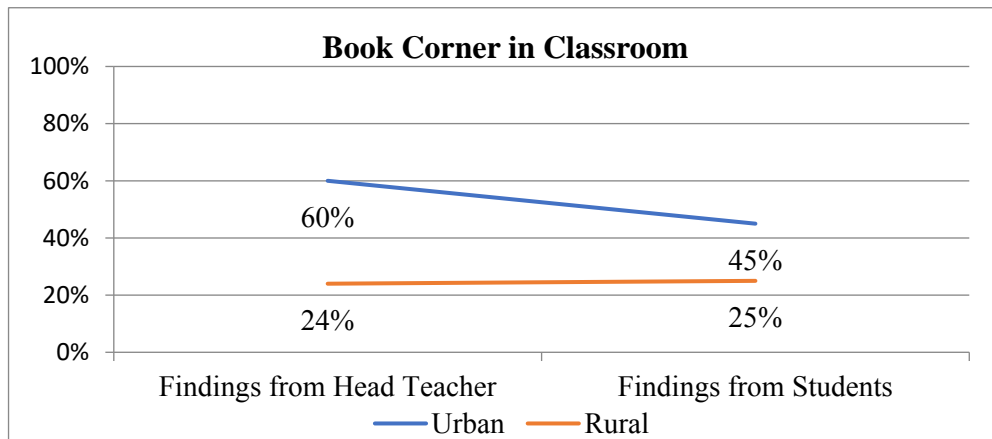
This study result found that four areas as the reading environment in the classroom.

These areas included- book corner in the classroom, scope of reading storybooks in the classroom, reading assessment, and electricity facilities in the classroom. Data regarding the classroom environment and facilities are mentioned below.

### Accessibility of a Book Corner in the Classroom

The present study looked at the accessibility of a book corner in the classroom from both the students' data source and the head teacher's response on an observation checklist for the reading environment in school. Three-quarters of students from rural areas (75%) indicated that they did not have any book corners in their classroom. The head teachers revealed a similar picture that 76% of the schools in rural areas did not have a book corner in the classroom. On the other hand, more than half of the students (55%) in urban regions responded that they had no book corner in their classroom. However, findings from the head teachers of the urban areas compared to urban students were little different. It was found from the head teachers that about 60% of the schools in urban areas had a book corner in the classroom.

**Figure 5. 46:** *Percentage of Accessibility of a Book Corner in Classroom*



Irrespective of locations, 65% of the students responded that they had no book corner in their classroom. In contrast, 58% of the head teachers from different areas responded the same. However, the situation was worse in Char (students' findings-84%, and head

teachers' findings-90%) and plain land (students' findings-77%, and head teachers' findings-60%) compared to other locations.

**Table 5. 20:** *Percentage of Accessibility of Book Corner in Classroom by Geographical Areas*

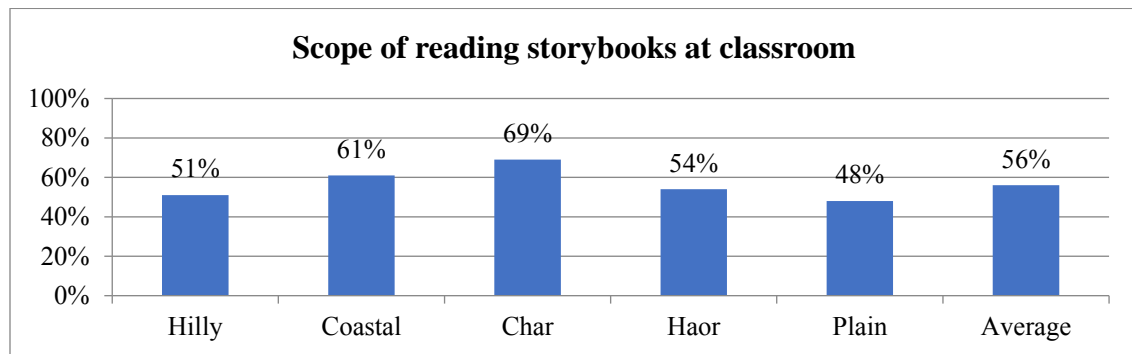
Accessibility of Book Corner in Classroom by Geographical Areas		
Locations	Findings from students' responses	Findings from Head teachers' responses
Hilly	53.8%	60.0%
Coastal	39.2%	50.0%
Char	16.3%	10.0%
Haor	44.0%	50.0%
Plain	23.3%	40%
Average	35.0%	42%

### **Scope of Reading Storybooks in the Classroom**

The study investigated students' experiences of reading storybooks in the classroom. In the survey questionnaire, this close-ended question was asked to know whether students had any opportunity to read storybooks in the classroom. Data revealed that 61% of rural students did not have the scope to read storybooks in the classroom. On the other hand, with a majority of the students 51% of urban students did not mention having such scopes of reading. Furthermore, irrespective of geographical locations, more than half of the students from all the areas did not get the scope to read storybooks in the classroom. However, the percentage of students with no reading scopes in the classroom was high

for the coastal (69%) and Char (61%) area students as more than half of the students reported (56%) having no opportunity to read storybooks in class.

**Figure 5. 47:** *Scope of Reading Storybooks at Classroom by Geographical Locations*



### **Reading Assessment**

The present study explored reading assessment in school in any of the form like formative or summative assessment. Data found that a good number of head teachers (66%) responded that they had reading assessment in their school. On the other hand, the rest of the head teachers (34%) responded that they did not have any kinds of reading assessment in the assessment procedure.

### **Electricity Facilities in the Classroom**

Electricity in school, particularly in the classroom, was investigated in the present study as an infrastructural facility linked to the environment for reading in the classroom. Data revealed that 96% of the schools had electricity facilities. However, 100% of schools in the hilly, Haor, and plain lane had electricity facilities in the classroom. On the other

hand, one school from coastal areas (2%) and another from Char areas (2%) did not have this facility.

## **5.6 Community Environment**

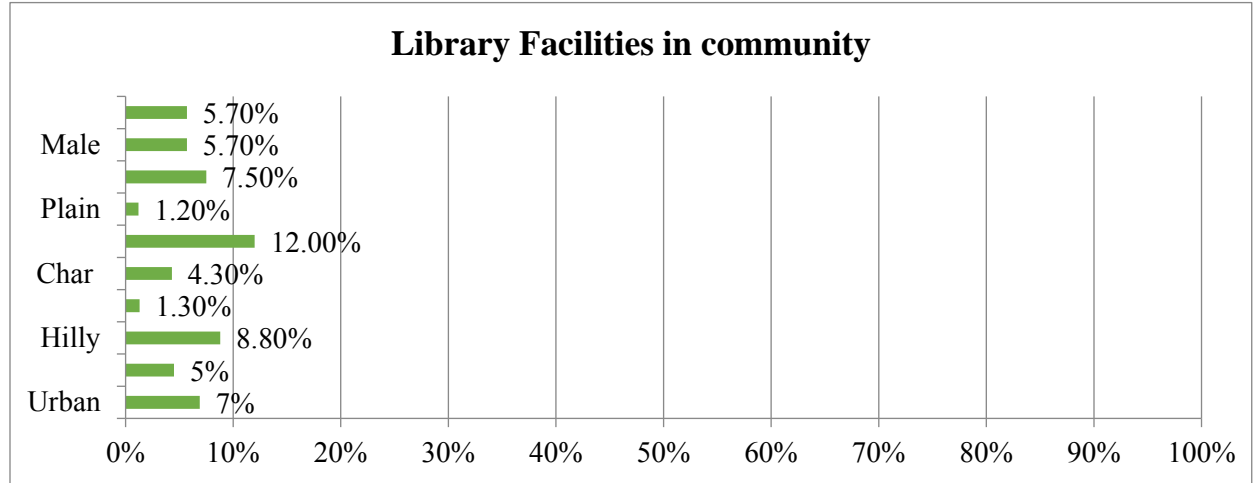
This study examined the extent in which community environment and practices influence reading motivation among the young readers. The use of community libraries, book sharing culture, and availability of mobile libraries were found as major factors promoting reading in the community. The data regarding these three points are presented below.

### *5.6.1 Community Library*

Following this question, the study explored student library facilities in the community through a public library or another form of a library. The findings regarding students' experience showed that 94% of them did not have library facilities in their community. This unavailability of library services at the community level was reported without major difference across the urban-rural location (96% of rural students and 93% of urban students).



**Figure 5. 48: Library in Community**

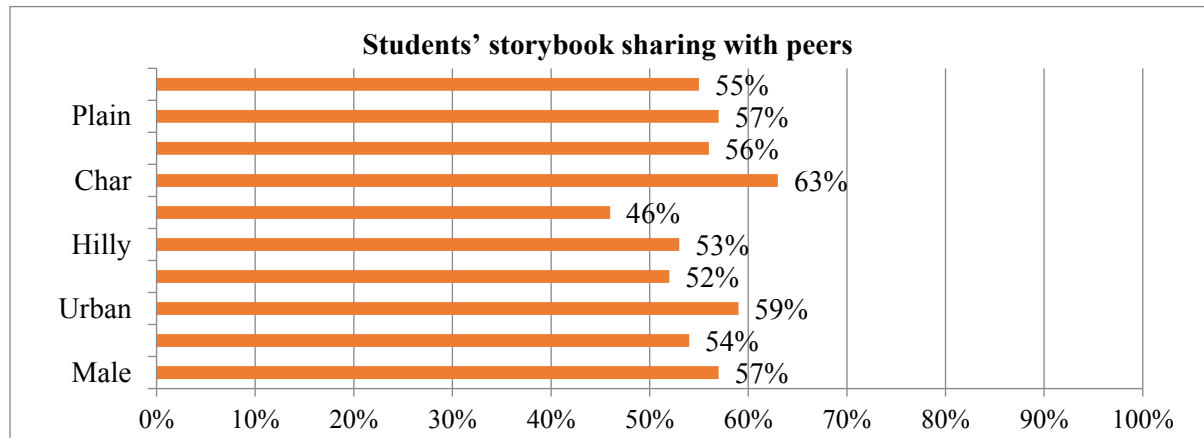


When considering geographical locations, the majority of the students (88%-99%) across all the locations acknowledged that they did not have any libraries in their community. Nevertheless, compared to other areas, Haor area students reported (12%) having this facility more.

### 5.6.2 Storybook Sharing with Peers

Students' experiences of sharing storybooks with their peers in the community were explored as a reading environment in the community. Data revealed that more than half of the students (55%) did not share their books with their peers, and the remaining 45% of the students shared their books with their peers. However, there were no huge differences between the groups (e.g., boy and girl students) or students from one region to another in terms of sharing books with the peers.

**Figure 5. 49:** *Students’ Storybook Sharing with Peers*



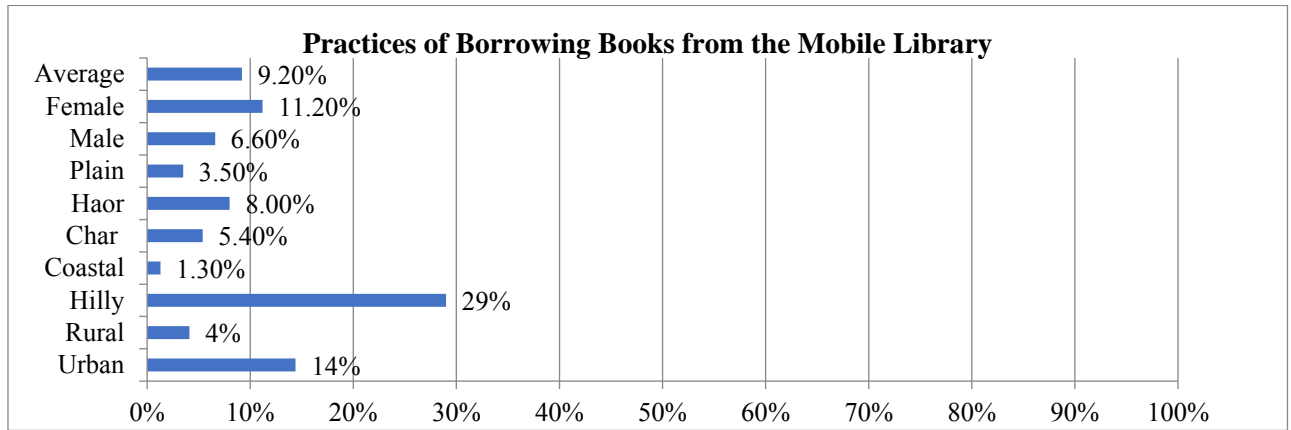
### 5.6.3 Use of Mobile Library

Bishwo Shahitto Kendro (World-Literature Centre), a non-profitable organization in Bangladesh, runs this mobile library known as Bhrammaman Library all over the country to promote a culture of reading in the society in enlightening students and general people of Bangladesh. This study explored the reading environment in the community through students’ practices of using this library in their community to borrow books from the library.

However, data revealed that only 9% of students used the mobile library for borrowing books. Students from rural areas had limited scope to borrow books from the mobile library. Findings showed that 96% of the students from the rural areas did not collect books from the mobile library. On the other hand, with the mobile library facilities availability, the number of non-borrowers was also high among the urban area students (86%). Like the urban-rural perspective, most of the students from all the geographical locations did not borrow books from the mobile library, except the those from the hilly

areas. Data found that 29% of students in the hilly areas collected books from the mobile library. Additionally, girl students (11%) were comparatively more likely to have collected books from the mobile library than boys (7%).

**Figure 5. 50:** *Practices of Collecting Books from Mobile Library in Different Locations*



### 5.7 Reading Motivation for Primary Level Students

To measure the reading motivation of the participants, a 23-item (4-point Likert scale, Cronbach's Alpha .91) reading motivation scale was administered with the grade IV participants. The results show that the participated students had an average motivation for reading. The mean score of the participants was 58.75 (where the scale midpoint is 57.5, SD-13.22). The scores ranged from a minimum of 29 to a maximum of 87 (minimum scale point 23 to maximum 92).

**Table 5. 21:** *Primary Level Students' Reading Motivation Score*

	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Reading Motivation Score	58.75	13.22	29.00	87.00

### 5.7.1 Reading Motivation - gender perspective

The findings revealed that the mean score for reading motivation was high for girl students compared to boy students. Girl students obtained 59.86, against the boy students who scored 57.37. However, the standard deviation was quite high for both boy and girl students. It was 14.25 for girls and 11.74 for boy students.

**Table 5. 22:** *Reading Motivation - Gender Perspective*

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	t*
Girl	59.86	241	14.25	29.00	87.00	1.96
Boy	57.37	196	11.74	31.00	81.00	

Note. \* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

In addition, an independent sample *t*- test was done to know the differences of reading motivation between boy and girl students. Results indicated that there was a difference in reading motivation between boy and girl students, and girl students had significantly higher reading motivation than the boy ones ( $t = 1.96, p < 0.05$ ).

### 5.7.2 Reading Motivation from urban-rural perspective

The results showed that urban students had higher score in reading motivation compared to the rural ones. The mean score was high for urban students, which was 60.88 while it was 56.66 for the rural students (see Table 5.23). The standard deviation was pretty similar for both urban and rural areas. The results showed that the differences in reading motivation between urban and rural students were statistically significant ( $t = 3.37, p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 5. 23:** *Reading Motivation in Urban-Rural Perspective*

Upazila	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	t**
Urban	60.88	12.69	30.00	87.00	3.37
Rural	56.66	13.43	29.00	85.00	

Note. \*\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

### 5.7.3 Reading Motivation in geographical perspective

The results showed that the differences of mean score across the geographic variations was not statistically significant. However, students in hilly areas acquired comparatively higher scores (M-62.35) while participants from plain land showed the lowest scores (M-55.94). The standard deviation was almost similar across the locations except the char areas. The difference of reading motivation between the students of hilly and plain land was statistically significant ( $F = 2.60, p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5. 24:** *Reading Motivation by Geographical areas*

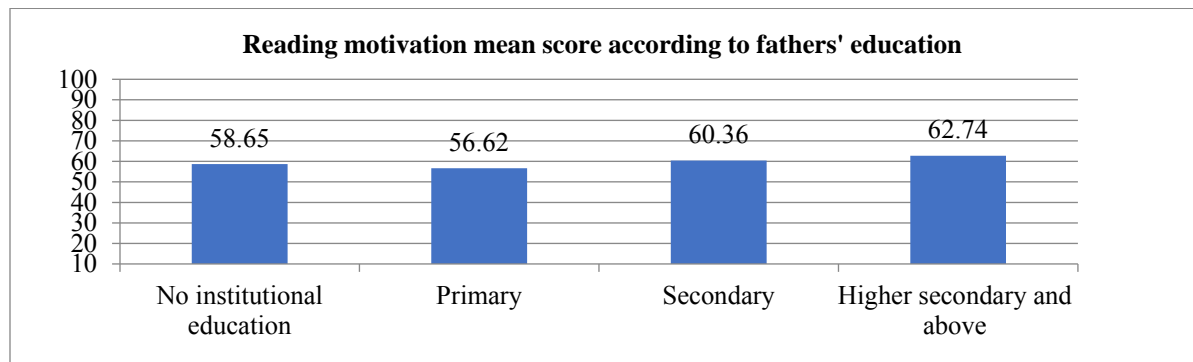
Locations	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	F*
Hilly	62.35	13.23	31.00	87.00	2.60
Coastal	57.75	13.10	29.00	81.00	
Char	58.88	11.98	35.00	83.00	
Haor	58.95	13.57	30.00	87.00	
Plain land	55.94	13.69	30.00	80.00	
Total	58.75	13.22	29.00	87.00	

Note. \* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

#### 5.7.4 Parents Education and Reading Motivation

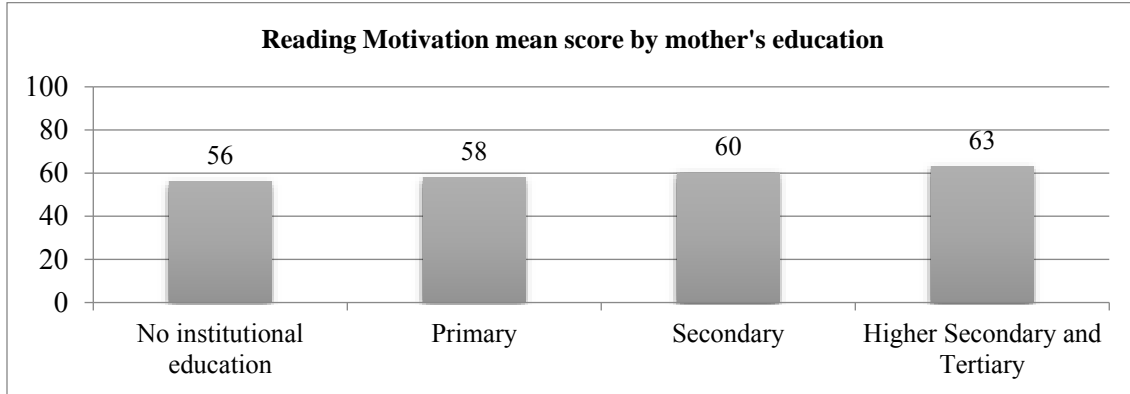
It was found that students whose fathers had higher secondary and above education levels had higher reading motivation score (M-63) compared to the other participants who had parents with less education background. The differences between the reading motivation of the students with parents having 'primary education' and 'Higher secondary and above'; as well as 'Secondary' and 'Higher secondary and above' were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Figure 5. 51:** Reading Motivation as Stated by Father's Education



Data revealed that students with mothers who had higher institutional education were more reading motivation (M-63) than students (M-56) whose mothers had no institutional education. Their differences of mean between these two groups were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Figure 5. 52:** *Reading Motivation as Stated by Mother’s Education*

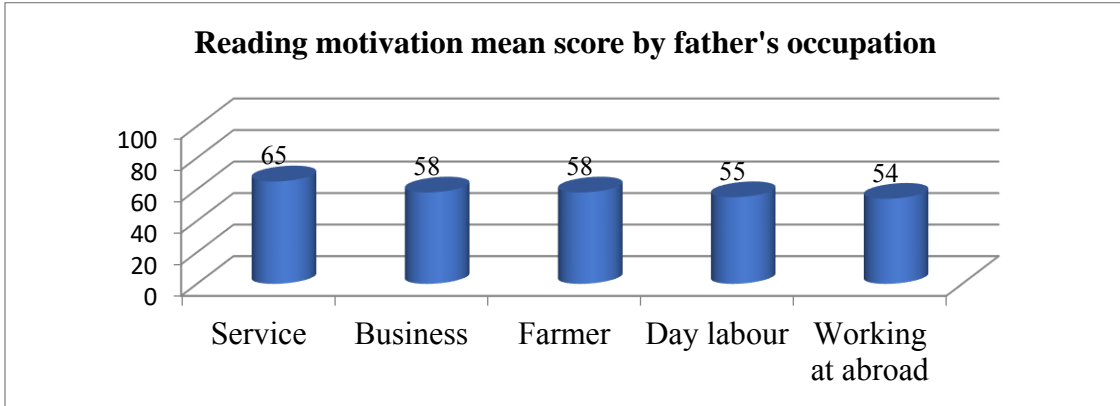


#### 5.7.5 *Parents Occupation and Reading Motivation*

##### **Father’s occupation and reading motivation**

The study findings showed that students whose fathers were involved in services outperformed the rest in the sample in terms of reading motivation. On the other hand, students whose fathers worked on a daily basis, such as day labourers, performed poorly on the reading motivation. However, students whose fathers were businessmen or farmers performed better than those whose fathers worked on a daily basis or abroad. Data revealed from the ANOVA test reported that the differences among all the groups were not statistically significant. However, the differences in the reading motivations of the students whose fathers belonged to the services were statistically significant compared to all other occupational groups ( $p < 0.05$ ).

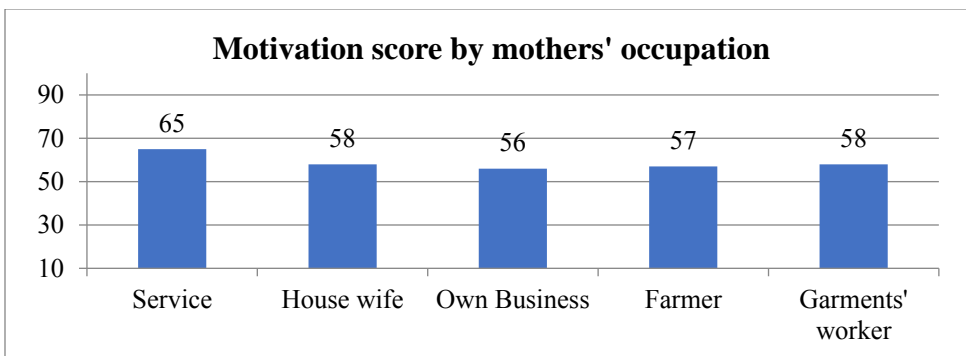
**Figure 5. 53:** *Reading Motivation Mean Score According to Father's Occupation*



### **Mother's Occupation and Reading Motivation**

The study looked at the relationship of the mother's occupation in motivating children to read. The findings revealed that the mean scores for reading motivation were very close for all, except for mothers with service holders. Students whose mothers were service holders acquired the highest scores (M-65). The rest of them were close to one another. The mean score of different occupations were different but not statistically significant.

**Figure 5. 54:** *Motivation Score by Mothers' Occupation*





In summary, it appears that participants higher reading motivation is related to parents' higher level of education. It was also found that girls and participants from urban areas had higher reading motivated than boys and participants from rural areas respectively.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter presents quantitative data findings collected from the grade four students using a survey questionnaire. The study also used an observation checklist and a reading motivation scale to collect quantitative data to fulfill the purpose of the study. A total of 437 students and fifty Head teachers participated in the study as a quantitative data source. Students' reading environments and facilities at home, school, and community were major concerns, along with students' reading habits, practices, and motivation. The study findings revealed that students had very minimal reading facilities at home. Furthermore, facilities for reading at schools were not adequate as well. The quantitative findings revealed that students had limited facilities including library facilities in school, and community. However, girls along with urban students had higher reading motivation compares to their counterparts. The next chapter presents the qualitative findings of the study.

## Chapter Six: Qualitative Findings

### 6.1 Introduction

The findings were divided into two chapters. The quantitative results were presented in the previous chapter (chapter five). This chapter is going to describe the qualitative findings collected through one-to-one interviews, focus group discussions, and telephone interviews with teachers, parents, community members, educational officials, different library officials, and book publishers. Among fifty individual and group interviews, only seven interviews (one DPEO, three PTI superintendents, a mobile library official and a public library official) were conducted over telephone due to the COVID-19 concerns.

The data sources complement one another resulting in a thorough understanding.

Combining data from multiple sources improves the findings by offering a comprehensive scenario of the social and cultural environment motivating students to read. In the findings, the socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation were reflected in both urban and rural areas within five different geographical locations. A detailed list of the participants and the tools used to collect the qualitative data from different geographical locations are presented in Table 6.1.

**Table 6. 1:** *Participants of the Study for Qualitative Data*

Geographical Location	No. of District	No. of School from each District		Parents' FGD		Teachers' Interviews		Community Members' FGD		Interviews with experts and others	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	DPEOs	
Char	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	DPEOs	5
Haor	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	2	1	PTI Super	5
										Shishu Academy	2

Hilly area	1	5	5	2	1	2	1	1	1	Public library	1
Coastal area	1	5	5	1	1	1	2	1	1	Mobile library	1
Plain	1	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	Book Publishers	2
Total	5	25	25	6	5	6	6	6	5		16

The data sources included eleven FGDs with parents and with community members, twelve interviews with teachers, five interviews with the District Primary Education Officers (DPEOs), and the Primary Teachers' Training Institute Superintendent (PTI Super). In addition, two interviews with officials from Shishu Academy, one interview with the Assistant Director, Programme and Monitoring, Mobile Library of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, one interview with the Deputy Director of Sufia Kamal National Public Library, and two more interviews with two children's book publishers have been conducted to collect qualitative data. The data were presented thematically to address the research questions under the following headings:

- Parents' perceptions regarding reading
- The reading environment in the family
- School environment and facilities for reading
- Urban-rural differences in reading
- Gender perspectives of reading motivation

Each heading also has several sub-headings reflecting the major themes and sub-themes of the findings.

## 6.2 Parents' Perceptions Regarding Reading

This study explored parents' opinions regarding what the word 'reading' means to them. Along with this, the study also examined the parents' views on the importance and the necessity of reading. This central theme was divided into two sub-themes. These were:

1. Parents' conceptualisation of reading
2. Parents' views of the importance of reading

### 6.2.1 Parents' Conceptualisation of Reading

Participating parents described reading as '*Pora* - reading', '*Porasuna* -study', '*Poralekha* -study' and '*Shikkha* -education'. Parents used these words to refer to reading in the context of formal education. Parents often expressed their opinions about reading by linking this to various academic practices, but they did not consider going through reading any written materials. In addition to that, parents mostly used three terms interchangeably for reading. However, some of the parents used the word 'reading' to refer to the act of reading.

Parents repeatedly identified reading as *Porasuna* or *Poralekha* (study) and *Shiksha* (education). A parent said, "Reading means so many things to me" (RaPF7). She continued, "Reading means students will study well, they will learn to study, and the process of developing ideas and cognition will be accelerated" (RaPF7). Another parent said, "Reading will improve life, help move forward in life, and improve the future" (KaPF9). Another parent stated, "Reading is education; reading is to acquire knowledge"

(ChPF11). Furthermore, a parent said, “Reading is education, which helps to improve life” (ChPF10).

In addition, some parents defined reading from a different perspective. They explained that reading is a way to pique the interests of readers. On the other hand, reading may be used to enlighten a person. *“The students should read for themselves; parents can only guide them. Parents cannot compel their children to read”* (SuPF3). Another parent stated, *“Children would read to be an enlightened person with a beautiful mind”* (SuPF3).

Moreover, the parents also spoke about their children's first attempts with reading. When their children were about to begin school, parents frequently claimed that they used to recite the alphabets such as o (অ), a (আ), ka (ক), kha (খ), a, b, c, d, and rhymes with their children during their free time. This was their first step towards teaching their children to read in most cases. Another parent claimed that she started to teach letters focusing on the signs of the alphabet at home. She used to teach those orally (ChPF10). *“Reading involves learning the alphabets, numbers, and rhymes”* - one of the parents explained (RaPF7). Another parent said that her daughter usually sits with her older sister during her study time. The parents wrote down the alphabet and numbers, and the child was asked to trace the letters and numbers (SrPF2). One of the participants explained, *“At first, I introduced the alphabets orally. After that, I taught her some common words such as “father, mother, sister, brother, relative, village, and post office”* (SsPF4). Learning the alphabet, various human relations, and objects were frequently regarded as parents' reading practices. Parents seldom perceived reading as reading written materials. One of

the parents said, *“Reading means being able to read anything. It is important to be able to read. If anyone can read well, they will be able to understand everything”* (RaPF7).

### *6.2.2. Importance of Reading to Parents*

The study investigated what importance the parents attributed to reading. Data revealed that parents valued reading as an integral part of their children's lives, and they frequently mentioned reading as a core requirement for life instead of a form of entertainment. The following sub-themes emerged from the data regarding parents' perceptions of the importance of reading which are presented below.

- a) Reading for career development
- b) Reading for women's empowerment
- c) Reading for enhancing social skills and raising awareness
- d) Reading for developing life and the nations

#### **a) Reading for Career Development**

Parents frequently described reading as a means to achieve stability, establishment, self-realisation, or a pathway to success in life. They went on to remark that reading is important for everyone to be well-off in life, regardless of their occupation. One of the parents said, *“If anyone wants to get a job, do business or do anything else in their life, they need to study. Without reading, life is in the dark”* (CfPF6). Another parent said, *“It is necessary to read. Education can't be given to someone else. Everyone requires it for his or her benefit. People need employment, whether today or tomorrow”* (GaPF1).

Similarly, another parent said that studying would be beneficial to their children. It can ensure their employment, income, and, ultimately, improve their standard of living

(SsPF4). Parents from different communities frequently mentioned that children need to learn to be self-sufficient (SrPF2, GaPF1, SuPF3, ChPF10). Furthermore, one of the parents said that children must study to be established and play a positive role in society (SuPF3). In addition, another parent said, "*Children should be educated to be able to do something by themselves. They don't have to be dependent (on others). They should be self-reliant*" (KaPF9). One of the parents emphasised the extent of reading engagement while discussing the value of establishment. Along with this, he also emphasised developing reading ability. He said,

Reading is required if an individual wishes to be recognised or advance to a higher socioeconomic level. His interest in reading would grow if he could effortlessly read, and his level of knowledge would improve. If anyone cannot read, they will be uninterested in reading and will repeatedly change the text. (RaPF7)

### **b) Reading for Women's Empowerment**

Reading is essential for women's empowerment, according to the parents. They found out that women in society have a variety of roles and responsibilities. As a result, from various perspectives, parents highlighted the need for women to read. The expressions of parents highlighting women's empowerment are mentioned below.

#### **Reading for Women's Empowerment, Upraising Social Status, and Contribution to**

**Development** - Reading is essential not only for child-rearing but also for women's empowerment. Parents advocated women's employment while still contributing to their families. One of the parents said, "*I am a housewife. There would not be as many issues in the family as there are if I had studied. I'm sure I could fix those issues as well*"

(SuPF3). Parents nowadays want their daughters to be independent and stable as human

beings in the society. A parent said, “*Girls need to study to raise themselves, become independent, and improve their lives*” (SrPF2). Parents frequently mentioned reading as a tool for women's social advancement. Another parent said, “*If girls read, they can do anything for themselves. As a result, I believe that education is required more for girls*” (SuPF3). Another parent was concerned about women’s education. She said,

Women are not valued and are not given the respect they deserve in the society. Girls must be taught to gain respect from the society. In addition, girls do not have the same level of freedom as the boys have. As a result, girls must be taught to turn their lives around and assert their rights. (RaCF7)

Furthermore, parents frequently placed more emphasis on girls' education so that they could protect themselves (KaPF9, ChCF10). One of the parents said,

Girls move to another house after they get married. They must act out if they are the sufferers or are tortured. They can accomplish something on their own if they are educated. They may be able to save themselves. That is why it is more necessary to make girls educated. (KaPF9)

One of the parents said, “*Education enhances a girl’s social status in society*” (CfPF6).

As a consequence, girls must have a strong desire to learn. One another parents stated, “*If girls’ study properly, they will get a good job in the future; they would settle down*” (CfPF6).

Parents further emphasised that a mother could build a nation. As a result, a girl’s reading is more significant to build a country. “*If mothers are not educated, it is difficult to build an educated nation. Educated mothers will ensure the survival of an educated population*” (SuPF3). Another parent agreed and stated,

If a mother is literate, she can teach her children. If the mother does not know how to read, she will not be able to help her children in any of the required areas. Her child will be unable to achieve the information which is vital for a human being. (BhPF5)



### **c) Reading for Enhancing Social Skills and Raising Awareness**

Parents frequently highlighted reading as a means of developing social skills and raising awareness. Education has a positive impact on people's attitude and behaviour. One of the parents said, *"If we study, we can learn how to behave in a social setting, what to do and what not to do in a certain situation and as well as how to behave with due etiquette"* (SrPF2). Some parents claimed that people must be able to read to function in their everyday life.

Reading, according to some parents, makes people aware of the burning social issues which may protect them (people) from different negative developments in society and help eliminate them. One of the parents mentioned in this regard, *"Studying may prevent various biases and eliminate various societal vices such as child marriages. A well-educated young man or woman would never marry a child. Gradually, these kinds of negative activities will be removed from the society"* (GaPF1). Another parent also supported this and mentioned that reading helps remove different social problems and upturns social awareness. Likewise, a parent said, *"A person, especially a girl, who knows how to read can consciously protect herself from eve-teasing. She can easily communicate through the helpline and get help from the concerned organisation"* (ChCF11).

#### **d) Reading for Developing Life and the Nations**

Parents valued reading because it allows their children to develop various aspects of their lives while also enabling them to contribute to their community and the nations as a whole. Thus, reading was perceived as a means for social, cognitive, political, financial, and personal growth by parents.

A parent remarked, *“If children can read, they will learn a lot from diverse research studies and use the knowledge in their own family, community, and state, and in the end, it will help everyone in the society”* (SuPF3). Another parent stated that an educated individual has a beneficial impact on society. She added, *“If I am educated, someone else in the society will want to learn from my example. Someone else is keeping an eye on him. This would stimulate a large number of people in society to study”* (RaCF7).

Furthermore, another parent said, *“An educated person will work to educate one more person. Through education, educated people attempt to reform the society”* (RaPF7).

Parents expressed that reading is essential for the development of a country. When an educated person leads a developing area, it will function properly in every sector.

Children are the future generation that need to be developed, and the country would develop further if educated children became involved in politics. The parent stated, *“Anyone in politics with an educational background would be able to lead the country correctly”* (SsPF4). Furthermore, a parent explained, *“Children go to the supermarket, buy something, and pay for it themselves. As a result, they need the education to do these common tasks needed in their daily life”* (CfPF6). Another parent added that even if a person owns a small business, he must conduct daily business transactions, and he'll have

to be educated for that (SuPE3). Giving importance to reading, another parent said, *"Agriculture is the primary source of income in the rural areas of Bangladesh. If children study and research agriculture, the agricultural sector would improve greatly"* (SuPF4). Another parent mentioned, *"An educated citizen would understand and follow all of the state's laws. He will not do anything illegal"* (RaCF7).

Parents consistently stated that children must read to obtain knowledge. Reading helps to develop a child's cognitive abilities. One of the parents said, *"Knowledge is infinite. Reading is important for expanding one's knowledge. Reading allows a child to learn more"* (SrPF2). According to another parent,

Life is worthless if someone cannot read. The more people read, the more they learn, and they become richer. We owe our debt to books according to academics. For expanding one's awareness and knowledge there is no substitute of a good book. (SuPF3)

Similarly, another parent claimed that children could learn a lot from reading and reading helps them improve their cognitive skills (SuPF3). Furthermore, a parent said, *"The main purpose of reading is to acquire knowledge"* (ChPF10). Moreover, a parent said, *"People cannot express themselves when they do not know anything. They can acquire knowledge through reading"* (ChCF11).

Some parents stated that reading has a positive impact on shaping a person's mental structure and they are distinct from those others who cannot read. Regarding this a parent said, *"There is a difference in the mindset of an educated person and a person who is not. Those with education, I believe, have a positive perception about reading and development"* (SrPF2).

### **6.3 The Reading Environment in the Family**

A child's first and closest social institution is the family. Similarly, parents are the most important members of the family. Parents in a family play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a learning environment that encourages children to read. This study looked at the family environment and parents' role in various activities to promote reading. In addition, the research looked at how parents value different reading practices. The findings on parents' family practices and participation in their children's reading activities are presented under the six themes below:

1. Early reading practices of children in Bangladesh
2. Reading support found in families
3. Reading habits and involvements in reading at home
4. Attitudes of parents towards reading storybooks
5. Library facilities and parental involvement

#### *6.3.1 Early Reading Practices of Children in Bangladesh*

##### ***Adarshalipi- the First Book of Children***

Parents in Bangladesh often bring 'Adarshaalipi' (a book for young children composed of Bengali and English alphabets, numbers, rhymes, and common vocabulary) for their children as their first book (GaPF1, SrPF2, SuPF3, SsPF4, BhPF5, CfPF6, ChPF10, ChPF11). Some parents listed 'Eker Vitor Pach-Five in One' or 'Eker Vitor Dosh- Ten in One' (CfPF5, RaCF7) or 'Eker Vitor Tin-Three in One' (KaPF9) as alphabet books. Some parents mentioned the alphabet book titled 'Shishur Soishob- Child's childhood'

(RaCF7). In other regions, parents mentioned ‘Shishu Shikkha- Child education’ (ChPF11). Children were introduced to these books by their parents before they were admitted to school.

Parents introduced these books to their children in their early years. However, one of the parents said that he did not buy any books before sending his child to school. The books provided by the government school were his child’s first books (ChPF10). Parents stated that they gave these books to their children when they were two and a half and five years old. One of the parents said, “*I began teaching the letters orally. When my child was five years old, I then purchased an alphabet book*” (SsPF4). Another parent explained, “*I began teaching my child alphabet at the age of two and a half, and then I bought a pencil and a khata (notebook) for writing*” (CfPF6). According to the data, some parents bought books following their children’s request. A parent continued,

My daughter used to sit with her elder sister and write on paper. She cried one day and said, ‘Apu [elder sister] has her own books, so I need mine.’ Then, we bought her an alphabet book titled ‘Eker Vitor Panch-five in one’ (GaPF1).

***Additional Reading Materials*** - The alphabet book was often listed as a reading material used by parents. Few educated parents have mentioned using storybooks, pictorial books, and books with short sentences as reading materials. Along with these books, some others introduced Bangla rhyme books. One of the parents said, “*At the age of three, I used to read out storybooks to her which were written in short sentences*” (SrPF2). Another parent also mentioned using picture books and the alphabet books (ChPF11).

In this instance, a couple of the parents used picture books as reading contents. One of them explained, *“At first, my child began with picture books containing different things like fishes, fruits, flowers, eggs, etc. By looking at the pictures, she used to tell their names. We also used to read stories to her”* (SrPF2). He said, *“She wanted to see real objects and animals after looking at the pictures. Therefore, I took her to the market and showed her the real ones”* (SrPF2). One of the parents reported that her child was particularly fond of picture books. She explained,

My daughter was more interested in picture books. Her older brother read many stories when she was two and a half years old. By looking at the images in her elder brother’s storybook, she could tell the story beautifully in her way. (SuPF3)

She continued, *“When I asked her to tell stories, she surprised me. I was perplexed thinking how she came up with such fantastic stories”* (SuPF3)! One of the parents agreed with this and emphasised the importance of picture books. He added, *“My son would try to narrate the story after reading picture books and listening to stories. I used to believe that if lessons could be conveyed to him through the medium of stories, he would learn them easily”* (SuPF3). Additionally, one of the parents said, *“I would bring the plastic picture books sold on the train. She began with those books”* (SuPF3).

***Starting Time of Reading in Early Years*** - Parents began to teach their children to read at various ages. Some parents enrolled their children in private kindergartens to begin their formal education (SrPF2, SuPF3, CfPF6). Those children were transferred to the Government Primary Schools (GPS) later. Others started at home (GaPF1, RaPF7, ChPF10) or a temple-affiliated school (RaPF7, KaPF9) before enrolling in the GPS. According to data obtained from focus group interviews, parents began teaching their

children to read when they were two and a half or three years old. One of the parents said, *“At the age of three, I used to read out storybooks to her that were written in short sentences”* (SrPF2). Similarly, one of the participants said, *“I had taught the alphabet orally to my child when he was two and a half years old. When he was three years old, I purchased alphabet books for him”* (CfPF6).

Alternatively, in some communities, parents began teaching their children to read when they were about four to six years old (SrPF2, RaPF7, ChPF10, CHPF11). One participant said, *“At the age of six, we gave her a rhyme book, and she used to memorise the rhymes and read the pictures in that rhyme book”* (SrPF2). Similarly, one of the participants said, *“I bought my child’s first alphabet book when he was four years old and taught him the alphabet”* (SsPF4). Some parents began with the alphabet book when their children were three years old (RaPF7).

### *6.3.2 Reading Supports in Families*

The reading support students received from their family was also investigated. The facilities parents provided as part of the reading environment prevailing in the family through various activities are discussed under the following three sub-themes:

- a) Family environment and facilities
- b) Family practices of storybooks
- c) Collection of storybooks at home

### **a) Family Environment and Facilities**

The study found some of the facilities parents provide that form the family environment for their children to stimulate their interest in reading. In the focus group interview, parents stated that they provided two different types of facilities -tangible and intangible. All concrete elements that added to a family reading environment were chairs, tables, textbooks, pencils, khata (notebooks), other stationers, computers, laptops, tablets, and decorative materials. On the other hand, adequate light and air at home, including amenities for reciting poetry, painting, dancing, and singing were the intangible facilities.

#### **Tangible Facilities**

Parents frequently mentioned that they had provided chairs, tables, books, pencils, khata (paper), and other stationers as tangible facilities for reading at home. When it came to the home environment, some parents said that they kept it calm and quiet during study time (GaPF1, BhPF5, CfPF6, RaPF7, & KaPF9). They further mentioned that they avoided watching TV or using their phones at home, ensuring a quiet environment for their children's reading. However, one of the parents claimed,

Children frequently persuade their parents to get a mobile phone so that they may participate in online classes. Even though it is necessary for attending the classes, parents and children are addicted to phones, and they use them for entertainment purposes mostly. This is the reality of the reading environment at home.  
(ChCF10)

A parent stated that he had given her daughter a computer as a study tool (SrPF2).

Similarly, another parent mentioned that he provided a laptop and a smartphone as a source of both entertainment and study. He added, “*I also gave it so that she could learn to type*” (SrPF2). Some parents stated that their children had their own study space



(SrPF2, BhPF5). On the other hand, some parents mentioned that their children did not have a separate study room (RaPF7).

### **Intangible Resources**

Some parents stated that they engaged their children in activities such as reciting, drawing, dancing, singing, and playing to address their psychological requirements. They stated that participating in these activities might encourage them to study. A small number of parents mentioned that their children went to play outside in the evening. Other parents reported that their children enjoyed singing, painting, and dancing and that these activities were something they did in their spare time.

One of the parents stated, *“During my evening stroll, my son used to go outside to play in the field. He and his classmates used to have a lot of fun”* (SuPF3). Another parent added, *“There is an ethnic group organisation in the community. In that organisation, my child learns to sing and dance”* (KaPF9). In addition, a parent raised a different point about motivating children to read. He spoke about a child’s willingness to read and inherent motivation. He stated,

We provide a better environment for our children considering our ability. Some children do not have enough facilities for meeting the basic needs, as well. Despite this, they are achieving good academic results. The environment may be good, but they will not improve until they have a positive attitude toward reading. (SuPF3)

Parents were also asked about the supply of storybooks as additional reading materials to encourage students to read at home. The following part presents parents’ perspectives on providing storybooks.

## **b) Family Practices of Storybooks**

Students' exposure to storybooks within their families was explored through parents' opinions. Parents were asked about their support and the kind of offers that give regarding storybooks in creating a reading environment for children at home. Parents had mixed views regarding providing storybooks. Some parents focused more on extra-curricular activities than storybooks, and others focused more on textbooks. Some were very strict when it came to reading storybooks and mentioned that their children could not read storybooks unless their textbook lessons were not completed. Some parents claimed that their children disliked storybooks and preferred playing to reading. On the other hand, some parents argued that reading storybooks hinders students' academic success. Some parents stated that it did not come to their mind to buy additional books for their children. Moreover, some others said that their children were too young to read. Nonetheless, some of them said that they provided storybooks under various circumstances.

*Giving importance on textbooks* – a parent said, “*I don't buy storybooks. My child is unable to complete her schoolwork (homework). Therefore, how can she read stories*”

(GaPF1)? Parents were not interested in providing storybooks. At this point, one of the educational professionals said,

Parents do not have the habit of purchasing storybooks. It is in the individuals who have a habit of reading. Parents who haven't had storybooks reading experience were not interested in reading. They only know how to improve their children's academic performance. However, they do not realise that to develop their children, they should have the experience of reading additional materials such as storybooks to know the history and culture of the society. (RaDPEO, EeI3)

Some parents expressed the view that schoolbook are sufficient for reading as storybooks. A parent added, *“There are current issues in the Bangla textbook. Reading the storybook is sufficient. They can read many contemporary things”* (RaPF7). Another parent stated that the Bangla textbook had so many stories that her child preferred to listening to them to reading (ChPF11).

***Storybooks hampered students’ academic achievement*** - however, some parents perceived that storybook negatively affect their children’s textbook reading practices and hamper academic achievement. Children would compromise on reading their textbooks. Therefore, they did not purchase storybooks for their children. Teachers also opined that parent did not want to provide storybooks to their children. Furthermore, the education officer noted that along with parents, teachers are also not very enthusiastic about giving storybooks to children. One of the parents said that her daughter asked her to buy some books. She denied it, though. She said, *“My child’s academic performance would be negatively impacted, so I am not intentionally purchasing storybooks”* (CfPF6). One of the parents shared, *“My child spends a lot of time reading storybooks, wasting the time she could spend studying school textbooks. I forbade my children to read storybooks”* (RaPF7).

At this point, one of the teachers said, *“More than 50% of the parents did not want to purchase storybooks for their children. They thought reading storybooks would impede their academic results”* (SuTI3). In the same way, one of the educational professionals said,

Unaware parents do not encourage their children to read storybooks or provide storybooks for their children. Furthermore, some teachers do not make the

storybooks available to the students. That is why they do not even maintain the register. This trend is more common in the schools that became government primary schools from registered schools. (SiDPEO, EeI4)

This finding was also addressed by another educational professional from a different region. He said that parents who are more interested in academic results denied purchasing storybooks. Teachers also could not carry out their responsibility in this regard. He added, *“Teachers claim that they cannot keep the register as they use the leisure time to provide supplementary reading materials”* (SuDPEO, EeI5).

***Limited reading practice in the community*** - Some parents claimed that they did not enthusiastically buy storybooks for their children and that their children did not ask them to buy books. However, other parents said that giving storybooks to their children was not a common practice in their community. A parent said in this regard, *“I don’t think reading stories is a common in my area. I’m going to buy storybooks for my child from now onwards; this isn’t something I usually do”* (SsPF4). Parents from different communities mentioned that people do not understand storybooks in villages. One of the parents said, *“There has never been such an opportunity to buy storybooks. I never gave or got that chance. When I go to the market, I usually bring what my child needs for school. I don’t buy extra books”* (KaPF9). Another parent stated, *“I don’t buy storybooks because I’m busy. But I think it would be wrong to say I am busy. The idea of buying storybooks never crossed my mind”* (KaPF9). Another parent from the char areas also supported it and mentioned, *“The practice of buying storybooks was not common, so this idea didn’t come across my mind”* (ChPF10).

*Mobile as a replacement for storybooks* – Some parents mentioned that children were more interested in watching stories on electronic devices than reading storybooks. They love to observe and listen together than to read storybooks. Explaining this one of the parents said that children used cell phones to substitute storybooks and they were more interested in watching and listening to stories on their mobile phones. Another parent said that her daughter seldom reads storybooks and she didn't buy storybooks. She further expressed, *“This is the age of the Internet and smartphones. The children can watch so many activities on the mobile phone. They can also listen to stories through phones”* (BhPF5).

However, another parent disagreed with this and said, *“Students did not use electronic devices as reading tools”* (RaPF7). Another parent agreed and stated,

Children do not use devices for reading. But it has both good and bad sides. It is good to use it as a communication tool like a mobile phone in our daily lives. Children are experiencing it, and the negative side is that if they get addicted to mobile phones, they will not want to read anymore. (KaPF9)

One of the teachers agreed with the parent and said that the primary school students did not use the phone as a reading tool rather used it as a source of entertainment (SrTI2).

However, one of the book publishers mentioned, *“Children's book sales have been decreased since the advent of mobile phones. Children are more attracted to mobile phones now, and they spend more time on mobile phones than on books”* (CBPI1).

Another book publisher mentioned that the price of some of the children's books might be higher for remote areas or for those who are concerned about the price. But these books were well received in some of the areas of Dhaka city including some other

regions. On the other hand, people from the remote areas want to get everything in one book and they look for books with more content in one book. They do not want to buy a book with a few sentences. However, some publishers published their books with only 12 to 16 pages with short sentences. On a typical page, there are large pictures as the focus is on images along with one or two sentences in few words (CBPI2).

### **c) Collection of Storybooks at Home**

In the FGDs parents were asked about the number of books children have at home to know more about the home reading environment. Parents from different communities expressed their opinions in the focus group interviews and they mentioned the number of books they had along with other demographic information. Despite the fact that this chapter presents qualitative findings, this additional information is also presented below as this would supplement the quantitative findings.

A comprehensive table was designed from the participants' information from all five districts to know the number of books available. A total of 64 parents participated from all five different locations in the FGDs. It was revealed that 47% of the families did not have any books. On the other hand, 3% of families had 26–50 books. Furthermore, 30% of families belonged to the group of having 1–5 books at home. The rest of the families (20%) had 6–25 books. There was not a single family with more than 50 books at home. Urban families were more likely to have books at home.

**Table 6. 2:** *Number of Books Owned by Families*

Area	Sl No	Number of parents	Number of books at home					Urban	Rural
			1-5	6-25	26-50	More than 50	No books		
Plain	1.	1		10					√
	2.	1		10					√
	3.	1		7					√
	4.	1	1						√
	5.	1					0		√
	6.	1					0		√
	7.	1					0	√	
	8.	1					0	√	
	9.	1					0	√	
	10.	1	2					√	
	11.	1	2					√	
	12.	1	2					√	
	13.	1	4					√	
Haor	14.	1			30				√
	15.	1		6					√
	16.	1	5						√
	17.	1	2						√
	18.	1	1						√
	19.	1					0		√
	20.	1					0		√
	21.	1					0		√
	22.	1					0		√
	23.	1		25				√	
	24.	1		25				√	
	25.	1		10				√	
26.	1			40			√		
27.	1		20				√		
28.	1		20				√		
Coastal	29.	1					0		√
	30.	1					0		√
	31.	1					0		√
	32.	1					0		√
	33.	1		12					√
	34.	1					0		√
	35.	1		6				√	

Area	Sl No	Number of parents	Number of books at home					Urban	Rural
			1-5	6-25	26-50	More than 50	No books		
	36.	1	3					√	
	37.	1		10				√	
	38.	1	5					√	
	39.	1	5					√	
Hilly	40.	1	1					√	
	41.	1	4					√	
	42.	1					0	√	
	43.	1		6				√	
	44.	1	5					√	
	45.	1					0	√	
	46.	1					0	√	
	47.	1					0	√	
	48.	1	3					√	
	49.	1	4					√	
	50.	1	5					√	
	51.	1					0	√	
	52.	1					0	√	
	53.	1					0	√	
Char	54.	1					0	√	
	55.	1					0	√	
	56.	1					0	√	
	57.	1					0	√	
	58.	1					0	√	
	59.	1					0	√	
	60.	1	3					√	
	61.	1	1					√	
	62.	1					0	√	
	63.	1					0	√	
	64.	1					0	√	
Total			19 13(u rban ) 6(rur al),	13 8(urb an), 5 (Rura l)	1(urba n 1(rural )	0	30	13 (0)	17 (0)
Percentage			30%	20%	3%		47%		



### 6.3.3 Reading Habits and Involvement in Reading at Home

Parents' reading habits and their involvements in reading at home were also investigated.

The following topics were addressed:

- a) Reading habits of the parents
- b) Reading assistance provided in children's daily study sessions

#### **a) Reading Habits of the Parents**

Parents' reading habits were also explored as family reading practices encourage students to read. Data showed a limited practice of reading by parents at home. In some families, mothers, in particular, were busy with housekeeping. Therefore, they could read books neither for themselves nor for their children. On the other hand, some parents were involved in business and could not read.

While expressing the reasons behind their limited practices of reading storybooks, one of the parents stated, *"I'm not able to read books for myself because I take care of my children and do home chores all day long. However, I am responsible for their studies"* (SuPF3). In the same way, another parent articulated, *"I rarely read books. I have to give time to my business"* (CfPF6). Furthermore, another parent said, *"I cannot read for myself. I do housework, then oversee my own business, and I also assist my child in his homework"* (KaPF9). While some parents were busy with their household work, they could still find some time to help their children with their homework. One of the parents explained, *"I support my children in their studies. I explain the topics covered in the*

*school, but I don't have the chance to read storybooks with her. I do not read for myself either"* (SrPF2).

Parents reported being busy working regularly and they did not read books on their own, even to inspire their children to read. One of the parents expressed the reason for not reading books, *"I do not read books intentionally. If I wanted to read, I could manage some time. I think time is just an excuse; we've got the scope, but we escape it, and it is our fault"* (SrPF2). Some of the parents were dissatisfied with their involvement in regular activities at home and complained that they did not get a chance to read books. One of the parents showed her disappointment; she said, *"When I was young, I used to read numerous books, and I even hid storybooks under my textbooks. I had been more inclined to Masud Rana's novels. But I'm not reading books for myself anymore nowadays"* (SuPF3). Some participants, especially mothers, read their children's religious books and other holy books. One of the parents said that he generally read books because he had to write for various purposes. He mentioned, *"I habitually read books as I have to write. I read history books more. I review books as well"* (SuPF3). Parents frequently mentioned that they did not read books for themselves or their children (ChPF11).

#### **b) Reading assistance provided in children's daily study sessions**

Parents were asked about their regular assistance to their children's home reading activities. Though the study explored reading for pleasure at home, parents mentioned their involvement in textbook reading at home. Parents frequently claimed that they assisted their children in their daily reading and encouraged them to complete their daily

homework. Furthermore, they were concerned about their schoolwork, so they guided them during their studies. A parent said, *“I am taking proper care of my children’s homework. I sit beside my daughter while she studies”* (GaPF1). Another parent expressed the same opinion and said, *“I help my child with her homework and simultaneously do the household work”* (KaPF9). In addition, a parent said, *“I make her practice reading every day. I’m trying to support her along with the house tutor. I sit next to her while she studies and see whether she studies properly or not”* (SsPF4).

It was found from the data that most of the participating parents, particularly the fathers were not involved in their children’s regular studies. They supported them financially or when they needed support outside the home. In this aspect, one of the parents (father) mentioned,

I do help my child financially because, without money, she would not be able to study. I arrange everything, like a private study room and stationery, so my daughter faces no trouble in her study. However, I can’t help her directly with her studies because I have very little time to spare. (SrPI2)

Another parent supported this. He mentioned that usually mothers, not the fathers help their children in their studies, their job is to earn money and do the work outside the home. He added,

The culture of our country is that it is the job of mothers to teach their children and the father takes responsibility for earning. They work outside all day. Therefore, they only take rest at home and do not do other household work. (ChPF10)

Another parent (father) said, *“I can’t support my daughter. Her mom supports her in her studies”* (SuPI3). He takes his daughter to the private teacher as well. Some other parents also said they could not support their children in their daily study sessions. In some cases,

the eldest siblings also help the younger ones in their studies. One of the parents said, “*On his course of study, I sit next to him. However, I can’t make my child sit down every day for his studies. His elder sister supports him in his studies*” (CfPF6).

#### *6.3.4 The Attitude of Parents towards Storybooks*

The study examined the views of parents about reading storybooks. Parents expressed their mixed opinions on this. Some parents felt that storybooks were strongly associated with the existing creative examination system and they helped achieve academic success rather causing any harm academic reading. However, some parents were worried about balancing between textbooks and storybooks. Moreover, parents were anxious and concerned about the public examination in grade five and considered that as a burden. Parents wanted their children to read storybooks for better academic performance, not for pleasure and leisure. Some parents believed that reading storybooks negatively affected academic results.

***The positive impact on academic achievement*** - One of the parents indicated that reading storybooks was not a problem; it was somewhat beneficial for academic progress. She said, “*Reading storybooks assist students in answering the creative questions that appear in the examination*” (SrPF2). Likewise, another parent said that students would read storybooks if they got the time after completing their studies and homework (RaPF7). In addition, another parent said that students would learn a lot from storybooks. But they must strike a balance between reading storybooks and academic books (CfPF6).

***Over-focused on school textbooks and results*** - Another parent said reading storybooks was not a problem. When students move to upper grades, they will get a limited scope to read storybooks and they did not read storybooks (SrPF2). Likewise, one of the parents said, *“There is no problem with reading storybooks, but young students do not have the sense to distinguish between academic books and storybooks”* (CfPF6). Another parent reported that reading storybooks did not hamper the daily academic reading of students. Students can read storybooks after completing their studies (RaPF7). Emphasising the importance of schoolbooks, parents stated that children should read the schoolbooks first, and if they have spare time, they could read storybooks. One of the parents mentioned,

If they have time after all the school lessons are over, they will be able to read storybooks; otherwise, they will not. They will not be allowed to read stories until they have completed their academic studies. Their homework should get priority. (SrPF2)

***Academic achievement impeded by storybooks*** - Conversely, another parent stated that reading storybooks hampers academic results. The students won't read the academic books properly when involved with storybooks (CfPF6). Parents believed that reading storybooks hinders academic results. Therefore, parents prohibited their children from reading storybooks (RaPF7). One of the educational professionals said, *“Parents are more concerned about the outcome. At the start of each academic year, they purchase a guidebook and every student brings their guidebook to class regularly”* (PTISuper, SiI5). She added, *“Parents do not need to buy books for their children since the government gives them free. Therefore, they can take responsibility for their children's additional educational costs”* (PTISuper, SiI5).

*Children were too young to read storybooks* -Some parents perceived that their primary school-going children (grade four) were too young to read storybooks. They did not provide storybooks to their children because they were too young to read them. One of the parents said, “*My child is too young to read. This is not the time to read various storybooks*” (RaPF7). Another parent said the same thing. However, his children were students of classes four and seven (SsPF4). Another parent said,

My child has to read his textbooks to perform well in school. Along with this, he studies at home under the supervision of house tutors. Therefore, I cannot force him to read storybooks, and he is too young to read storybooks as well. (BhPF5)

However, though parents frequently linked reading storybooks with textbooks either positively or negatively, some parents mentioned the examples of providing storybooks to their children. Parents said that storybooks were usually given during school holidays, birthdays, annual fairs, or various circumstances, such as when there is no academic pressure. One of the parents mentioned, “*I buy storybooks for my children on their birthdays, but they seem uninterested*” (SuPF3). Another parent said, “*I buy books for my children, particularly when there’s no academic pressure from school in December*” (SuPF3).

Likewise, a parent said children could read storybooks at the end of school, and he also purchased books from the book fair (RaPF7). He further stated that his child visited the mobile library and collected books. Some parents also believed that reading storybooks would help the children gain knowledge and reduce the usage of mobile phones throughout the day (ChPF11).

### 6.3.5 Library Facilities and Parental Involvements

The study also investigated library facilities for students and parents' involvements in utilising these facilities to encourage children to read. The findings on the available library facilities and parents' experiences, including their attitude regarding using this facility, are presented below.

***Libraries are too far and not used by students*** - Parents frequently mentioned that the community library facilities in their neighborhood were minimal. Most parents repeatedly stated that public libraries were too far from their communities. One of the parents said, “*Our children do not have a library affiliation. We have a public library, but children don't go there*” (RaPF7). Likewise, one of the parents said, “*We have a library, but not within the city. It's too far. Children cannot go there*” (BhPF5).

The officer of the public library acknowledged this fact and mentioned, “*Government primary school students are not using public libraries. Therefore, there should be a government circular on using public libraries by the students of the government primary schools*” (PLOI1). However, public libraries procure 5–10% of the books for children from the total number of books in a year (PLOI1). One of the education officers showed his concern that people from that area did not visit public libraries and he never saw any parents visiting the mobile library. He added, “*It is important to have a library, but being interested in borrowing books from the library is more important. The books could not be showpieces*” (BhDPEO, EeI2). At this point, an educational professional pointed out,

We have a public library, a mobile library, and Shishu Academy. Our children participate only in the cultural programmes arranged by Shishu Academy and

only the already known faces participate in these programmes regularly. But our children do not have any communication with the books of these organisations. (SiDPEO, EeI4)

***Unawareness of the availability and functions of the library*** - In some cases, parents were not even aware of the presence of the public library in their neighborhood. They said, “*We have no library. It would be better for our children if we had a library. They enjoy reading short stories and cartoons. They are afraid of large storybooks*” (GaPF1). Likewise, other parents in the neighborhood claimed that they did not have any libraries in their community. They also said they did not have any social organisation to set up a library. A parent said, “*We have no library. We don’t even have a social organisation that can build a library in our community*” (SsPF4).

One of the parents said that he knew about the Shishu Academy library, but the children were not associated with the library of Shishu Academy. He didn’t know whether the Shishu Academy sells books or not (RaPF7). Furthermore, another educational professional said, “*Students in primary schools are associated with various cultural activities or events of Shishu Academy. But they are not connected to the library*” (RaDPEO, EeI4). In addition, another professional mentioned, “*In different programmes of Shishu Academy, the academy rewards children with their books. We also buy their books on their recommendation. But they could arrange a reading club like other cultural programmes*” (SuDPEO, EeI5).

***Children are too young to collect books from the library*** – Parents perceived that primary school children were too young to collect books from the street library. Some



parents said that the mobile library bus came to their communities, but the children (grade four students) were too young to stand on the streets and borrow books from the library (BhPF5). Parents in other regions said that the mobile library was too far away (RaCF7). Data revealed that few parents acknowledged being exposed to the mobile library for their older children. A parent also shared her experience of borrowing books from the mobile library for her elder son (SuPF3).

***Academic pressure and unavailability of storybooks limit library use*** – Parents mentioned academic pressure as a reason for not visiting libraries for their children. One of the parents said, “*Students do not have time to read storybooks. They would read some books at school even though the school was open. At home, because of COVID-19, there is more pressure now*” (BhPF5). On the other hand, one parent said, “*Children could not take books from the school library, though there was a library in school*” (CfPF6). Some other parents also acknowledged this and showed their doubt regarding the availability of storybooks in the school library (ChPF11).

***Parents’ Positive Attitude towards the Library*** – Even though there were few opportunities in the community, parents avoided going to the library. However, parents frequently mentioned that a library in the neighborhood and school would benefit the students. Parents had a positive attitude towards the library. Many parents in different communities said that the library could enhance reading interest. It can also make students feel good about life by reading many stories. They said, “*Having a library in the school would be great. The children could read books. It could boost their reading*

*interest*” (BhPF5). Other parents stressed that reading storybooks was essential. One of the parents said, *“Knowledge is not limited to textbooks; students can gain knowledge through reading storybooks”* (SsPF4). Parents also mentioned that students could acquire several skills by reading books from the library. They said, *“Reading books can increase students’ interest, and their pronunciation will eventually be correct. The reading speed and fluency will also improve”* (GaPF1). They also said that the language of the text doesn’t matter. Some of the parents agreed that the lack of libraries was the reason for the students’ mobile addiction. Students watched cartoons and played games using them as the source of entertainment (SrPF2). Some other parents also said, *“The libraries might limit children’s use of mobile phones. So, they would encourage children to borrow books and spend a good time reading them”* (GaPF1). Parents pointed out that the library also has tremendous benefits for the elderly and homemakers. One of the parents said, *“We could read books together with children in our leisure time and inspire children and other people around us to read books”* (CfPF6).

#### **6.4 School Environment and Facilities for Reading**

The study looked into the school environment and the school and classroom practices that motivate students to read. The school environment and the services provided in the school were explored through the views shared by the concerned teachers, parents, and community members. Six significant themes emerged from the findings as mentioned below:

1. Classroom facilities and practices for reading
2. Stakeholders’ involvement in reading activities

3. Teachers' attitude towards reading storybooks
4. Schools' reading environment for implementing reading technique
5. Schools' library and reading environment

#### *6.4.1 Classroom Facilities and Practices for Reading*

The study explored the facilities and practices in the classrooms to investigate the reading environment in schools. Four major points emerged from the data as classroom facilities and practices which influence the reading environment in schools. These include:

- a. Book corners in the classrooms
- b. Reading assessments in the classrooms
- c. Regular reading practices in the classrooms
- d. Reading competitions

##### **a) Book Corners in the Classrooms**

In October 2018, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education circulated a government order to improve students' reading and writing skills for ensuring quality primary education. One of the references in the circular was to set up a book corner in the classroom so that students could read in the classroom.

The book corner was also examined as an important aspect of the reading environment at schools. Data found that the participating assistant teachers and educational professionals did not know anything about the instruction regarding 'Book Corner'. Teachers frequently mentioned that they did not have a book corner in their classrooms. Two of the teachers said that there were few books in the book corner. Furthermore, another teacher

said that the number of books in the book corner is minimal (SuTI3). Another teacher said they had a book corner only in the pre-primary classroom (CfTI6). In addition, one of the teachers pointed out that there was no book corner in the classroom. But there was a cupboard organised with books and other materials in the classroom corner. Since children could shuffle books, they were locked and unlocked if necessary (RaTI8).

### **b) Reading Assessments in the Classrooms**

When responding to the reading assessments conducted in the classrooms teachers said that they considered students' learning competencies for assessment but didn't assess their reading skills directly. Teachers also mentioned an annual reading activity that was meant for evaluating students' reading abilities and to place the students in three different categories namely, fluent readers, intermediate readers, and poor readers. They considered it a reading assessment.

At the beginning of a year students were assessed according to some of the components of reading skills based on their previous year's English or Bangla textbooks. Through that assessment students were categorised into three distinct groups according to their reading abilities. If a student can read fluently without exertion, she or he is a fluent reader. If students get stuck in conjunct letters, they are deemed half fluent readers. And students who had to deal with all the words were classified as weaker readers. Teachers have been using this strategy in recent years. A teacher from another school carried out this type of assessment. They followed a register for taking records of the evaluation. Therefore, both the parents and the students were aware (SuTI3) of that reading assessment. The teacher

said, “*Students showed an attitude that I have to be able to read*” (SuTI3). The register’s copy of the reading assessment is attached in Appendix 23.

There was an instruction from the education office to ensure students’ engagement in regular reading activities for at least 10 minutes in each lesson. However, it was not practiced (BhTI5), and one of the teachers acknowledged that the reading assessment was not appropriately applied. Students were asked questions from the text they had already studied, and the teachers mentioned this as a reading assessment. However, one of the teachers added that it was not used to assess a student’s reading ability but rather to measure students’ learning outcomes (RaTI8).

Another teacher mentioned that students’ reading abilities were assessed in the classroom. She said that it took him 6-7 days to complete a story for reading and discussion. After each story was completed, the students were asked to read out a few lines. The students gradually read the entire story together. Teachers evaluated students’ ability to read in this way (SrTI2). One of the teachers claimed that each lesson was followed by assessment of students’ learning outcomes. They spent 5 to 10 minutes to assess learning outcomes. But in every class, they did not assess students’ reading capacity. She mentioned,

We evaluate students’ reading skills before and after each story. We don’t have a formal reading assessment. A one-minute reading is performed as a reading evaluation, and it’s got a track record. However, not everyone gets the opportunity to read every day.

Along with the teachers, one of the parents said that no reading assessment was conducted in the classrooms (CfPF6). On the other hand, parents often said they did not know about the classroom-based reading assessment (KaPF9, ChPF10, ChPF11). An education officer who came to the parents' focus group interview for a few moments mentioned, *“Children have come to this stage because they can read. So, there is no need to say it separately whether the reading assessment has occurred or not”* (KaPF9). Only one parent said, *“The teacher asks a student to read in front of the class. This is how reading in the classroom is assessed”* (RaPF7).

Though all the teachers mentioned that the reading assessment took place in the classrooms directly or indirectly, educational professionals did not report the same. They said that students' reading abilities were not formally assessed in the classrooms as a formative assessment and during the annual examinations as a summative assessment. They should emphasise reading assessments to understand students' reading abilities and take appropriate steps. At this point, one of the professionals said,

We don't have any format for formal reading assessment. 20% of the marks may be allotted for the reading assessment. After the written test is over, the oral reading assessment can happen another day. There will be an obligation to improve reading skills to do well in the reading test. Then, the parents will consider the importance of reading abilities, like written tests. (RaDPEO, EeI4)

### **c) Regular Reading Practices in Classrooms**

Regular reading practices in classes were explored as another area of reading environment in the classroom. The majority of the teachers stated that they did not have a specific slot in their daily schedule for practicing reading. Some others said that students were supposed to read for at least 5–10 minutes during regular classes, depending on the

class's needs. It was taught and instructed as a part of the pedagogical training in all subjects including Bangla. Most of teachers agreed with this point especially, with a focus on Bangla language (BhTI5). According to one of the education officers (EeI2), reading instruction is also part of the daily routine. Teachers were instructed to make the students practice reading every day, but they were unable to do so due to time constraints. A teacher stated,

We have many students in a class. In each lesson, we have so many tasks to complete. Young students keep fighting among themselves. I can't finish all the tasks in a 40-minute session. However, I make every effort to ensure that all students understand the concepts. (SuTI3)

Another teacher said she practiced reading by reading a story once a week. She said, "*A student reads a story, which is then retold by another student in their own words*" (SrTI2). Likewise, another teacher said she just read the text aloud by pointing her fingers in the book. She could not practice independent reading in her class because of the time constraints (SuTI3). However, some teachers recognised the value of reading for primary school children. One of the teachers said primary education is the basis for all other education. She added, "*If primary school students do not learn to read, they cannot read all other subjects on their own*" (GaTI1). On the other hand, another teacher said that they concentrated more on reading Bangla as it is the mother tongue. He mentioned, "*If a student cannot read in their mother tongue, they may lose interest in reading other subjects. All other topics rely largely on the Bangla language*" (BhTI5). Teachers recognised that reading in the classrooms must be focused. She shared the condition of the maximum number of students in her class. She said, "*There were students who did*

*not receive help from their family members during their reading. Therefore, we must concentrate more on them to ensure readability in the classroom”* (SuTI3).

One of the teachers admitted that they had little time to read in the classroom. She also acknowledged that all the students could not be engaged in reading practices in a single lesson. But in her class, she practiced it. She mentioned,

I know all the students’ home environment very well. First, I teach those who don’t have anyone at home to support them. We focus on the weak students a bit more. I ask them to read first and then check whether they could read everything correctly. (RaTI8)

One of the educational officials also indicated that reading is essential for achieving mastery in all other subjects. He said, *“A fluent reader can master any other subject easily and solve problems of any kind in any other subject”* (EeI2). However, teachers showed various reasons for not practicing the reading activities in the classroom. One of the educational professionals said,

Reading activities are not practiced in the classroom appropriately. And this is from the school level. As all the parents of the government primary schools’ students are not literate and aware, it is the teachers’ responsibility to teach the students and provide them with Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM) to develop their language skills. (SiPTI Super)

#### **d) Reading Competition**

The present study found from the teachers’ opinion that none of the students participated in any reading competition, either inside or outside schools. They also mentioned that students did not participate in any organisation-sponsored reading programmes. Although the schools did not hold a reading competition, the Upazila education office provided instructions writing competition and it was held at the national level progressively



(GaTI1). In a teacher's interview, one of the teachers mentioned that children took part in the handwriting competition in their school (CfTI6).

It was also noticed that the school authorities were to take the initiative to arrange a pronunciation competition for the students according to a government circular (October 2018) from the MopME. But it was not done in any of the schools. Students were involved in various cultural activities organised by the Shishu Academy, including music, dance, and poem recitation. However, there was no competition for reading or other reading programmes (RaTI8). Other teachers have also addressed it (GaTI1). One of the teachers said that some NGOs came to their school to run various programmes, such as recitation, essay competition, and sometimes reading competition. However, these organisations have moved out of the area, and the authorities did not allow them (SrTI2).

Another teacher noted that regional language style negatively affected students' conversations in their area. A reading competition would help students minimise the issue of regionalism and develop their reading skills (SuTI3). Another teacher stated that if students had the opportunity to participate in reading programmes, their competitive reading behavior would be increased, and they would ultimately learn to read and improve their academic performance (SsTI4). During a discussion, community members said they organised a reading competition for grade four and five students on national holidays. They picked the best student to eradicate regionalism for assessing different aspects like pronunciation, intonation, fluency, etc. However, this competition was

privately organised by the community members. It was not found in any government primary schools (SuCFS1).

#### *6.4.2 Stakeholders' Involvement in Reading Activities*

The research looked into stakeholders like parents' and community members' involvement in students' reading activities in the schools which was meant to support the reading environment in schools. This section is split into two parts: parents' involvement with the schools and community members' involvement with the schools.

##### ***Parents' involvement with the schools***

***Teachers' viewpoint*** - This point refers to the teachers' viewpoints on parents' involvement in reading activities and communication between parents and teachers on reading at schools. Almost all the teachers reported that parents usually spoke about the overall academic success of their children. Some parents shared the academic shortcomings of their children in different subjects. However, a few parents were concerned about the facilities at schools. Teachers shared information about the physical and mental health conditions of students. Each school had a mothers' meeting once a month to discuss their children's academic progress and other difficulties. Schools also used "Uthan Boithok" (courtyard meeting) to share their concerns with parents. Many teachers have acknowledged the positive effects of parents' participation in their children's education. One of the teachers said, "*Parents know the strengths and limitations of their children, and they will support them at home accordingly*" (SSTI4). Similarly, another teacher said, "*Without good communication between parents and*

*teachers, it is not possible to improve students' academic performance"* (BhTI5). In addition, a teacher said, *"If parents become aware of the various concerns of schools, they will become complicit in the issues. It could also positively affect the situation"* (SuTI3). Furthermore, a teacher stated, *"We discuss students' academic achievements with their parents, and we also suggest to them how their children should be cared for"* (CfTI6). Likewise, another teacher said, *"We spoke about giving time to their children, caring for them, and sending them to school regularly"* (RaTI8). One of the teachers also said, *"We talk more about academics with the parents, and we share their academic performance in different subjects"* (GaTI1). However, one of the teachers expressed the inability of the parents to help their children in the reading activities. She said,

Most parents are unable to express much about their children's reading abilities since they cannot help them improve their reading skills due to their illiteracy. Parents often acknowledge their incapacity and tell us to look after their children's academic activities. (RaTI8).

She added, *"Parents don't understand what is taught in classes, and they can't even understand what the house tutors teach"* (RaTI8). Another teacher shared parents' participation in the issues regarding the school's infrastructure, renovations, and decorations. She added, *"We inform the parents when we intend to purchase anything or do any renovation in the school"* (SsTI4).

***Parents' viewpoint*** - This point refers to the parents' involvement in academic activities, in particularly students' reading activities which have been gathered through their opinions. Similar findings were revealed by the parents that teachers communicate with parents to share information about their children's academic achievements and teachers inform them of their children's strengths and shortcomings in different academic areas.

Parents frequently stated that their children's academic performance was aided by the schools' environment and teachers' interaction process. However, some parents were disappointed with the schools' and teachers' level of interaction. Nevertheless, none mentioned their involvement with reading activities.

During the lockdown period caused by the COVID-19, the teachers even talked to parents over the phone. One of the parents stated,

Teachers usually contact us on the phone once a week to update us about our children's academic performance as their school is now closed due to COVID-19. I used to come to school every day before COVID, and they would let me know about my child's academic updates. (SrPF2)

Furthermore, a parent said that he spoke to the teachers about various problems of his child, such as concentration, academic success, etc. He added, "*I once spoke of his contempt for English, and his teacher encouraged him to read English texts. He was interested in reading English afterward*" (SsPF4). Another parent showed her satisfaction regarding the teachers and the school. She mentioned,

The teachers and the school's environment are excellent. In all aspects, they are pretty communicative. If a student cannot attend a class for any reason, like being sick, they take the action required to alleviate the issue and meet the family immediately. They also help the child catch up with the school work they missed. And if a child is unable to pay the tuition fees or purchase books, they cooperate and help on their own. (BhPF5)

Some parents shared their utmost satisfaction regarding the communication process of the schools. They thought that they didn't even have to worry about improving the schools because they thought they were already improved. However, some parents mentioned that they did not discuss any school-related concerns with the teachers and that the teachers also did not communicate any school-related information with them (ChPF10).

Though some parents commented on their positive experiences with the schools, others mentioned their negative experiences regarding academic problems their children faced at their schools. They also expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the teachers' responses to their children's inability. Teachers frequently avoided addressing students' learning difficulties and expected parents to help them overcome those problems. Moreover, parents mentioned teachers' irregularities in schools. One of the parents shared her annoyance and said, "*We need to manage our children's education by ourselves*" (CfPF6). She added, "*I was told to teach my daughter at home when I raised issues regarding the teacher's attention due to a mistake in her copy*" (CfPF6). Another parent said, "*If the teachers teach the class regularly and care for the students, the students' eagerness to read will increase*" (CfPF6). However, regarding the plan, most parents stated that teachers or school officials did not share any information about the schools' plan.

### ***Community members' involvement with the schools***

In the focus group interview with the community members the representatives were made up of several members from the school management committee and the guardians of the school. Community members' participation in reading activities and involvement with other activities at the school were the discussion areas of the interview. Most community members mentioned participating in various activities such as infrastructural growth, health matters, cleanliness, school decoration, and academic achievements. On the other hand, very few group members mentioned their participation in reading activities.

**Reading Involvement** - Regarding reading involvement, one of the members stated that the school authorities called parents individually or in a group to share the conditions of their children's reading abilities to make them aware of it and take steps at home to get their children involved in various reading activities. Parents were not involved in any reading activities other than listening to the teachers (GaCF1).

Another parent shared that parent were instructed to prepare children at home to participate in a reading competition at the school. Though the parents described this event as reading competitions, it had the features of a memorisation test. She stated,

The teacher told us that our children must learn the text correctly to read the text in front of an external senior teacher during the school reading contest. The teacher also told the students to read at home and understand the text. Moreover, the teacher inspires children by awarding them. (SuCF3)

**Non-academic involvement** - Parents and other community members participated in various non-academic activities, such as school repairs, cleanliness, stimulating drop-out students, communicating with irregular students, etc. One of the participants said, "*I'm working from my own interest. I have been working for cleanliness and repair. The task may not be significant, but I'm working for*" (SsCF4). He further added that he communicated with the students who had dropped out and those who were not regular. As a community member, he arranged electricity for the school.

Another community member stated that teachers shared the academic success and failure of the students (SsCF4). The school only shared academic issues with us and did not share any plan related to the improvement of the school (SuCF3).

Another committee member mentioned that he used to look after the students' presence at the school, their classes, the exact opening and closing time of the school, and whether students were inside or outside the classroom. He further added, "*We usually come to the Head teacher with a newcomer regarding admission in the school*" (CfCF6). Regular parent-teacher meetings were held in the school to make parents aware of students' academic performance, and we, the committee members, also shared our views on this (BhCF5). The school authority talked with the committee members about purchasing sports materials and educational materials, as well as implementing the school's new dress code (BhCF5).

#### *6.4.3 Teachers' Attitude towards Reading Storybooks*

Teachers perceived a positive correlation between storybook reading and academic achievement. They said that reading stories increases the interest of students in reading textbooks. Storybooks may also assist them in acquiring information. One of the teachers stated,

Reading storybooks increases students' interest in reading. Moreover, it does not cause any problems with textbook reading. Students nowadays should not read just to pass exams. They must read to enhance their reading skills, develop their creativity, and gain knowledge. (SuTI3)

However, teachers were concerned about aligning reading textbooks and storybooks with the perception of a positive relationship between academic performance and reading comprehension. Students' academic performance may be harmed if textbooks and storybooks are not balanced. A teacher mentioned that reading a storybook have positive impacts on students' academic achievement and yet often, students choose to read the

storybooks but not their textbooks. He added, “*We encourage students to balance between reading textbooks and storybooks*” (BhTI5).

One of the teachers agreed that storybooks did not hinder the students' academic reading. She said, “*I do not tell the students directly to read storybooks. I tell them about the value of reading so that they are encouraged to read*” (RaTI8).

In some schools, the teachers focused more on academic performance and thus discouraged students from borrowing storybooks. One of the teachers said, “*We discourage upper-grade students from reading extra books, as they will sit for a national-level public exam, which is known as the Primary Education Completion Examination-PECE*” (SrTI2). However, teachers indicated that students were interested in reading storybooks when they understood and enjoyed the books they had already read. “*Students want to read books written in simple languages. They avoid books written in hard languages*” (SuTI3). Another teacher claimed that new books attracted students more (SrTI2).

#### *6.4.4 Schools' Reading Environment for Implementing Reading Techniques*

This section presents the findings concerning teachers' experiences in implementing reading strategies in the classroom. All the participating teachers have received both pedagogical and subject-based training. Only one teacher had not yet taken the DPED, but she had undergone the subject-based training. Teachers had a good understanding of the teaching techniques for reading skills. Teachers' experiences and challenges in implementing reading techniques are mentioned below.



***Lack of time to implement reading techniques*** – Teachers frequently mentioned that they had time constraints while implementing reading techniques in the classroom. One of the teachers said that the instructions given in subject-based training regarding practising reading techniques in the classroom were hard to implement. In a 35 minutes class, there were so many additional activities to execute. As an example, she mentioned the process of teaching conjunct letters. *“It takes a long time for a big group of students to grasp conjunct letters by breaking down the letters and then interpreting them”* (SuTI3). She added, *“Our regular rules, class routines, and typical procedures allow us to teach the class traditionally. What students don’t understand, what they don’t learn - doesn’t matter. We can’t consider these matters”* (SuTI3). However, in the primary schools, many additional responsibilities and activities in the classroom created an obstacle to implementing the techniques received from the reading training. Teachers often lost interest in their work because of the workload. A teacher added,

In our department, we have so much additional work. Often, we have to leave the classroom for other works. Scholarships, elections, surveys, training – handling all these things are teachers’ responsibilities. We need to collect so much information for a particular task. There is no assigned staff for these tasks. Everyone needs to participate in different activities. (RaTI8)

Another teacher expressed that they assessed the learning outcomes of the content regularly. In each class, teachers were unable to assess the daily contents of the students. Reading activities took extra time within a regular class. She further added,

In a class, we have many students. We have sections as well. But the classes take place in one room due to a lack of teachers. We cannot assess all the students’ reading skills in the regular large classes. In a regular class, coordinating reading practices might take additional time. (SsTI4)

***Students' socio-economic conditions hinder proper reading environment*** - Along with the time constraints, teachers stated that students from well-off families did not come to the government primary schools due to different forms of the education system. Students who did not have connections to books outside school hours attended the government primary schools. According to the teacher, *"The students do not study properly at home. Most of them do not come to school regularly, and those who come do not concentrate on classes"* (RaTI8). She further mentioned that all stakeholders must work together to achieve the educational goals. She added, *"There must be coordination among students, schools, and families for the students to succeed"* (RaTI8). One of the educational professionals also mentioned that parents believe that school is enough for their children's academic success. However, we all need to work together to successfully achieve the learning outcomes related to reading (PTISuper, BhI3). The ECD specialist of Shishu Academy also acknowledged it. He mentioned that students in the government primary schools were from families where parents were not aware of their children's studies and did not have any concern regarding their reading abilities. They want their children to memorise all the contents of their books and get a good score. The activities done for their children's holistic development were not their concern (ECDSSA1). An education officer also pointed out that students were not regular at the schools because they had to work for their family. They skipped a lesson so they found it difficult to relate to the following classes (SuDPEO1).

*Teachers' enthusiasm for reading* - However, teachers themselves believed that they could use the knowledge gained from the training in the classroom. All issues might not be addressed, but at least 50% of them can be overcome. One of the teachers added, "*If teachers are enthusiastic, they can implement their learning from the training within 35–40 minutes of a class. It is possible to improve the primary education system with the utmost sincerity of the teachers*" (SrTI2). Along with the teacher, one of the education officers mentioned teachers' lack of inspiration as the obstacle to implementing their knowledge from the training. He said that teachers received training from PTIs and other training several times. By attending teachers become eligible higher salary grades. But, in terms of their services in the classroom, implementation of training decreased gradually (EeI2). He listed some reasons for teachers being reluctant to implement the training ideas in the classroom. He included the lack of enthusiasm and dedication of teachers as well as the use of mobile phones during teaching time (BhDPEO, EeI2). Similarly, another administrator noted that the overabundance of female teachers due to the traditional responsibility of the female teachers as mothers, the absence of daycare on the school premises prevented them from concentrating on the classroom since they are always worried about their small children (RaPTISuper, RaI4).

Another professional mentioned that the government had provided enough training to teachers. Additionally, researchers, educationists, and psychologists worked in education to develop and implement the skills. So, if there was any problem, it was about the dedication of teachers (SiPTISuper, SiI5). She added,

Many teachers think they have a Master's degree, why they should teach in the lower primary grades. Besides, if they teach Mathematics and Science, it is better.

So, it is seen that the weakest teachers teach the pre-primary and class one students. Though we know that the base should be strong. But that's where the problem lies. The responsibility lies first with the head teachers and then with the other teachers. (SiPTISUper, SiI5)

However, an education officer pointed out that teachers were not involved in carrying out the strategies taught in their training, and they ran the class using their own teaching styles (SuDPEO1). Furthermore, one of the PTI superintendents expressed, “*Teachers’ attitudes were modified after undergoing training from the PTI. But they did not implement their learning from the training*” (PTIS1). However, with the reference to ex-trainee teachers, the PTI superintendent said that they were facing various obstacles in implementing their knowledge in the classroom, and they were thus demoralised.

Another officer also mentioned that sometimes school authorities insult trainee teachers (BhI3). She said, “*Head teachers and education officers showed negative attitudes to the teachers and made fun of the newly trained teachers, discouraging them from implementing the techniques they just learned*”.

***Shortage of teachers*** – One of the PTI superintendents mentioned that there were shortages of teachers in the schools. Teachers had to teach many classes in a day. And the activity-based DPEd curriculum required additional time to implement (BhI3). Still, some teachers tried to implement their learning from the training. Furthermore, one of the educational professionals said, “*For implementing the reading techniques taught in training, the number of teachers should be increased. Some newly trained teachers use these strategies. However, these are not usually carried out in the class*” (RaPTISuper, RaI4).

***Absence of Supervision and Monitoring and a Career Path*** - In addition to other issues, absence of supervision and monitoring was found another area of challenge in implementing reading techniques. One of the educational professionals pointed out that managers or academic supervisors needed to monitor academic issues, not the trivial issues like coming and leaving the school on time or not, and it would ensure the implementation of training in the classroom (RaPTISuper, RaI4). Furthermore, he mentioned that lack of supervision made teachers reluctant. A similar point was also mentioned by another educational professional. He said that supervisors focused on administrative tasks like punctuality, fund management, register maintenance, etc. but they didn't focus on academic issues. Furthermore, teachers' motivation got diminished within a few days after completing their training due to the overload of teaching (GaPTISUper, GaI1). Another administrator acknowledged the issue of teachers' excessive workload and their demotivated attitude to their practices in the classroom. He mentioned,

Teachers work for the good students enthusiastically. When they see most children are too weak to apply the teaching strategies effectively, they give up and become demoralised. Teachers are overburdened and do not give their effort in the classroom as children cannot face challenges. (RaDPEO, RsI4)

Furthermore, another administrator mentioned the demotivation of the young teachers due to their bleak career paths. He added,

In the appointment of a teacher, there is no difference between a teacher and a manager. Now, teachers are appointed with four first classes. But they are not getting any promotion. There is no career path. I think teachers need a separate pay scale. The teaching profession and the teacher must be considered according to their dignity. (SuDPEO, EeI5)

#### *6.4.5 School Library and Reading Environment*

The study found different opinions from teachers regarding the availability of libraries at the schools. Some of the teachers said that some books were kept in a cupboard in the office room. Some others said they had several books in the Bangabandhu corner, but others said they had none except books on the Father of the Nation. Some schools had no additional books except supplementary reading materials (SRM). However, some teachers pointed some infrastructural concerns that accounted for a lack of libraries, while others stated that the school library had been closed for a few years. Teachers frequently reported that students could not take books from the school library. In practice, in the class routine, no time was allotted for SRM. However, the education department prescribed including the SRM slot in the class routine.

***No Time Allocated for Library Use*** -Teachers frequently mentioned that no particular time was allocated for reading storybooks or SRM. Teachers distributed the storybooks at different times. Sometimes, it was at tiffin time, at the beginning of a class, or on the first day of a month. Teachers mostly said that students from pre-primary to second grades could not take library books, and this opportunity was only available for grades three to five. In terms of particular time allocation, one of the teachers said, *“A specific class or schedule has not been organised to distribute library books. However, students could read books in their leisure time”* (CfTI6).

On the other hand, a teacher said that they did the library work using SRM class.

However, there was no allocated class for SRM in the class routine. Another teacher said

that there was no time to read storybooks in the class routine. Students read the books for SRM (GaTI1). She pointed out,

In the office room, we have a library. If children want to read, they can. Young children (from pre-primary to grade two) only pay attention to picture books. Some of the seniors (grades three to five) also observe these books. However, these books were bought 2-3 years ago. (SrTI2)

Another teacher also acknowledged that there was no time for reading storybooks in her school. She said, “*We used to offer books to students during the tiffin time*” (SuTI3). She further added that only a few students could come to the Bangabandhu corner at a time due to limited space. In terms of using SRM in school, one of the educational professionals said,

Every school has adequate SRM, but it is not used properly. In the professional training of PTI, teachers were supposed to read 20 books as part of the ‘Book Reading Programme’. But they were not interested, and the number was reduced to 12 books. They are supposed to use additional reading materials in the SRM period. Now, it is impossible to make these things happen by guarding the teachers. (GaPTI Super)

***Limited Scope to Borrow Books Home*** – Teachers gave mixed opinions about borrowing books from the school library. Some teachers noted that students in grades three to five could take books home from the library and some said that all were not permitted to take books from the school library. Due to infrastructural limitations, some schools do not have a general library but have a cupboard like a bookshelf in each classroom. One of the teachers expressed her concern about the children's home environment and stated that it was not suitable to read books at home. She mentioned,

Everyone cannot read books. Because of the home environment, they are not passionate about reading books. No environment is available to take a book home, read it quietly, or share it with parents. Students who did not have a proper environment could not take books from the library. (RaTI8)

Another teacher said that students could take their books home but could not mention any specific time of distribution or did not find any register. One of the teachers noted that students only had the option of reading the storybooks on Thursday (CfTI7). She also said she took the storybooks to the classroom. However, some teachers were confused about taking books from the school library (GaTI1, SrTI2). Conversely, some teachers said that all the students could not take books home from the school library. In this regard, one of the teachers pointed out,

We do not give books to all children. They may end up tearing the books apart. Responsible children are allowed to take books home. The other children read it at the school. They do not have the opportunity to take books home. They just read it during the tiffin time. (SsTI4)

Another teacher also stated, "*School library books cannot be taken home*" (SuTI3).

Furthermore, another teacher said, "SRM cannot be given to children to read at home, according to what I have observed. I always see notices stating that additional reading materials should be read in the classroom" (RaTI9). Some other teachers said that their students could take books home (BhTI5, CfTI6). One of the teachers indicated, "*Students of my school used to take books every 15 days at the beginning of a class*" (BhTI5).

However, one of the education officers came to an FGD with parents and mentioned, "*Students are not permitted to take books home from the school library. They can take books from the school library during the tiffin time or at the end of any class*" (KaPF9).

***Limited Child-friendly Books at Libraries*** - Age-appropriate and relevant reading materials inspire children to read with enthusiasm. The teacher claimed that students are interested in short and simple books. A teacher said, "*Students like to read the easy and*



*attractive materials, and they read these books easily. But they ignore the ones they find difficult*” (SuTI3). An education officer also mentioned that not all the storybooks in the school library were suitable for children but that most of them were child-friendly. The school authorities were asked to arrange age-appropriate and attractive storybooks (SuDPEO). Another teacher noted, *“The books in the library are a couple of years old. Children would be much more interested in new books”* (SrTI2). She added, *“We don’t have a school setting to take books from the library”*. Another teacher said that age-appropriate books for children were limited in the school library, and she recommended buying more such books (SuTI3).

However, an educational professional shared his dissatisfaction in this regard and said that there were so many attractive storybooks in the schools but teachers did not read those books to the students. He added that teachers don’t even know what books are there in the library. He said, *“The teachers should read the books first, then our students”* (EeI2).

***Books Collection: Consideration for Students’ Choice*** -Most teachers stated that students’ opinions were not considered while selecting books for the school library. One of the teachers said that the school authorities did not procure books for the school library. Another teacher said that the Head teacher brought the books to the library (CfTI6). However, another teacher said that the Head teacher arranged a meeting to determine the books needed to be purchased (BhTI5). In addition, a committee of

teachers worked to bring books to the school library. Through their teamwork, they made a list (RaTI8).

***Bangabandhu Corner – another form of library: Availability of books and Implications***

- The “Bangabandhu Corner” was present in almost all schools. The Corner had different names in different schools. Some teachers referred to it as ‘Bangabandhu Corner’, while others referred to it as ‘Muktijuddho Corner’, while still others referred to it as ‘Bangabandhu and Muktijuddho Corner’. In some schools, the Bangabandhu Corner was arranged with historical photographs of the Nation’s Father and the War of Liberation. However, some schools had some books and pictures in the Corner. Some schools set up the Bangabandhu corner in the teachers’ room, whereas the others fixed it up in a separate room.

***The scenario of the corner*** - Each school received several books at the Bangabandhu Corner from the government. In addition, another teacher said photographs of different events from the Liberation War were displayed in the Corner. A teacher explained that students felt excited and connected when they saw the small pictures in their textbooks in a much bigger size. They were intrigued and enjoyed seeing the large photos in the Corner (BhTI5). There were several books about the war of liberation and the Father of the Nation in the Corner. However, all the books were not suitable for young children, and young students should get appropriate books (SuTI3). Another teacher said that though there were books, the book corner couldn’t be set up due to COVID-19 and the construction of new buildings (SrTI2).

An education officer cited that all schools had a different situation regarding the Bangabandhu corner. He said that some of the schools arranged the corner of the Father of the Nation with many images. However, books for children were minimal (EeI2). He added that most schools did not have extra space for the corner, and it was set up in the teachers' room. In other schools, the rooms were worn out, and the plaster on the walls and roofs had been damaged. The officer also mentioned that the children were not appropriately using the books in the corner.

***Inadequate space, time, and resources for the corner*** - One of the Head teachers stated that the Bangabandhu corner had received government funding. Each school received 150 government books at a time. However, not all schools had space to accommodate the students with a sitting arrangement. He said, *“Since our goal is to ensure that young children understand the country, the liberation war, and the nation, we need a proper reading environment with a sitting space for students to read and a librarian to handle these books to maintain the library”* (SuCFS1). He added that there was an instruction to read these books on Thursday. However, students and teachers could not continue their storybook reading after 3 p.m. Therefore, he proposed making it a compulsory class to read the books of the Bangabandhu Corner (SuCFS1).

In the same way, another educational professional proposed allocating at least one class period every week to use the books of Bangabandhu Corner and read other storybooks (SuDPEO, EeI5). However, one of the educational professionals noted that there was no

specific instruction on using the corner. Children could take books from the corner and read them to prepare for any programme (GaPTI Super). In most cases, the use of the books in the Bangabandhu Corner was limited (RaPTI Super).

A community member shared that a library is a mandatory infrastructure for a school at the policy level, but the situation was different in practice. Teachers in the government primary schools have been overwhelmed with classes, and thus, teachers' involvement in library administration burdens them even more. Therefore, the librarian's job was crucial (SuCFS1).

***Linking school libraries with libraries of other organisations*** - Students had no connection with the library of Shishu Academy. Teachers frequently denied the use of the library of Shishu Academy. A teacher said, "*I don't see anyone bringing books from Shishu Academy*" (SrTI2). Another teacher said,

The students participate in the cultural activities organised by Shishu Academy, such as dancing, singing, drawing, and reciting, but they do not read or borrow books at/from Shishu Academy. In these programmes, children win Shishu Academy's books as a gift (GaTI1).

Another teacher also acknowledged that students did not attend any of the reading programmes of Shishu Academy or collect books from the Shishu Academy library. The organisation, however, gave a few books to the school two or three years ago, according to another teacher (RaTI8).

Along with the teachers, the educational professionals also agreed that Shishu Academy communicates with the schools only for the cultural programmes. The organisation had no communication regarding using the books in its library (GaPTI Super). However, another professional said that the library's use depends on the willingness of the parents and teachers (RaDPEO, EeI4).

***School libraries and parents' perceptions*** – Data showed that parents had a mixed opinion regarding the availability of the school library. It was reported that most parents were ignorant about the availability of a library at the school (RaPF7, SrPF2, BhPF5, KaPF9, & ChPF10). One of the parents said, *“We do not know whether there is a library in the school. We never asked. The children do not take books from the school library. However, the school should have a library”* (RaCf7). Another parent stated, *“It would be better if every school had a library. Children would take books from the library, and their curiosity could be increased”* (BhPf5).

However, parents often showed a pessimistic attitude towards the library. They admitted that the school might have a library but the environment was not suitable for reading. One of the parents said, *“A library may be found in the school. It appears to be full of dirt and dust than books. Let's not limit ourselves to infrastructure”* (SuPF3). Another parent was also unhappy regarding taking books from the school library. She said, *“There are books on the rack. Students can read the books in schools, but they cannot carry them home”* (RaPF7). In addition, one parent said, *“My son says he does not bring books from school often”* (RaPF7). In the same way, another parent also pointed out,

Students are not permitted to borrow books from the school library. My son is unable to borrow books from his school. My daughter attended this school as well. She was also unable to borrow books from the school library. She is now a high school student, and she can borrow books from the school library. (RaPI1)

### **6.5 Urban-rural Students' Differences in Reading Motivation**

This study explored the differences between urban and rural students regarding reading motivation and their facilities for reading in schools and at home. Data were gathered through the opinions of teachers, educational professionals, community members, and parents in both areas. Among other issues, all the participants voiced their concerns about the lack of reading facilities and environment in the remote and rural areas. Rural students were less motivated to read than students in the urban regions like Upazila Sadar due to a lack of teachers, poor infrastructure, and parental unawareness.

One of the officers said, *“During my school visits, I saw that the students in the Sadar Upazila schools could read adequately. In the rural areas, about 50% of students were unable to read”* (BhI3). Another officer mentioned that there were enough teachers in the schools located within the municipality area. Alternatively, there were only two to three teachers in a school in the rural areas. Rural schools had a shortage of teachers. He further mentioned,

There is not a single vacancy in the municipal schools. They can be found in greater numbers in one school at times. Teachers do not wish to remain in the remote areas. Because of better schooling for their children and other services in the municipal areas, they want to migrate from remote schools to municipal schools. (EeI3)

Schools were not then visited regularly due to the lack of supervisor. Teachers took this as an advantage for not coming to classes regularly in the rural areas (EeI3). In some

remote areas, communication is a major issue for children's regular presence at schools. The communication challenges were caused by rain, floods, a mountain collapse, or some other natural disaster. The students then miss school for a long time and gradually fall behind in acquiring reading skills (RaDPEO, EeI3). Another education officer also pointed out a similar fact. He noted that in the remote areas, there were limited facilities for students in schools. These eventually harmed their achievement of literacy. In the meantime, the lack of teachers, infrastructure, and awareness among parents made students absent in reading classes in the remote areas and fall behind (SuDPEO, EeI1). The officer also noted that financial conditions and the above components negatively affected reading capacity. But another officer mentioned that the awareness and education of parents both worked together to gain inspiration for reading (EeI3).

One of the teachers reported that most students from the rural areas were from lower-income families who struggled to read and could not provide a conducive reading environment at home. She said, "*The ability to read depends on social context*" (SrTI2). A teacher also noted that families with lower economic conditions could not handle the reading materials (SuTI3). The children of those families also could not even eat before going to classes. Moreover, in the classroom, they could not focus. Parents of these families were not very conscious and were less likely to read (BhTI5). One of the parents stated that teachers are available in the urban areas, and students get support from their parents at home. Students in the urban areas were disciplined. On the other hand, students did not get that environment at home in the rural areas. Children in the rural areas were more accustomed to playing (ChPF11).

## 6.6 Gender Perspectives on Reading Motivation

This study explored the views of parents, community members, teachers, and other professionals on reading from the gender perspective. Considering the gender of the students, all participants stated their opinions on whether there is a difference in reading interest.

*Gender perspectives on reading interest: parents' opinions* - Though parents frequently mentioned that girls were more interested in reading, some of the parents opined that it depended on the environment. They also observed that it was the value of reading that made the children want to read not their gender. Parents mostly mentioned that boys were naughty, agile, and less interested in reading. The boys didn't want to listen to their parents. On the other hand, the girls stayed at home. They were more homely and listened to their parents. They were more excited about reading than boys (GaPF1). Another parent said that girls were more engaged in schools, they developed connections with literature and performed better at schools. Boys stay most of the time out of home spending time with their friends; they are less keen on reading (SuPF3).

A parent mentioned that children's interest in reading could be identical for both boys and girls as it depends on the home environment, but girls are more interested in reading. He added,

If a boy is raised in a family with proper rules and appropriate guidance from childhood, he will gradually become more interested in reading. However, as he grows older, he may become restless and want to go outside and focus more on playing. (GaPF1)



Similar findings were revealed from other parents. They said that boys and girls have the same level of interest in reading when they are young. But it changes as they grow older (SrPF2, RaPF7). Day by day, boys stay outside the house most of the time and are more interested in spending time with their friends or playing, while girls are usually at home and are more interested in reading and they are ambitious. In addition, a parent stated the perceptions of society regarding their daughters' education. He mentioned,

I don't believe that there is usually any difference between a boy's and a girl's interest in reading. As a member of society, I found that many parents perceive that their daughters do not need additional education, and girls must marry after completing primary education, so there is no point in further schooling. Boys and girls have different levels of access to education, and girls are often given fewer chances. (SrPF2)

Some parents mentioned that the girls were more interested because they realised, they could do what a boy could do. "*Nowadays, girls no longer want to be left behind in society*" (ChPF11). Girls were interested in reading more, but boys, in some places, had some limitations. One of the parents noted that boys needed to support their father in the agriculture field in his region. There was no particular work pressure on the girls from their families. But boys aged 10–12 had to work for their families. However, boys were also responsible for this. After coming from the field, they could attend school again, but they did not come to school. They skipped school and played all day long during the school hours (SsPF4). A parent said,

Child labor is not banned yet. As a result, the boys work for their families. They don't face any problems getting work anywhere. And the girls can't go out. They push themselves to move up a few grades. Although parents are uninterested, there is sometimes a lot for girls. (ChPF10)

Another parent said that the girls were eager to learn. A parent said, *“I don’t understand why the interest gap is there! But if someone knows how to read fluently, whether a boy or a girl, they will be interested in reading more. And interest also depends on the environment”* (RaPF7). Other parents said that girls were more concerned about their social standing because society made them aware of their social status. A parent said, *“An educated girl will get a good life partner in terms of education and money. Her parents will be proud that their daughter is living a dignified life”* (BhPF5).

Parents further noted that girls mostly stayed at home. When they saw violence in households with females, they attempted to avoid it in their own lives. They wanted to be educated to tackle these issues and assist their parents (BhPF5). Another parent mentioned that gender gaps in society exist regarding access to education. Boys used to be given more priority by parents. The government of Bangladesh has now taken several initiatives aimed at both girls and boys. The girls have accepted this opportunity and therefore, they are more interested in studying (CfPF6). She said that this type of incident had occurred to her as well. She could not continue her studies as she was a girl, but her brothers could do so. But as a mother, she did not discriminate between her son and her daughter. She also admitted that girls were more interested in studying than boys (CfPF6). Another parent added-

Girls today do not want to be left behind. They want to be the same as the boys. Women are now working in all types of occupations. They work as pilots, police, teachers, and in other professions. Working women are the sources of encouragement for other women. Girls are more interested in learning by watching other women leading a successful life. (BhPF5)

A parent mentioned girls’ interest in reading and said,

Girls want to study because they see Bangladesh being governed by a woman making so many remarkable improvements. So, they need to study to do so many activities for the society. Girls now want to do something on their own. Girls do not want to depend on anyone. (ChPF11)

***Gender perspectives on reading interest: community members' opinions*** - One of the community members stated that he did not discriminate between his son and daughter in terms of providing educational facilities. However, some guardians wanted to give their daughter an early marriage, and this type of approach has demotivated children. He added, *"I think this happens if the parents are illiterate"* (GaCf1). Another member said that girls would like to read more than boys because they were more patient (GaCf1). Furthermore, one of the community members stated that the level of interest in reading often depends on the community's activity. He said boys in their area were less interested in reading. They did not want to study; they wanted to go abroad. He said, *"Most families want to send their sons abroad if a boy can even know how to sign"* (SuCf3). Another member acknowledged it, and she added that her child did not want to study and wanted to go abroad. She had been trying hard to persuade him to study but her son was not interested.

However, another member of the same community disagreed with this view and added that boys and girls have the same interest level in reading. He added, *"It depends on the family. The family needs to create a proper environment suitable for studying, and the children must follow the family rules; so that the boys do not go out while studying"* (SuCf3). He further added, *"It also depends on the community's environment"* (SuCf3).

In addition, another member said that girls received more priority than boys in the job sector. Therefore, the boys were demotivated. They were involved in several misdemeanors, which could be another reason for the demotivation to read for boys (SrCf2).

Another member mentioned the condition of the society and said that girls remain at home because they could not find a place to play or go outside. Their movement was restricted. On the other side, boys had a scope to go out to play. Everywhere they could find a spot. So, girls stayed at home with their books (SsCf4). Another member expressed,

In the context of Bangladesh, girls are more interested in studying. The only explanation could be the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. How she raises women with reverence and dignity everywhere has led to the awakening of women in society. My daughter is more interested in reading than my son because of this awakening. (BhCf5)

Another member talked about the conservative attitude of the parents and its effect on girls' education. He added,

While I was a student, my three sisters were all studying. My father was a school teacher. My father wanted to postpone my three sisters' schooling. However, one of them studied determinedly. However, two of my sisters were unable to study due to conservatism. I saw conservatism. However, I do not believe in conservatism. That's why I educated my two daughters. (BhCf5)

In addition, previously, girls were unable to pursue their ambition. Nowadays, they can see successful ladies around them. They were still ahead due to information technology, and they would see it in front of their eyes. They were more ambitious and more successful (BhCf5).

***Gender perspectives on reading interest: Teachers' opinions*** - In the classroom, the girls outnumber the boys. They even preferred reading more than the boys. Girls were also calmer and more patient. The guys were impish and restless. They had a lot of fun outside playing sports. One of the teachers stated,

It's a psychological issue. The level of interest might fluctuate. Families would be concerned about how a parent rears a boy or a girl. Even though the boys are less engaged, their friends and instructors will support them in many ways. (GaTI1)

Another teacher expressed her opinion regarding the reason for girls' increased interest in reading. She said that society values and prioritises boys more and they misuse this concern. On the other hand, girls studied more to increase their value in society (SrTI2).

Teachers noticed that girls enjoyed reading more than boys. A teacher said,

Girls are ahead in all areas in Bangladesh. The boys cannot do anything constantly. But the girls are patient. The way girls want to do a task is ultimately done in that way. Girls keep it in mind when they are motivated. They do the work appropriately. (RaTI8)

Another teacher agreed on girls' interest for reading and noted that the boys need to help their fathers with fishing and farming. Conversely, another teacher pointed out that many fourth and fifth-grade girls were getting married. However, due to the Upazila Chairman's initiative, child marriages decreased to some extent. She said, "*Parents do not know about the importance of education in this area. They just send their children to school, and that's all*" (CkTI7). However, one of the teachers said that people usually claim that boys are naughty and are not interested in reading. Parents should be mindful of their children's reading habits in response to their interest in reading. She added,

We have built a social relationship between girls and reading. We do not allow any girl to play outside in the afternoon. But the boys can play with other boys outside the house in the afternoon. Parents even discourage their daughters from

going outside. A boy likes to go out and play. I believe a boy would be interested in reading if his parents develop a love for reading in him from an early age. (SuTI3)

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the qualitative findings collected from one-on-one interviews and FGDs with teachers, parents, community members, education officials and other government officials. The data were analysed based on the reading environment and facilities in families, schools, and communities. Along with the reading environment and facilities data showed that parents used a new pen, notebook, or food item as prizes to encourage their children to read textbooks (SuCF3). However, parents did not encourage their children to read storybooks by rewarding them or stimulating them. Moreover, inspiring reading for pleasure was missing in most families, schools, and communities. A very few teachers also expressed their experiences of inspiring students to read with the gift's chocolates and other simple things. Though there were government instructions to encourage students to read through various events and competitions such as the student of the week or student of the month, pleasure reading was also missing in the school environment. In the end, all the stakeholders could inspire the children to read for pleasure by rewarding them with new books.

### **Box 1:** *Reading Culture in a Family - A Story*

A parent shared his experience with a fascinating story. He stated that every child in his family had to perform something in the cultural programme organised every month. It could be telling a story, reciting a poem, singing, dancing, sharing the ideas of a book he or she had read, or whatever the child wants. Every child would receive a book as a gift. He provides books to his family's children through this programme and encourages them to read. He added, "If parents spend time with their children, practice good examples and keep accurate time records, children will read more" (SuPF3).

## Chapter Seven: Discussion

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this study in relation to the research questions, theoretical framework, and the empirical studies reviewed for the study. The aim of the current research was to explore the social and cultural contexts of the reading motivation of Grade IV students at selected government primary schools in Bangladesh. The study was guided by one main research question which was followed by four sub-questions.

The main research question was: **What socio-cultural aspects influence reading motivation of the primary school students in Bangladesh?**

The four sub-questions were:

1. How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?
2. What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?
3. What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?
4. What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?

The discussions of the findings presented in this chapter are organised according to the four sub-questions of the study.

### 7.2 Research sub-question 1: How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?

The findings of the study indicated that parents have varied views and conceptions of reading. The following sections discuss parents' perceptions of reading and the importance they give to it.

### 7.2.1 Parents' Perception of Reading

As the study found, the parents in Bangladesh expressed their perception of reading using three different Bangla terms named, *porasuna or poralekha* (study), *shikkha* (education), and *pora* (reading). However, while referring to reading, parents used these Bangla words interchangeably. In discussing parents' varied perceptions of reading, the present study also addressed the meanings of these words which are discussed below.

**Reading as Study (*Porasuna, Poralekha*) and Education (*Shikkha*)** -Three different Bangla Academy Dictionaries along with an Oxford English dictionary and an online dictionary were consulted to determine the meaning of these Bangla words. The Bangla dictionary were Practical Bengali Dictionary (Bengali-Bengali), the Bengali-English Dictionary, and the English-Bangla Dictionary. According to the Practical Bengali Dictionary of Bangla Academy, the words *porasuna* and *poralekha* have identical meaning, which was found as *oddhoyon*, or *paath* in Bengali (Bangla Academy, 2005, p. 713). The Bengali word *oddhoyon*, or *paath*, means 'to study' or 'to read' (Bangla Academy, 2014, p.15). However, *shikkha* means *oddhoyon* in Bengali (Bangla Academy, 2005, p. 1079) and *oddhoyon* means study or education (Bangla Academy, 2014, p. 15). Therefore, *shikkha* also means study or education.

Alternatively, according to the Oxford English dictionary, 'study' means 'the activity of learning or gaining knowledge from books or by examining things in the world' (Wehmeier, 2002, p.1292). while 'education' means a process of teaching, training, and learning, especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills'



(Wehmeier, 2002, p.401). Unlike the Bengali terms where *porasuna*, *poralekha*, *shikkha* and *pora*- all have almost identical meanings, the English terms ‘study’, ‘education’ and, ‘reading’, are more distinct words with different meanings.

The study found that ‘reading’ was frequently perceived as 'study' (*porasuna* or *poralekha*) and 'education' (*shikkha*), similar to its meaning in English. On the other hand, the perception of reading (*pora*), as an act of encountering a text for comprehension, was less frequently held by the respondents.

The study findings indicated that parents mostly perceived reading as an act of study and means of perusing education, but not as an act of reading a text. Parents mentioned a variety of educational activities when talking about study or education, such as learning alphabets, numbers, rhymes, developing writing skills, learning various human relations, and naming different objects. However, most of these activities mentioned happened without even having to read any text or visual materials. The finding indicated that reading means learning and gaining knowledge about the contents reflected in the textbooks, which assists students in achieving good results and success in life by securing a job or any other work. Parents mostly did not consider reading storybooks or other materials or pictures as reading activities. This kind of perception could be influenced by the result-oriented education system. In the educational system of Bangladesh, both parents and teachers want students to get good test scores. So, while thinking of reading the respondents focused on the kinds of content and skills that are relevant to the examinations. That is why it was also found in this study that reading skills were not emphasised in the classroom as well as in the assessment system. The parents also did not

view reading as a fundamental skill for learning a language or a tool that could provide enjoyment to students. This finding is consistent with that of some previous research (Hasnat, 2017; Maniruzzaman & Hoque, 2010; NAPE, 2019; Nuby et al., 2020; Podder, 2013), which revealed that teachers taught test-relevant content while parents were motivated to guide students only on those topics. This may lead to parents' reluctance to perceive reading as an important skill or even a separate activity.

The findings also indicated that reading was mainly viewed as an oral activity rather an interactive process of observing and understanding the meaning of various materials like text and symbols. The cultural tradition of folklore in the community of Bangladesh might have a link with the reading practices of conversations. The study findings indicated that children started learning through rhymes along with the alphabet and numbers. The first element considered in folklore is rhymes (Rahman, 2016).

Furthermore, for a long time, folklore has strong influence reflected on the society. As Islam (2012) mentioned, “Folklore is the literature that has been in the mouths of people since time immemorial, still exists, and will continue to exist in the future” (p.126, cited in Rahman, 2016). It was also used as a medium of education and constructive means of entertainment in various forms in the rural ancient Bengal of the Indian subcontinent (Liton, 2014: online). According to the current study findings, the majority of parents had a minimum institutional education (grade five or no institutional education) and, thus, they admitted their inability to read. It is also a reflection of not using books as reading materials for the early reading activities of their children at home. Rahman (2016) argued in this regard that in a society where most people are illiterate, they create their literature

from mouth to mouth and passes it from generation to generation. Previous research (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Howie et al., 2017; Retelsdorf et al., 2011) has found that parents' level of education determines whether or not they provide reading resources at home.

A study conducted by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) libraries found that the Southeast Asian Nations are talking and listening community, and they do not have a culture of reading (Sangkaeo, 1999). The study also claimed that the unavailability of children's books among Southeast Asian nations is a reason for not having a reading culture there. It was found in the context of Bangladesh that, Shishu Academy, established in 1976, is the only dedicated organisation that publishes children's book in this country. Moreover, it was mentioned by Ahmed (1993) after analysing the books published by some renowned publishers that only 22.68% of the books in Bangladesh published in 1991 were children's books. The study further reported that the percentage of children's books published by government publications would be even lower and there were probably no books for children under five. The present study has also found that 5–10% of the books procured by the public libraries of Bangladesh each year are children's books. In addition, it was revealed that books of children below the age of five are not sold, and that is why their supply is also limited. However, the unavailability of children's books and the absence of the culture of purchasing children's books in the early years may create a culture of shopkeepers' and publishers in difference about making children's books available.

Along with the issue of availability of books, the price and the content of children's books also matter. The current study indicated that children's book publishers produce books in simple language with minimal content, attractive covers and pages, and at a price that may not be affordable for all parents in urban and rural areas. Similar finding was reported in the study conducted by Ahmed (1993) who pointed out that most of the children's books used traditional content, which children might not readily accept, and the high price of the colourful books might discourage parents from purchasing those books. However, in addition to the price and the content, parents' unawareness may be another factor that hinder them from purchasing books.

**Reading as to be able to read (*Pora*)** - The word 'pora' means 'path kora' or 'oddhoyn' (Bangla Academy, 2005, p. 712). Similarly, *path kora* or *oddhoyn* means reading or studying (Bangla Academy, 2014, p. 420). Along with this, in the English dictionary, the word 'read' means 'to look at and understand the meaning of written or printed words or symbols and 'reading' means 'the cognitive process of understanding a written linguistic message' (Online Advanced English Dictionary, n.d).

The study found that parents less frequently perceived reading as a process of having the ability to read any material and. It was also found that few parents considered reading as a process of understanding texts and as a unique skill. It was found in previous studies (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Guthrie et al., 2007; Kucukoglu, 2013; McGeown, 2013; Owusu-Acheaw, 2014) that a good reader needs to be skilled as well as having an interest in reading. The study found that parents with higher education expressed positive attitude

towards reading and they provided additional reading materials to their children and supported their reading. Studies (Baker, 2003; Geske & Ozola, 2008; Simonds, 2012) consistently indicated that students need a supportive environment in their closest organisation, such as family, and a positive perception from a closest person, such as parents, to be motivated in reading and to be good readers.

Parents, who perceived reading as the ability to read and understand texts, focused on reading storybooks and picture books and also encouraged their children to do that. This finding is also comparable to other study findings (Evans et al., 2010; Kloosterman et al., 2011) which reported that such activities help stimulate children's intrinsic motivation and increase their skills of achieving academic success in school.

In a nutshell, parents mostly perceived reading as means of 'study' or 'education' focusing on learning alphabets, numbers, rhymes, and naming various objects as part of the reading process, except reading non-academic or storybooks. On the other hand, parents occasionally mentioned reading as the ability to read, with a focus on reading additional material, like storybooks and picture books who encouraged their children to do so and thus could promote a reading environment and motivate children to read.

### *7.2.2 Parents' Perception about the Importance of Reading*

Reading has received a lot of attention from parents from a varied perspective. As mentioned in the earlier section, parents mostly perceived reading as a means of study and attainment of education; they have given importance to reading with regards to several aspects of life and success in terms of academic results, getting a good job, or

engaging in other work. The parents considered reading as an important activity especially from the following four perspectives:

- Reading for Career Development
- Reading for Women's Empowerment
- Reading for Social Skills and awareness
- Reading for developing various aspects of life and the country

### **Reading for Career Development**

The findings of the study revealed that parents emphasized the importance of reading as a means of gaining education and study. Reading was viewed as a means of gaining academic success or excellent grades in school, and parents placed a high value on reading for its role in developing a career. According to UNESCO (2016), education is required to make people productive and educate them to be decent citizens, family members, and community members who can contribute to all aspects of their lives and the country's economic success. The importance of reading as established in the society is very much linked with the concept of education (Evans et al., 2010; UNESCO, 2016). In the context of Bangladesh, parents mostly considered education as a means to be successful or established in life. They do not think of achieving several skills through the education system, and that is why they have given importance on the output and not on the input and the concerned processes. The reflection in the study is that it has emphasized reading as a means of career development (*"If anyone wants to get a job, do business, or do anything else in their life, they need to study"*). Therefore, by emphasizing reading as a means of achieving success, students do not read or study for

acquiring skills and they do not get involved in the required cognitive process. The study findings also indicated that reading skills are not addressed in the classroom. Hence, it is also mirrored in the education system of Bangladesh that at the end of grade five, students are not achieving the reading skills and learning competencies for reading, which were targeted for that grade. It was also reported that a majority of students are unable to read even in their mother tongue (Ahmed, 2021; DPE, 2018).

However, research revealed that stimulating students to read or study for Examinations for the purpose of establishing a career is linked to parents' role in improving their social lives (Kaiser & Hancock, 2003). But Baker (2003) pointed out that the influential role of parents' involvement with reading should not be ignored as it would increase children's reading skills for academic achievement and ultimately improve their social lives. Considering Baker's (2003) concerns, it is clear from the findings of this study that parents mostly focused on securing academic results instead of engaging in the reading process itself. However, there have been research that revealed that parents' attitude towards reading have impacts on students reading (Bano, 2018; Henning, 2013; McKenna & Kear, 1990; Roman & Pinto, 2015). Therefore, parents must model a positive attitude toward reading to encourage their children to read and shape their children's positive attitudes toward reading.

### **Reading for Women's Empowerment**

Women's empowerment was considered another area of giving importance on reading as a means of gaining education. The study findings indicated women's vital role in family

welfare such as taking care of children's physical, educational, and mental health.

Furthermore, an educated mother would take care of every need of their children as well as family members more accurately than a mother without education. In this twenty first century, people could not get out of the traditional role of a woman as an unpaid service in the family. These study findings are linked with other study findings where data revealed that women's education is essential to educate them to be aware of the importance of girls' education and contribute to the family as conscious citizens (UNDP, 2014; UNESCO, 2016).

The study findings also revealed instances of women's empowerment in the society in terms of their contributions to economic growth, self-protection measures taken by them, and their status and rights in society. Today, Bangladesh government is focusing on women's empowerment as well as development in every sector, including education, which was reflected in a number of strategies mentioned in the National Education Policy 2010 (MoE, 2010). The study found evidences of recognising government's contribution to women's development ("*The Prime Minister raises women with reverence and dignity everywhere, which has led to the awakening of women in society*") through education. In addition to that research studies by several international organisations and individuals have (Heath & Jayachandran, 2016; UNDP, 2014; UNESCO, 2016) indicated that without women's contributions in the economic and education sectors, it would not be possible to gain success in social and national levels. The current study findings are also similar to these studies and concluded that there is a conception in society about the importance of girls' education in terms of their own development as well as their



contribution to the society. Furthermore, women are reported to play the role as a leader, protect them from any kind of violence as well as make their decisions by themselves (Heath & Jayachandran, 2016; UNDP, 2014; UNESCO, 2019; UNESCO, 2016; UNICEF, 2020). This kind of attitude towards girls' education as well as women development would eventually develop the society and the country.

### **Reading for Social Skills and Awareness**

Research findings indicated that reading is essential for developing a wide range of social skills, including raising awareness in day-to-day life. In everyday life, students need to communicate with others using proper behaviour, sign different documents, make several decisions regarding regular health and hygiene, and buy necessary items from the shops. Furthermore, studying helps people become aware of social superstitions and remove them from society. It also helps eliminate social problems like child marriage through education and, thus, upturns social awareness. A similar finding was revealed in a recent study (Wodon et al., 2018), which showed that education helps develop a wide range of ways for individuals as well as families, communities, and society. Another research by Chiu & Ko (2007) reported that parents with a lower level of education do not view reading as a joyful activity rather as a functional tool that helps a child throughout their life. However, the study findings are linked with other studies (Raghupathi & Raghupathi, 2020; UNESCO, 2016) that focused solely on education, not on reading.

### **Reading for Developing Various Aspects of Life and the Country**

The study findings mostly emphasize the importance of reading for career development, women's empowerment, and national development. However, some of the findings pertain to reading for different aspects of students, like cognitive development, social skills, mental structure, and contribution to the development of the country. The study findings reveal that reading helps develop students' cognitive abilities and makes students competent. Furthermore, a skilled reader reads to acquire knowledge and is enthusiastic about reading. These study findings are relevant to other studies (Retelsdorf et al., 2011, Schiefele et al., 2012; Unrau, 2006, Lau, 2009) that reported positive relationships between reading motivation and competence in reading.

Along with cognitive development, an educated society works for the betterment of society and the country in all areas of development. An educated person can contribute to any sector, such as agriculture, industry, business, politics, or anything else. Agriculture is the primary source of income in the majority of rural areas of Bangladesh. As a result, it would be better if educated citizens returned to agriculture to apply their skills and enhance the sector. This type of improvement is associated with education rather directly with reading. There is, nevertheless, parents linked between reading and education. Learning is dependent on examining information that requires reading proficiency, which reflects academic accomplishment together (Schiefele et al., 2012). Furthermore, reading abilities and educational success develop students' personalities and make them successful in their personal lives, allowing them to contribute to social and economic development, including the development of a culture that ensures the well-being of all

members of the community (Project Literacy, 2020; Qiftiyah, 2020; Salahuddin et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2016; World Bank, 2016; World Economic Forum, 2014).

In conclusion, the findings showed that parents mostly viewed reading as means of study and gaining education. As a result, they perceived reading as a tool for supporting or improving academic achievement, developing children's social skills and awareness, enhancing life skills, empowering women, ensuring the betterment of society and country. However, they mostly saw reading as a functional tool rather an enjoyable activity. Moreover, the notion of reading for pleasure is mostly absent in Bangladesh, which is essential for becoming a competent reader. It motivates students to read and, as a result, helps them attain reading skills and academic outcomes. Alternatively, parents less frequently emphasize reading for their children to be competent readers, which encourages them to read more and promotes cognitive development.

### **7.3 Research Sub-question 2: What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?**

Family is the first learning organisation, and parents are the first teachers for a child in encouraging them to read in a supportive reading environment at home (Chiu et al., 2015). The findings of this study that are related to the family environment and parents' interactions, including the kind of learning environment and home facilities that stimulate or hinder children's reading, are discussed in this section. The discussions are framed by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) and Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory (2000). According to ecological systems theory, family is the closest social organisation to children, and parents as family members influence

children's development by ensuring appropriate environment and positive interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Along with this, self-determination theory discusses the influence of the surrounding environment and social interactions of the family members on children's motivation (Legault, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Employing these two theoretical frames, the discussion of family environment, facilities, and practices on reading motivation is organised and presented below under the five sections namely, 1. Socio-economic conditions and reading motivation; 2. family facilities for reading motivation; 3. family practices for reading motivation; 4. parents' involvement with library facilities and practices; and 5. reading culture in the families of Bangladesh.

### *7.3.1 Socio-economic Conditions and Reading Motivation*

Parents' socio-economic condition, including their education, has a positive association with reading achievement as well as reading motivation (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Education Watch, 2015; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mayer et al., 2015; Tarelli & Stubbe, 2010; Waldfogel & Washbrook, 2011). The present study found that around half of the parents (both father and mother) had attained maximum primary level education, whereas some had never attained any institutional education. The study findings indicated a significant relationship between better education and reading motivation ( $p < 0.05$ ). The result is similar to other studies (Basher et al., 2014; Education Watch, 2015; Howie et al., 2017, Lee & Yeo, 2014). Besides education, parents' occupation was another social factor contributing to or hindering the family environments for motivating children to read. The current study revealed that fathers were mostly involved in daily-basis work, small business, or farming (80%) that are related with daily income. On the other hand,

mothers were mainly engaged as homemakers (85%). However, the study findings showed a significant positive relationship between fathers' better occupation (e.g., service holders) ( $p < 0.05$ ) and their children's reading motivation (Basher et al., 2014; Howie et al., 2017; Lee & Yeo, 2014). On the other hand, the motivation level differed with the mothers' occupation, and students whose mothers were involved in service performed better, but the difference was not statistically significant. Mothers as guardians are mostly involved with their children, and their education level may vary in taking academic initiatives, supporting and sharing in reading as well as educational activities. It makes no difference what occupation they are in. The study findings are similar to other results (Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Mayer et al., 2015).

According to the research findings, parents with higher institutional education and a favourable financial situation had a positive attitude toward reading who also provided a better environment at home. They also interact with their children's academic activities at home. The study also revealed that parents' attitudes towards reading and their education and occupation led them to provide additional reading materials or storybooks at home to create an environment conducive to reading at home, which was also identical with other study findings (Howie et al., 2017; Lee & Yeo, 2014; Zhang et al., 2020). Educated parents had the habit of providing storybooks for their children. On the other hand, parents with a lower level of institutional education and an unstable occupation were not much aware of their children's educational activities (Saha & Khan, 2014), particularly reading. Parents of children in these groups rarely manage to provide any assistance with reading or other academic activities, and their monitoring is often limited to sending

children to school, communicating with teachers for academic results, and helping with their children's homework. It was reported in other research that parents with a lower level of institutional education were not very aware (Salahuddin et al., 2020) and they did not maintain a proper reading environment at home or provide additional materials to their children. On the other hand studies (Altintas, 2012; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003) consistently indicated that educated parents spent time on interactive and developmental activities, whereas parents with lower-level education spent time on repetitive and physical care activities.

Moreover, in the context of Bangladesh, findings revealed that students from low-income and disadvantaged families were enrolled in government primary schools (Habib et al., 2019) and had difficulties attending classes regularly. Some of them need to work with their parents in the fields; some of them may not take their meals properly before coming to school; or they do not have a supportive environment at home for reading books (Saha & Khan, 2014). Additionally, the socio-cultural conditions of the parents and the consequences are relevant to the concept of Boudon (1974), 'primary effect of social background' (cited in Kloosterman et al., 2011) and have an impact on academic success, including reading ability, which was reflected in other studies (Chen et al., 2018; Kloosterman et al., 2009; Kloosterman et al., 2011). Some other research (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Yoder & Lopez, 2013) indicated that parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were less active in their children's reading activities, and this reduced participation was associated with lower level of reading achievement.

### 7.3.2 *Family Facilities for Reading Motivation*

A child spends most of the time from birth to entering school or even during school days with their family, particularly their parents. Children are intrinsically motivated to read in families where parents provide adequate home literacy activities as a source of enjoyment for their children (Abu-Rabia & Yaari, 2012; Wiescholek et al., 2017). The findings of this study regarding the reading environment and reading culture in families for primary school students in Bangladesh were examined by the family facilities (e.g., number of storybooks available at home, having a reading table or electronic devices as reading materials) and practices (e.g., purchasing storybooks, parental reading habits, shared reading).

***Availability of books at home*** -The number of books students have at home indicated a healthy reading environment and increases the motivation to read. It was found from this study that a majority of the students (61.3%) do not have any storybooks at home, which denotes a lack of ‘cultural capital’ (Evans et al., 2010; Notten & Becker, 2017; Wiescholek et al., 2017; Zimdars et al., 2009). However, in the concept of cultural capital, ‘books’ at home are considered as culture, excluding magazines, newspapers, and schoolbooks. Furthermore, a family environment, such as a discussion with reading materials and having adequate reading materials at home foster social and cultural values and are intrinsically motivating for learning (Chiu et al., 2015; Chiu & Chow, 2010), of which both are absent in the families of primary school students in Bangladesh.

Another factor could be the parent's educational level, which may stimulate or hinder parents from buying storybooks at home. The present study found that a majority (56%) of the parents belonged to a minimum primary or no institutional education background. Studies (Retelsdorf et al., 2011; Villiger, 2012; Zhang et al., 2020) consistently indicated that parental education and socio-economic conditions are strongly linked with the ability and enthusiasm to provide an inspiring learning environment at home particularly the number of books in a child's hand. Fan (2014) also found that a family's economic, social, and cultural capitals had influences on the children's educational resources. In addition to parental education, the high-stake school examinations of Bangladesh, including the Primary Education Completion Examination (PECE), and highly test-centred teaching-learning practices, often keep students occupied with textbooks (Ahmed, 2021; DPE, 2018). The present study found that parents also generally focused on textbooks and discouraged buying storybooks for their children.

***Number of books*** - The present study found no families where there were more than 50 books for their children at home. Regarding the number of books at home research (Mullis et al., 2017) revealed that the world average for a student in the primary was 112 books. On the other hand, students with 'many resources' at home are found to have more than 100 books in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) reports. In addition, research (Retelsdorf et al., 2011) mentioned a total of 200 books as a good number of books to be found at home. Furthermore, well-resourced countries with a good education had more books than the average (Elley, 1992; Evans et al., 2010). However, the present study found that some families where parents were educated had



more storybooks (10–40 books) than students whose parents did not have that. This finding is similar to those of earlier studies, which found that students from well-educated (Notten & Becker, 2017; Evans et al., 2010) and well-resourced families had more books at home and performed better in reading (Elley, 1992; Evans et al., 2010).

It was further reflected in the NSA 2017 report that students gradually reduced their reading ability (Salahuddin et al., 2020) and performed poorly in their domain of understanding (Education Watch, 2015). Students do not receive any supplementary resources to read at home, as the system, including parents and teachers, focuses on academic results rather skills. Gradually, they are falling behind in acquiring reading skills, as they are not connecting to reading, and consequently, not developing reading competencies (Ali et al., 2020). It is also related to the self-determination theory, which claims that students' self-determination would increase in a supportive social situation where they are competent and have the freedom to choose from that social environment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). To create a neck for reading, parents must buy books and keep a sufficient number of interesting and relevant books at home. This will help create an environment that makes them competent at reading and generates an opportunity to choose materials according to their choice, which makes them connected to the issue. This whole process reflects that reading motivation may start within the family first.

***Availability of electronic devices*** - Along with storybooks, electronic devices like mobile phones, laptops, televisions, and social media are used as reading materials in the 21st-century to foster students' cognitive development. The present study revealed that 28.6%

of students used mobile phones and laptops as reading devices when participating in online classes. It is good practice in the context of primary education in Bangladesh. However, this might be due to the announcement of the Bangladesh government to make the education system digitalized by integrating ICT in education (MoE, 2010). In addition to that, the Bangladesh government is committed to achieving ‘Vision 2021’ by implementing efficient and high-quality information and communication technology in all sectors, including education, to transform Bangladesh into a thriving, resourceful, and modern economic country (Rahman, 2014). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Bangladesh introduced online classes for primary school students, and the government primary schools used social media to disseminate classes and communicate with students. In COVID-19, it was an opportunity for the students to become familiar with the technology to explore other types of reading resources. However, rural students had fewer opportunities to use electronic devices as reading materials. There was a lack of networks and availability of mobile phones and laptops in rural areas. All the parents from urban and rural areas could not afford smartphones for their children. However, though students use electronic devices as reading materials, there is still room for improvement to achieve Vision 2021. However, the impacts of ICT on students’ learning in this technological era are also addressed by several research studies (Waldfoegel & Washbrook, 2011; Yang & Wu, 2012) which argued that students must be exposed to technology to be prepared for and equipped with the abilities required of 21st-century citizens.

Furthermore, data from the present study showed that those who had access did not use those devices as reading materials; they used them as playthings and spent a lot of time on them. Electronic reading materials and social platforms significantly motivate children to read, and there should be a school and community programme to make students use these devices as reading materials and make them aware of the merits and demerits of these electronic devices. Similar findings were revealed in other studies (Jonassen, 2000; Yang & Wu, 2012). However, parental guidance should be provided while using those gadgets for academic purposes and recreation (Biancarosa & Piper, 2012; Majid & Tan, 2007).

***Availability of reading table***-In addition to the mentioned facilities for reading at home, the study showed that parents mostly identified stationer items, such as pencils, notebooks, and reading tables, as the essential part of reading motivation rather reading materials such as books. For example, the present study found that most students have reading tables (87%) with adequate light and air at their homes. Though research (Bano et al., 2018; Bronfenbrenner & Evan, 2000; Evans et al., 2001; Schmeer & Yoon, 2016) has shown that physical facilities have a positive impact on students' cognitive, emotional, and physical development, books are the most important element of reading at home for motivating students to read (Morni & Sahari, 2013; Mullis et al., 2017; Park, 2008; Yang et al., 2018) which are mostly missing in the context of primary education in Bangladesh.

### 7.3.3 *Family Practices for Reading Motivation*

Family practices and the reading culture of the family are crucial for motivating students to read and learn to read (Mayer et al., 2015; Swalander & Taube, 2007). The findings of the study examine three aspects of family practices, including purchasing storybooks, parental reading habits, and parental involvement in both academic and shared reading in influencing students' reading motivation.

***Practices of purchasing storybooks-***The present study revealed that limited practices of purchasing storybooks for children are found among family members (69%). Parents were not inclined to purchase storybooks because they were over concerned about school test outcomes. A National study (the Education Watch, 2015) also echoed parental high concentration on academic results. In the government-provided primary education system of Bangladesh, parents do not need to purchase textbooks because the government provides free school textbooks every academic year (MoE, 2010). Parents are not interested in buying storybooks for their children's pleasure reading as they do not find any linkage between academic results and storybooks; they only buy guidebooks to get good academic outcomes. However, this is because the parents preferred their children's results.

In addition, parents did not express very optimistic views toward reading storybooks who believe that storybooks hamper their children's academic achievement. Storybooks may distract the child from their academic reading and the child may spend a long-time reading storybook than textbooks. Even parents who accepted their children's reading of storybooks somewhat linked it with academic purposes. Most of the parents were mostly

concerned about academic urgency. A similar finding was revealed in a Southeast Asian study (Majid & Tan, 2007) which revealed that students were mostly interested in reading for academic purposes like developing language skills or acquiring good grades. Despite the fact that leisure reading or reading for enjoyment greatly contributes to improving language abilities, the study found reading as the third most favoured leisure activity among students.

As parents accepted reading storybooks as a path to achieving good marks in the creative question system, they did not encourage their children to read storybooks. For that reason, parents, teachers, and schools were all focusing on textbooks. Even the culture of knowing content through other materials, including e-books and other authentic Internet sources, was not recommended in the education system and the classroom. It was also mentioned in previous study that reading from multiple sources of materials should be focused on in the primary education system of Bangladesh (The Education Watch, 2015).

Research (Syarief et al., 2020) revealed that storybooks encourage students to read, develop their language skills, improve vocabulary, and develop their capacity to express themselves. However, the student respondents of this study reported having no opportunity to read storybooks at home. So, students are not achieving these skills and capacities. In addition, parents' positive attitudes toward reading and their interactions with children through storybooks encourage their children to read and significantly impact their reading achievement (Weigel et al., 2006). Furthermore, parents with a positive attitude towards reading provide adequate reading materials at home (Collins &

Svensson, 2008; DeBaryshe et al., 2000; Weigel et al., 2006b). On the other hand, parental education also influences parental attitudes towards education (Lam & Ducreux, 2013).

An interesting finding was revealed in the present study regarding an educated parent's positive attitudes towards reading and the parent's initiatives in creating a reading environment at home through activities. That parent organised an exciting activity at home to stimulate children's reading by organizing a cultural and reading programme once a month and providing books as gifts.

The study revealed that a lack of literacy (56%) kept parents unaware of the importance of storybooks for the development of children. Parental education has an influence on language performance and learning abilities, which ensures a favourable reading environment at home (Aram et al., 2013; Education Watch, 2015). Furthermore, a study (Aram et al., 2013) revealed that parents' socio-economic conditions (high school education and semi-skilled professions like hairdresser and carpenter) encourage parents to conduct several activities (vocabulary and letter naming, joint book reading and writing) at home, which also hinders the parents' respondents of this study from purchasing storybooks for their children.

Parents admit the importance of extra-curricular activities for their child's holistic development; however, they do not recognise the significance of storybooks. It is a representation of how parents feel about reading storybooks. This finding aligns with that of Lee and Yeo's (2014) which revealed that youngsters had time to watch television but not to read. However, parents' attitudes and practices influence children's reading

attitudes. In the same way, children's attitudes develop with the stimulation of their environment and the practices of the members of those institutions (Lee and Yeo, 2014). In addition to that, parents perceive their children's educational attainment as the responsibility of the school and their task is only to send them to school. Perceptions like this could limit their willingness to buy storybooks as additional support for their children. A similar finding was also reported in another study, which stated that parents might believe that education is the job of the school instead of the parents and, hence, remain indifferent (Heaton, 2016) about their children's education.

Furthermore, an interesting finding of the study was that a portion of parents perceived that a child of grade five is too young to read storybooks which prevent them to purchase story books for their children. On the contrary, students' data revealed that students love to read a wide range of reading material including fairy tales, comics, history and Liberation war of Bangladesh. As parents did not buy storybooks, students did not get relevant and appropriate books to explore in their environment. Ultimately, students are not getting anything to read in their leisure time without textbooks and may not have the opportunity to choose the kind of texts they like to read (Legault et al., 2006). However, studies (Baroody & Diamond, 2014; Collins & Svensson, 2008; Teaneck, 2008) consistently revealed that having sufficient printed materials at home encourages children to read, and without that, they would not be willing to read in their early years.

Furthermore, to create a joyful reading environment at home and foster the habit of reading, parents need to ensure a sufficient number of books considering children's

choices to encourage them to read. Research (Evans et al., 2010) also showed that a competent reader would love to read more and positively connect with school. Some studies have reported that students are not achieving learning competencies concerning the Bangla language and are gradually losing their reading ability (DPE, 2018; Salahuddin et al., 2020). There is a relationship between reading ability and interest. This finding is very much linked with the concept of ‘Matthew effects’ on academic achievement. The cognitive process follows the concept of “rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer” (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997, p. 934). The students who could not read in their early years and not even getting enough opportunities or materials at home gradually drifted away from reading practices and skills (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). Gradually, students lost interest in reading and became less proficient because they did not have the proper environment in their social context to satisfy their psychological needs, were not competent in reading, did not find any connection with reading, and even they did not have the opportunity to choose the materials they liked (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Ryan & Deci, 2000). An appropriate environment for reading with a positive attitude has a bidirectional impact. Students are influenced by their surroundings to read more and, as a result, they read more for enjoyment, acquiring reading competencies, and achieving the skills (Farver et al., 2013; Mullis et al., 2017). However, a conducive reading environment must be created at home in order to encourage students to read and to ensure that they are capable of doing so.

***Parents reading habits-*** Along with other areas of the home environment, parents’ reading habits at home have an influence on the children’s capacity to be advanced



readers, higher performers in literacy and this also motivate them to read (Geske & Ozola, 2008; Sangkaeo, 1999; Quilliams & Beran, 2009). The present study showed that parents' reading habits at home were almost absent. Furthermore, when students observe their parents reading for both work and pleasure, they are encouraged and have a favourable attitude toward reading (Collins & Svensson, 2008; Morni & Sahari, 2013; Rasinski et al., 1994).

A study (National Library Board, 2018) done in Singapore revealed that there is a positive relationship between adults' reading habits and higher institutional education. The study found that adults who had more institutional education read more than once a week (bachelor's degree, 93%, and primary school or below, 75%). However, in the present study, parents (56%) mostly have primary level or no institutional education, which might result in lack of reading habits at home.

The parents who took part in the study seldom read storybooks for their children's enjoyment. According to Chiu and Chow (2010), everyday societal practices impact the views, interests, and behaviours that form the culture of children and adolescents, which eventually affect motivation. In the current study, students mostly missed the reading culture in their families, which may have contributed to their inability to form their reading habit. It was also discovered in mothers' reactions that mothers were frustrated over not getting the chance, not having the facilities, or their unwillingness to practice reading at home. However, community facilities might not be sufficient for adults to explore and collect reading materials in their spare time. Along with fathers' reading

habits, the habit of maternal reading influences reading skills and the intellectual development of a child (Jiménez-Pérez et al., 2020; Price & Kalil, 2018).

***Parents' involvement*** - The study revealed that parents (71%) were regularly involved in their children's academic activities, including reading at home. However, parents were too busy with housekeeping and other responsibilities to manage additional time to read storybooks to their children and their involvement was limited to school-based reading activities. Though studies (Cui et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2022) revealed that parental involvement positively affects children's academic performance, the involvement was explicitly related to children's learning engagement such as bringing textbooks or tutorials for academic purposes, playing graphics games, playing with building blocks, helping to develop subject-based thinking capabilities. Furthermore, parents' involvement was also connected to children's cognitive and sociable development (Cui et al., 2019). Though the quantitative data of the present study represent parents' higher involvement in academic activities, this involvement is broadly limited to general instruction such as encouraging children to finish their homework and not being involved directly in giving support for intensive reading. They did not read academic materials to their children or provide reading support for any material (Islam et al., 2020).

Furthermore, 'assistance in children's daily reading' is perceived by parents as the acts of encouraging regular study activities and giving instructions to do homework. However, in a western study, South Asian parents' involvement was mentioned as lower managerial

involvement, which was described as structural involvement. Here, structural involvement denotes parental monitoring of television watching at home (R. Sy, 2006).

In addition, Hoover-Dempsey's model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) for parental involvement mentioned three psychological constructs. These are parents' motivational beliefs, parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement, and parents' perceptions of living situations. In this model, the researcher discusses how parental involvement is influenced by parental ideas about what they are expected to accomplish in terms of their child's education. Furthermore, an invitation from the school community strongly influences parents' initial decisions to be involved, and parental involvement is comprised of parents' perceptions of their available time and energy, as well as their knowledge and skills for involvement (Howland et al., 2006, Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In the current study, parents' academic knowledge, abilities, and work patterns may impede their involvement in reading activities at home. Furthermore, the warm invitation from the schools might be another reason for not participating in academic activities at school.

Furthermore, multiple studies (Carlisle et al., 2005; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Yang et al., 2016) frequently identified parents' socio-economic status (SES) and parents' education level as relevant factors for reading involvement. These two factors can limit access to resources that promote parental engagement, such as flexible or consistent work hours, increasing the risk of severe stress. Furthermore, families from disadvantaged communities may face resource

constraints due to lower socio-economic status and cultural challenges. However, the similar findings (56% of parents with lower levels of education and 80% of parents with daily basis work) in the present study might hinder parents' involvement with the reading of their children.

Alternatively, fathers mostly assist their children by offering financial assistance or dropping off or picking them up from tutors' centres. The study found that fathers consider the house a place to relax as they work outside all day long, and mothers were responsible for everything in the house, including their children's reading. It reflects parents' societal responsibilities and their attitudes and behaviours towards children in supporting them in their academic activities. In this situation mothers were responsible for and involved in their children's academic and social instruction and it has a positive impact on students' academic achievement (Ahmad et al., 2020; Jiménez-Pérez et al., 2020).

Parents' involvement encourages children to read (Klemencic et al., 2014) and children of involved parents enjoy reading more (Heyman, 2016) which also has a significant impact on socio-emotional development as well as adaptation to society (Hoyne & Egan, 2019). Furthermore, parental involvement in reading is associated with reading success (Klemencic et al., 2014; Kloosterman et al., 2011), which is prevalent at the homes of primary school children.

***Shared Reading*** - Reading stories aloud to children in their early years is another way to improve motivation for reading at home. Gradually, this joint or shared reading makes a child independent reader (Baker et al., 1997) and enhance their literacy skills (Senechal et al., 1998; Weigel et al., 2005). The current study showed that a good number of students (33.2%) never get the chance to read storybooks with their parents. Though the rest of the students shared their experiences of reading storybooks with their parents, the practice of providing storybooks was limited within the families mentioned in earlier sections. Sharing storybooks with children before they start school impacts reading, gives a wealth of knowledge, and motivates the youngsters to read (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Yusof, 2010). It is unavailable in the participating students' families which in fact, limit their ability to practice reading with their parents.

However, there is a relationship between parents' socio-economic conditions and the quality of their education and reading interactions. It was found from the present study that most parents had the minimum level of education and that they no connection and interactions with their children's reading experiences. Research findings by Chen et al. (2018) showed similar results that parents with higher education have more positive relationships and interactions with their children that foster the children's positive attitude towards reading as well as increase their reading fluency.

#### *7.3.4 Parents' Involvement with Library Facilities and the Practices*

Parents' involvement in other activities outside the school, like using library, promoted reading for enjoyment (OECD, 2012). Studies (Clark & DeZoya, 2011; Clark &

Hawkins, 2011; Department for Education, 2012) consistently indicated that reading for pleasure had a positive connection with use of library and both these aspects promote reading achievement. The present study results indicated that students (73%) did not have exposures to visiting libraries with their parents. Parents from both urban and rural areas were not aware of the availability of libraries in their community; even some of the parents who were informed about different libraries did not explore those for their children. In a western study (Clark & Hawkins, 2011) more than half of children respondents did not use public libraries because their families did not visit libraries with them. It is revealed in the culture of Bangladesh, where most parents in both rural and urban regions do not bring their children to libraries. In some cases, parents do not visit those libraries with their children due to distance.

Baker et al. (1997) mentioned in a study that there is a link between parents' economic level and library attendance. Families with middle economic status attended libraries more frequently than families with lower economic status. In the present study, most participating parents (80%) were day laborers, drivers, or street vendors. They were unaware of the importance of library visits and needed to be busy all day long with their work. So, they could hardly manage time to bring their children to the library. This may cause parents limiting visits to the libraries with their children.

The habit and willingness to use the library are less common among parents. The possible reason could be parents' perception of use of library has no effect on academic achievement. They did not intend to link their children with the library, as they did not

find any linkage between library visits and academic results. However, research (Harisanty, 2019) indicated the importance of library visits as a means to acquire knowledge (Atmodiwirjo et al., 2010; Clark & Teravainen, 2017) as well as literacy development (Gerrity, 2018; Merga, 2019). Furthermore, it helps developing students' interest about reading (Clark & Teravainen, 2017).

The use of libraries stimulates students' enjoyment of reading, fosters a positive attitude toward reading, and it is an excellent resource for improving students' interests and reading habits (Heyman, 2016; Morni & Sahari, 2013; Ring et al., 2016). It was mostly absent among primary school students in Bangladesh. The creation of a library increases the attitude toward borrowing books from the library as students read books with their peers and their reading time increases. Therefore, this should be taken into consideration to ensure libraries in the families and community. In addition, a small library at home and exposure to libraries with parents are beneficial to children's cognitive and social development (Melhuish et al., 2001; Noah et al., 2015). Although the majority of parents reported not offering storybooks to their children, not having the practice of 'shared reading' with their children, and not reading for pleasure, they had a positive attitude towards libraries. The library would be a way to diversify students' interests and stimulate their attention to reading as well as distract their inclination to electronic devices like mobile phones.

### *7.3.5 Reading Culture in the Families of Bangladesh*

Early exposure to reading materials at home is essential in motivating children to read. In the present study parents frequently noted that they began their children's reading with an alphabet book. Parents of Bangladesh used 'Adarshalipi (a book for young children composed of alphabets both in Bengali and English, numbers, and rhymes)' as the first reading material for their children at home in different corners of Bangladesh. It is the most commonly used book in Bangladesh. Along with Adarshalipi (Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar), some other alphabet books were used as first reading materials in some families. However, parents use these books to prepare their children for academic purposes rather improve their reading skills or read for pleasure.

In addition, parents began reading activities at home in the early years of their children. The present study findings indicated that in some families, academic activities (though parents mentioned them as 'reading') were initiated at the age of two and a half to three years and also at the age of four to six years in some families. Though families mostly started their children's reading at home, a few others started at kindergartens (Education Watch, 2008) or religious organisations like temples or madrasas. In the current education system of Bangladesh pre-primary education has been recommended by the National Education Policy 2010 at the government primary education system for the five years of old children. In practice, pre-primary education begins at the age of three in non-government schools and at the age of four in government schools from 2021 (The Financial Express, 2020: online). Nowadays, kindergartens are located throughout the country and they begin with children of three to four years of age. That is why parents



enrol their children in kindergartens before sending them to government primary schools (Education Watch, 2008).

Though children's interest in reading emerges from the experiences and opportunities of exploring or interacting with different kinds of printed materials from a very early age (Baker et al., 1997; Baroody & Diamond, 2014; Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Justice & Ezell, 2000; Makin, 2006; Roskos et al., 2003; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994), it has started differently in the context of primary school children in Bangladesh. Though it began in the early years, it is still different in practice. Children learn the alphabet, numbers, and rhymes in most families through conversations. Even in some families, parents did not provide any textbooks before their children entered government school (*"I didn't put any pressure on him till 4 or 5 years. At the age of five, I bought him an Adarshalipi book and sent him to school. I used to teach him through conversation with other children"*), and in some families, government-provided books were their first books. Moreover, in some families, parents were reluctant to give these kinds of books to their children. These academic topics were introduced to children during their early years to prepare them for school admission and academic success. Students could not explore different print materials to read and play. Moreover, students had little experience listening to stories in their early years from their family members, during sleep time or other leisure time. However, parents introduced academic content through conversations in most families, which reflects 'oral tradition' similar to black families in the South African community (Mngoma, 1997). Parents need to introduce sufficient reading materials from a very early age and interact with their children through those materials to move from the

'listening society' to 'reading society'. Except for a few parents with higher institutional education, parents mostly did not use any forms of storybooks, picture books, or rhyme books as reading materials. However, children's interaction in the early years particularly, with their parents' storybook reading, influences students' reading attitudes and later academic outcomes (Baker et al., 1997; Klein & Kogan, 2013; Sénéchal, 2006). Furthermore, it impacts learning to read (Araujo & Costa, 2015; Collins & Svensson, 2008; Senechal, 2006), as well as develops language skills and contributes to reading comprehension (Aram et al., 2013; Lynch, 2008). In addition, along with literacy development some other skills like question phrasing, social interactions, and higher-level learning occur through storybook reading with children and parents (Lynch, 2008). Exposure to reading storybooks in the early years has a significant impact on children's reading skills as well as other development, but students in Bangladesh badly miss these exposures in early years of their life. Research (Klein & Kogan, 2013) revealed that parents' education, socio-economic status, and family culture stimulate parents to read to their children. The current study showed that most parents had the minimum institutional education with a lower socio-economic condition, and most of the families did not have any reading materials at their homes. Parents did not even practice reading for themselves or for their children. They also did not have the practice of visiting libraries with their children.

In conclusion, the family practices are not conducive to creating a proper reading environment because parents do not read for themselves or their children, and children do not have the opportunity to read storybooks at home or the opportunity to go to the

library, nor do they have the scope to discuss storybooks with their parents or peers.

However, to motivate children to read they need to be exposed to interesting, colourful, and age-appropriate storybooks from early years even before entering school with their parents and family members at home.

### **7.4 Research sub-question 3: What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?**

The school environment along with different activities and interactions with peers and teachers, has an impact on students' involvement and motivation to read (Daniels, 2010; Daniels & Steres, 2011; Scherer & Nilsen, 2016; Villiger, 2012; Zhang et al., 2020). Reading motivation is derived from a child's inner qualities and is impacted by the external environment, like in the school or family environment and interactions with teachers, parents, peers, and other members of society (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Daniels, 2010; Noddings, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Schraw et al., 2001). This section discusses different aspects of the reading environment, facilities, and interactions in school with teachers, peers, and students and other related issues like student reading habits and reading motivation. The section is organised around the three major points: the classroom environment and facilities, the whole school and areas outside of the classroom environment and facilities, and students' reading habits and motivation.

#### *7.4.1 Classroom Environment and Facilities for Reading*

The analysis of this section reveals three aspects of the classroom environment and practices in relation to students' reading motivation. These are the book corners, assessing

reading capacity and the scope of reading storybooks. Classroom reading activities encourage children to read and create an environment in the classroom through interaction with the teacher and classmates.

### **Availability of a book corner in the classroom**

Several studies (Education Watch, 2015; Mullis et al., 2017; Schraw et al., 2001) emphasised the importance of classroom facilities and practices to help improve students' reading habits and skills. In spite of having a provision for having book corners in the classroom (MoPME, 2018), the present study found most primary level students (65%) have no book corners in their classroom. Book corners could, in fact, make the students curious about and interested in reading and encourage them to come to school to enjoy reading additional materials within the classroom. The finding is consistent with another study (Salahuddin et al., 2020) done in Bangladesh, which also reported having no book corners in classrooms.

The student participants of the present study did not find the opportunity to read any other materials except textbooks in the classroom, and they could not even engage in reading different kinds of texts in the classroom. Research shows that students' reading engagement is enhanced if they have access to supportive reading facilities in the classroom (Guthrie et al., 2012; Guthrie et al., 2013; Reeve, 2012; PISA, 2018). In addition, students' intellectual, personal, and psychological needs are satisfied when they are positively engaged with rich reading materials in the classroom (Cheon et al., 2016; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). An engaging classroom environment

improves reading skills, comprehension, and helps to develop a positive attitude towards reading (PISA, 2018; Schraw et al., 2001). However, book corners, the most frequent places for children to borrow books compared to other forms of libraries (Huang et al., 2015), are often missed by the students of Bangladesh. Students also missed the opportunity to be engaged in an environment that creates students' reading habits under the teachers' supervision in the classrooms.

In the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), it was found that different countries have focused on classroom libraries - which might be similar to the 'Book Corner' in the context of Bangladesh - in developing students as skilful, independent readers (Mullis, 2017). However, PIRLS findings revealed that students with a classroom library with more books performed better on reading achievement tests compared to students with small or no central libraries at school. Furthermore, a proper environment in the classroom with resources to pass healthy leisure time would develop students' interest in reading and improve their reading skills, which needs to be ensured for the primary school students of Bangladesh (Geske & Ozola, 2008).

Teachers' attitudes toward reading have been reflected in students' attitudes towards reading. In addition, the classroom environment, which includes appropriate reading materials and adequate resources, contributes to children's reading motivation (Di Francesco, 2011; Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006; Gambrell et al., 1996; Pecjak & Kosir, 2008). In addition, without a suitable reading environment, students become demotivated to read and fall behind in achieving their reading skills, ultimately limiting their

development and academic success (Maslowski, 2001; Hoy et al., 2006). In Bangladesh, primary school students miss a wide variety of reading materials in the book corner, and they also miss the scope to choose reading materials, opportunities to interact with students and teachers about their reading interests, which are directly related to reading. However, teachers need to ensure book corners, where sufficient reading materials should be available to stimulate students to read with interest in the classroom.

### **Reading Assessment in Classroom**

In a results-oriented education system, all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and the system itself, want students to get good marks on Examinations. As the examination system assesses students' knowledge level through memorization as well as writing skills through paper-pencil tests, the present study findings show that there is a lack of formal assessment of reading in the formative and summative assessment systems to identify students' reading ability leading to the acquisition of reading skills (Education Watch, 2015). A similar finding was revealed in a national study (NAPE, 2018), which noted no scopes to assess reading skills in different Examinations in the primary education system. Students will not be able to be good readers and get good grades unless the educational system focuses on skills (Ali et al., 2020). The four basic language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) were not addressed equally in the assessment system of Bangladesh, and through the paper-pencil tests, listening and speaking skills are not possible to measure. A similar finding is echoed in another study done by Salahuddin et al. (2020). The NAPE findings noted that the PECE exam assesses reading skills by instructing students to answer questions based on a passage. However, it is insufficient to

assess reading skills without regular formative assessments and one-to-one interactions through printed materials. In the classroom, through question-and-answer sessions, students' knowledge and understanding of the text are intended as part of the teaching and learning process. Another earlier study found a similar feature (Islam et al., 2020) and reported that students were sometimes asked to read a text aloud in front of the teacher, but not all got the chance to read, be assessed and get feedback on their reading abilities.

Competence is a basic psychological need; without which it would not be possible to make students interested in and motivated toward reading. Furthermore, it inspires students to interact with a particular task with enthusiasm (Cheon et al., 2016; Deci & Ryan, 1985). It should have significance in the classroom as well. However, parents were not aware of reading assessments, and they did not even know about the informal reading assessments in the classroom, but they were well aware of the written examination. As reading was not a part of the formative assessment, parents and teachers did not focus on this skill. Even though the written assessment is considered, students who do not have reading abilities do not perform well in the written exam and are not able to attain other reading-related competencies (DPE, 2018). It should be included in the formal assessment system, with specific mark allocations to encourage all stakeholders to focus on developing reading skills. It would help both teachers and students to take part in the assessment process and be aware of the student's ability to take the necessary steps. In addition, parents would encourage students to read and arrange the required measures at

home. Otherwise, students' lower levels of competence may demotivate them and cause them to lose interest in the activity (Banerjee & Halder, 2021).

### **Classroom practices for reading**

Reading activities in the classroom were another area of concern for reading motivation, and the present study findings revealed no particular reading activities in the daily routine. In addition, this study found that there was a government circular for improving students' reading and writing skills, making reading a compulsory skill for all students in the form of a 'one-day, one-word' activity. This activity was meant for ensuring teaching one word each day, and teachers were directed to teach students the words with due pronunciation with a view to removing students' inertia (MoPME, 2018). A literacy-rich environment (UNESCO, 2017) and a culture of reading (Kamalova & Koletvinova, 2016) at school, particularly in the classroom, foster the development of potential readers, and reading books certainly affects their motivation to read (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006). Students in the primary education system of Bangladesh are rarely exposed to this kind of environment within their classrooms.

However, the present study found that students did not have the opportunity to express their reading interests on a topic or the types of books they liked to read, and they did not have the chance to read any additional materials in the classroom. All students did not have the opportunity to read aloud or regularly interact with the teacher in the classroom. Findings from multiple research (Banerjee & Halder, 2021; Cheon & Reeve, 2015; Patall et al., 2017; Pelletier et al., 2001; Terrier et al., 2018) revealed that this kind of environment demotivated students in the classroom as their autonomy was not addressed



in the classroom and they could not engage them in any activities in the classroom.

Reading must be central to the teaching-learning process. Students' better performance in reading depends on the classroom environment through several activities like reading stories, poems, creating storytelling techniques, movies, filmstrips, or other relevant literature in the classroom. Several studies (Chou et al., 2016; Geske & Ozola, 2008; Huang et al., 2015; Morrow, 1982; NAPE-Bangla, 2020) consistently mentioned that reading activities in the classroom enhance students' reading motivation.

Research (OECD, 2007) revealed that a lack of physical, human, and financial resources impedes teacher instruction and limits student achievement. Findings from OECD (2007) also reflected the present study, where teachers were found overloaded with classes due to a shortage of teachers and burden of additional work outside the school. Therefore, teachers could not maintain the instructed reading activities in the classroom.

Furthermore, research (Mullis et al., 2017) has shown that interactions with various types of literary and informative text reading along with instructional hours for language and reading over a year are critical for students' reading achievement. In the context of Bangladesh, primary school students do not get adequate contact hours for language, particularly reading skills (DPE-APSC, 2019), which could hinder students' reading environment and sufficient interactions in the classroom regarding reading.

#### *7.4.2 The Whole School and Out of Classroom Environment and Facilities for Reading Motivation*

Along with the classroom environment and facilities, how the whole school and out-of-classroom environment influences students' motivation for reading is discussed in this section. This point considers library facilities in school, Bangabandhu Corner in school, reading activities inside or outside the school, parental and community members' involvement with the school in reading, teachers' attitude toward reading storybooks, and barriers teachers face in implementing reading techniques as a reading environment in school and outside the school.

#### **Library Facilities at School and their Usability**

The school library facilities, including the collections of books, directly impact reading interests and reading habits of students and teachers (Huang et al., 2015). Though research (Daniel, 2004) indicated a library as the 'powerhouse' of a school, the study findings showed that library is absent in most schools (54%). A similar result revealed in another study mentioned that a formal library system is missing in the schools of Bangladesh (Hossain, 2018).

Those entitled to have libraries mostly have office cabinets with a few books. The libraries were mainly in teachers' common rooms (48%), which could be assumed that accessing the library in the teachers' room may discourage students from getting their books and having a proper reading environment. Because of the limited library facilities at school, storybooks were unexplored by the students, which could have inspired them to

read for pleasure and develop their reading habits (Hoyne & Egan, 2019; Ring et al., 2016). However, research (Atmodiwirjo et al., 2010; Harisanty, 2019) consistently indicated that location and role are two critical aspects of a library that indicates whether the library is an important and influential component of a school or just a supplement to a school building. Similar findings were shown in a national study of Bangladesh which stated that just a few primary schools in Bangladesh had libraries, with only a few having a library in a separate room and others having a library in the teacher's room (Education Watch, 2015).

Furthermore, there is no schedule for using school libraries to read storybooks during a school day, and teachers place little emphasis on it. However, teachers emphasized reading textbooks in lieu of storybooks for examinations such as PECE. Findings from several studies (Hossain, 2019; Rahman, 2016) mentioned that libraries are not regarded as fundamental components of the teaching-learning process in primary schools in Bangladesh; they have not even been considered an essential element of quality education as reported in other research. The present study findings also did not find any significant evidences of using storybooks by teachers and students in the school libraries. Moreover, there was no option to get an opinion from the students regarding the type of books they would like to see at the school library.

There are government policies and provisions regarding the proper use of supplementary reading materials (SRM) in the classroom (MoE, 2010; MoPME, 2018). However, the present study showed no provisions in the class routine to ensure SRM in practice.

Furthermore, regarding using SRM, the teachers and administrators push one another for its improper usage. Administrative officers blamed teachers for not following the instruction of SRM while the teachers mentioned time constraints as an excuse for not promoting SRM. A similar finding was revealed in an earlier study (Salahuddin et al., 2020), which noted that students did not have the scope to use SRM at school. However, the present study findings revealed that the lack of a proper sitting arrangement and time allocation hinders the reading environment, even in schools with separate library rooms. It reflects the limited resources (OECD, 2009) in the government primary schools of Bangladesh that could act as hindrances to library use. However, the present study revealed that all schools had government-provided supplementary reading materials. The quantity might have varied, but adequate planning was missing to use them in the classroom (CAMPE, 2017).

Present study findings revealed from teachers' opinion that students had no time to read storybooks as they are going to be busy with PECE and they had pressure for the examination and were unable to read storybooks. Additionally, a lack of appropriate, up-to-date books and an absence of a schedule for library use discouraged students for using school library or other reading materials (Hossain, 2019; Rahman, 2016).

Borrowing books from the school library indicates the use of the library in school and the school environment for reading. Participated students (32%) in this study did not borrow books from the school library. However, along with other reasons, an absence of a librarian could be another reason for not borrowing books from the school library.

Teachers were overburdened with their regular tasks, and the library management increased the extra pressure, so they may have avoided it extra responsibility. A similar conclusion was found in research conducted in Singapore, which said that a small proportion of students borrow books in primary school due to the lack of competent teacher-librarians in most primary schools in Singapore (Majid & Tan, 2007). However, research revealed that the practice of borrowing books from the library increases students' positive attitude towards reading (Heyman, 2016).

In a nutshell, the environment and facilities for reading storybooks and library facilities found in school were not favourable for students. In the school, no initiatives were found to create a culture of reading storybooks in the classroom or at home.

### **Bangabandhu Corner and the Situation**

The present study found that though students did not have a particular schedule for using books from the Bangabandhu Corner, they felt excited when they got to see the small pictures of their books in a much bigger format in the Bangabandhu Corner. All the schools had several books on this topic. Interesting findings revealed that, where a good number of students (32%) did not borrow any books from the school library, about 15% of them collected books about the Liberation War. It might be due to the presence of the 'Bangabandhu Corner' and the availability of resources on this topic. Research (Guthrie et al., 2012; Guthrie et al., 2013; Reeve, 2012; PISA, 2018; Mullis et al., 2017) consistently mentioned that a supportive reading environment with adequate materials encourages children to read. This corner promotes and transmits knowledge to the younger generation of the country about the life, hardships, sacrifices, and contributions

of Bangabandhu to the formation of an independent Bangladesh, as well as the history, heritage, and culture of Bangladesh. It would also increase students' interest in reading additional materials, breaking the tradition of reading only textbooks. However, age-appropriate storybooks need to be added to the Bangabandhu corner to make students curious about reading.

A study (Mullis et al., 2017) showed that a central library in a school stimulates students to read and improves reading achievement. The current study found that students are interested in reading books linked to the Liberation War of Bangladesh and the Father of the Nation due to the existence of a 'Bangabandhu Corner' in the school.

### **Reading Activities or Programme at School**

To encourage students to read, teachers need to arrange different activities in school or outside school. These activities stimulate students to engage in reading with joy and interest and help them become more proficient in reading (Huang et al., 2015; Pianta et al., 2008; Yang et al., 2016). The present study found certain government initiative of giving directives through a circular to improve students' reading skills at school (MoPME, 2018). The activities included reading a paragraph as daily homework and participating in a pronunciation competition (MoPME, 2018). In some regions of Bangladesh, students have different dialects and their pronunciations are different. In addition to improving reading habits, this circular was likely to improve the accents of students. However, the effectiveness of pronunciation competition in increasing students' self-esteem was hardly found in any of the participating government primary schools.

The current study finding revealed that the Upazila Education Office (UEO) provided instruction for writing competitions but not for reading competitions. It was not found in any of the participating schools where it was practiced. In the schools, teachers can guide students to define the purpose of reading and make them curious about reading. A study (Bano et al., 2018) mentioned that in order to motivate students to read, teachers need to involve students in several reading activities that can allow them to improve their knowledge for personal and cognitive development. Students' involvement in reading activities with their teachers' guidance and support inspires them to read enthusiastically and ensure their achievement (Yang et al., 2016). In addition, research (Banerjee & Halder, 2021) showed that teachers' support in meeting students' needs and their supportive teaching style (Patall et al., 2017; Pelletier et al., 2001) would increase students' motivation. However, these kinds of expectations and stimulation are rarely practiced in the primary schools of Bangladesh. Furthermore, students did not participate in any reading activities or programmes conducted by other organisations, either in or out of school.

Though students' involvement in reading activities and programmes related to reading improves students' reading performance, capacity and academic performance, this did not happen for the participating students of the study. However, research (Lee & Yeo, 2014) acknowledged the significance of reading activities or programmes done in primary and secondary schools in Malaysia where children were involved in a reading programme and that the programmes influenced children's attitudes towards reading positively.

### **Parents' Involvement at School**

Parents, teachers, and students are the key stakeholders in the education system (Epstein, 2010; Saha & Khan, 2014; Uemura, 1999). There should be a strong and positive relationship between school and family or parents and teachers. The present study found teachers' positive perception of parents' involvement in school activities, which could improve students' academic success and ensure the quality of education. In addition, proper communication between teachers and parents can allow parents to participate in school activities and provide support accordingly, as they know the strengths and limitations of their children. Similar findings revealed that parental involvement upraises a welcoming working environment for all the stakeholders, empowers parents, promotes academic success, increases attendance, cultivates reading awareness and habits, improves academic motivation, and decreases dropouts (Froiland et al., 2013; Larocque et al., 2011; Miles, 2016; Oates, 2017; Quilliams & Beran, 2009; Yusof, 2010).

Several researchers (Begum, 2007; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mirazchyski & Klemencic, 2014) mentioned parents' better level of education has an impact on their school involvement. In addition, Henning (2013) discussed that parents of non-high school graduates are less involved than high school graduates. The current study findings showed that parents are most concerned about their children's academic performance and other non-academic issues like students' physical and mental health, hygiene, infrastructural development, regular school attendance, and quality time spent with parents, but do not involve them in any reading activities at school. It might be



the cause of most parents' (56%) lower educational (Grade five or no institutional education) background. Even parents expressed their inability to be involved with reading activities. So, they requested teachers to take care of their children's academic issues. However, research (Olsen & Fuller, 2011) also revealed that parents who have the awareness are interested in being involved more, and teachers also request them to be engaged in academic activities (cited in Miles, 2016).

The parent participants of the present study did not take part in any school plans or other decision-making processes, which is very important for all stakeholders for achieving the goal of education. It could have happened due to parents' unawareness and socio-economic conditions. In a study, Yoder and Lopez (2013) identified some factors as tangible (transportation, childcare, finances, time, and access to technology) and intangible (did not know how to be involved, not feeling welcome based on prior experiences, marginalization) barriers that hinder parents' involvement. However, research suggested that parents, teachers, and society could solve these barriers together.

Parental involvement increases students' cognitive and motivational development. Furthermore, the students who enjoy reading more have parents who are more involved (Heyman, 2016; OECD, 2012). The present study suggested involving parents more in academic activities so that students enjoy reading and create a habit of reading with their parents.

### **Community Members' Involvement at School**

Community members, including all other stakeholders in the education system, play an important role in achieving the educational goal alongside parents (Epstein, 2010; Larocque, 2011; Uemura, 1999). The study findings revealed that community members mostly participated in various activities such as infrastructural development, health issues, cleanliness, purchasing play materials for students, and school decoration activities, similar to the findings of Education Watch (2015). Community members' involvement in academic, particularly reading activities, is almost absent in the present study. It was not done in a structured way to nourish students' reading skills but rather as a conversation to succeed in the exam (Education Watch, 2015). However, these kinds of involvement were considered passive collaboration or the passive role of the parents in school (Shaeffer, 1994; cited in Uemura, 1999).

Community involvement with the school helped both parents and students to build a relationship with the school and motivate students to play an active role in the learning process (Driessen et al., 2005; Simonds, 2012; Smit et al., 2007; Stenger, 2010). On the other hand, schools also need to know the community to improve the communication between school and parents with a positive attitude (Larocque et al., 2011). In addition, children's goals and expectations are influenced by the culture and practice of the community along with the family culture and beliefs (Klemencic et al., 2014). The current study found that though there were provisions in the policies to work with community members to ensure quality education through their active participation (MoE,

2010), their involvement was mainly non-academic. However, it was also reflected in Epstein's (2002) discussion that when schools consider students like children, they consider parents and community members as partners of the school for children's education and development; otherwise, they are regarded as strangers to the school. However, all need to work together to develop students' skills and achieve educational goals.

### **Teachers' Attitude Towards Reading Storybooks**

The present study findings revealed that teachers with a positive attitude towards storybooks did not encourage students to read storybooks. Teachers mainly focused on textbooks considering public examinations like PECE for upper grades (grade four and five) students. Furthermore, teachers are always concerned about balancing between textbooks and storybooks, and otherwise, it could hamper students' academic results. An earlier study (Salahuddin, 2020) found that teachers did not provide any other material except textbooks and inspire students to read the textbook. Furthermore, another study (NAPE, 2018) in the context of Bangladesh suggested that teachers need to motivate students to read additional materials in addition to the textbook, and there should be instructions on it. However, teachers did not express anything regarding reading storybook as pleasure reading or reading for relaxation. Research indicated that inspiring students to read with joy and ambition to become lifelong readers is a critical task for a teacher (Stenger, 2010). Furthermore, pleasure reading may have a greater influence on a child's overall academic performance (Pearson, 2015; Whitten et al., 2016).

The present study findings indicated that though teachers expressed their positive attitude towards reading storybooks, they did not create any scope or environment for students to read storybooks; students usually could not even borrow books from school resources. However, research reveals that students are intrinsically motivated when they are encouraged to comprehend, learn, nurture their talents, become skilled, and study for knowledge. On the other hand, if students focus on demonstrating their studying just to achieve high grades, they may feel motivated initially, but their motivation gradually diminishes under these conditions (Meece, 2006). Moreover, students' reading habits and behaviours are improved by the school environment, with the scope of reading additional books at school and interactions with teachers and classmates (Daniels, 2010; Daniels & Steres, 2011; Epstein, 1995).

Another finding revealed by teachers was that students from pre-primary to grade two were too young to read storybooks. However, the government has provided age-appropriate and illustrated books for early-grade students. Furthermore, it was mentioned in the handbook for Bangla subject from professional development training (DPED) that teachers would read storybooks to the early year students to make them curious and interested in reading (NAPE, 2020). However, there was no time allotted in the class routine for reading storybooks, and teachers had limited practice in using those storybooks with all the students, particularly with the early-grade ones. Moreover, teachers may not have emphasized such resources in developing a reading culture and habits of reading that delivered quality education as they mostly remain focused on textbooks for good scores (Hossain, 2019).

## **Reading Initiatives and Barriers to Implantation**

A number of initiatives were taken in the last five years (2016-2020) to enhance reading skills and stimulate students to read. There were instructions and activities from the government organisations like MoPME, NCTB, and NAPE to follow reading activities and techniques in the classroom. These activities include one-day one-word activities, compulsory reading activities in regular classrooms across school subjects, pronunciation competitions, reading a paragraph as homework (MoPME, 2018) and teaching techniques for reading practices (NCTB, 2016, Teachers' Edition) using additional reading materials. However, the study found that the reading techniques directed for classroom practice in the Teachers' Edition (picture description, story explanation, reading with students, support for the slow learner, group reading, etc.) and teachers' professional training (Certificate -in-Education, or DPED) were partially implemented. The present study found some teachers followed some of the activities in distinct and irregular ways (Saha, in press). However, teachers faced some challenges in implementing such activities. The current study revealed that teachers were overburdened with classes due to a shortage of teachers, and they did not get a break between classes. Furthermore, within a limited time, like 35 to 40 minutes of class period, teachers are often busy managing with so many tasks (Khatun & Salahuddin, 2019). However, a supportive and well-ordered school environment also requires teachers to provide quality instruction in the classroom to motivate students in school (Scherer & Nilsen, 2016; Thapa et al., 2013).

The findings suggested that lack of sincerity might be one of the reasons for not implementing reading techniques in the classroom. If teachers would be sincere in implementing the reading activities, they would be able to manage within the limited human and infrastructural resources. However, in this regard, Salahuddin et al. (2020) quoted a teacher who said, "For better achievement of language skills, teachers have to meet the requirements sincerely, heartily and cordial" (p. 78). Furthermore, research (Baumert et al. 2010; Creemers & Kyriakides 2008) noted that teachers and the quality of their instruction significantly influence students' learning achievement and motivation compared to other components of school.

To acquire students reading skills and habits, teachers need some additional time (Guthrie et al., 2007; Saha, in press). The present study findings found that teachers are not getting sufficient time to follow the reading activities in the classroom. With a large group of students from diverse social backgrounds and difficulties in reading competencies, teachers need to handle the learning outcomes of the content. Teachers could not put forth extra efforts to teach reading activities and gradually abandon them in the classroom. However, any new approaches or techniques required additional time for implementation, which was also reflected in another study (Islam & Sultana, 2020).

The present study findings showed a general perception among teachers that efficient teachers should teach in the higher grades, particularly subjects like mathematics and science. That means, comparatively, inefficient (as general perception) teachers are appointed to pre-primary and first grade. That is why the foundation of primary education

in the early grades was not developed, and students have grown up with deficiencies in basic skills like reading. However, research (Bracefield & Woodgate, 2020) has shown that teachers' role is to provide an environment where children may engage with various resources, interactions, and experiences that promote young students' holistic literacy development.

One of the significant obstacles faced by teachers as reported in this study is students with poor socio-economic conditions who attended government primary schools (Habib et al., 2019) mainly depend on school for practicing reading (Saha & Khan, 2014). Those students did not find any reading environment at home. Furthermore, teachers struggled with the students who did not read and could not adjust to the content due to their irregularity (Saha & Khan, 2014). Therefore, teachers gave up their efforts and lost their enthusiasm.

#### *7.4.3 Reading Environment and Resources in Community*

People's regular practices, habits, and customs are noted as community culture. The community plays a significant role in shaping the inner qualities of children and transferring the culture and practices of the community with a focus on children's success in academics (Aref, 2010; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Uemura, 1999). By providing various facilities, the community creates and ensures that environment. This study investigated some of the community's reading facilities and practices needed to promote a proper reading environment. These are various types of library facilities and their

applications enjoyed by students through storybook sharing with the peers in the community.

**Library facilities in community** - The present study findings revealed that the majority (94%) of students in both urban and rural areas did not have access to library facilities in their community. Community members did not have any involvement in creating an opportunity or utilizing the facilities of a library to encourage students to read other materials for their enjoyment, learning, or development of a reading culture. Community resources (like a library) are essential to creating and maintaining a constructive reading culture in the community to boost students' ambition and academic achievement, which was also reflected in other studies (Begum, 2007; Jordan et al., 2002; Klemencic et al., 2014; Simonds, 2012;). When students receive reading facilities everywhere, like in the family, school, and community, it improves the standard of life by facilitating the exchange of views, ideas, and developing networks as well as mutual assistance among family, school, and society (UNESCO, 2017). However, the present study found that students like to read different kinds of storybooks, but the practice of collecting books from the community library is missing in the selected participants' communities. In addition, another study (Islam et al., 2018) showed that students are more likely to borrow books from the library and spend more time reading when they are offered additional reading resources in the community.

In Bangladesh, children from remote or rural areas are more deprived of visiting libraries than urban students. Nevertheless, along with the public library, the scope of the mobile



library was also limited to rural areas. The Bangladesh government, on the other hand, has prioritized the establishment of libraries for the abolition of illiteracy in society, the protection and expansion of acquired education, self-awareness and development, social and democratic awareness, societal economic and social development, and information exchange for the development of human resources and society's culture (MoCA, 2021). Along with the availability of libraries, students in government primary education should have access to library facilities in each community, irrespective of all locations.

There were initiatives from the government and the Bangladesh Book Publishing and Sales Association to arrange a book fair each year at the district level. The present study revealed that this message was not disseminated to the masses, and they did not know about the fair. Furthermore, students from remote areas missed the book fair like urban area students. In particular, most of the students missed the book fair like 'Ekusher Boi Mela' in Dhaka. In addition, Room to Read Bangladesh has published 122 Bangla storybooks and delivered ten lacs thirty-four thousand (1034000) copies of books to primary schools as part of their reading programme in collaboration with the Bangladesh government (Alom, 2020: online). However, despite having different sources of reading materials, students in government primary education system are far behind in using storybooks as enjoyable, recreational, or even supplementary materials for developing reading habits. As a result, in order to encourage primary-level students in the community, community members need to ensure the use of these libraries in order to foster a culture of buying and reading books from libraries and borrowing books at home.

It will assure students' reading habits and a reading-friendly environment while also improving students' motivation to read.

**Storybook sharing experience with peers** - Peer interactions and sharing experiences are connected to their behaviour and influence their academic performance in the long run (Calvo-Armegnol, Patacchini, & Zenou, 2009; Fujimoto et al., 2012; Justice et al., 2011). They learn from one another through classroom and out-of-classroom experiences, as well as through formal and informal reading activities. Individual reading abilities have also been influenced by interaction with a group of mixed-ability readers (Cooc & Kim, 2016; Hong et al., 2012).

This study observed that, in different communities of Bangladesh, many students did not share storybooks with their peers. Moreover, students who had that experience of sharing books shared guide books and textbooks with their peers. However, the book sharing activity improves students' understanding, ideas, feelings, and cultural behaviours in a social situation (Daniels, & Steres, 2011). It was revealed from research (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Yang et al., 2018) that motivation in reading comes through the peers, projects, and cooperation, and that also increases reading comprehension. Even struggling readers get support and motivation from their peers.

#### *7.4.4 Students Reading Habits and Reading Motivation*

**Students Reading Habits** - The current study revealed that almost all the students (98%) read textbooks every day. On the other hand, a good number of students (18.3%) never read storybooks. Furthermore, the majority of the students (94%) read textbooks for an average of three hours (180 minutes) a day, whereas most of the students (60.5%) read

storybooks for 17 minutes or less a day. On the contrary, in a western study (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) it was revealed that students read a maximum of 2 hours per day on school nights and 4 hours on off nights for pleasure excluding school reading and homework. The finding demonstrates that western children read storybooks for a long time compared to students of Bangladesh, who mainly focus on academic reading. A study (Majid & Tan, 2007) conducted in Singapore revealed that most students were motivated to read for academic purposes to obtain better grades. Furthermore, research (Cox & Guthrie, 2001; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) showed the amount and frequency of reading are related to reading motivation and achievement. In fact, highly motivated students are reported to read three times higher compared to those with lower motivation levels.

Intrinsic reading motivation usually connects more strongly with the amount of reading for pleasure than extrinsic reading motivation (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Becker et al., 2010; Lau, 2009; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Wang et al., 2020). Students in Bangladesh spend less time reading for pleasure, which might be caused by the directives to read for results or better grades, which indicate external motivation. Another reason could be limited availability of reading resources in social environments like families, schools, and communities. Parents' positive attitude, habits, and library facilities at home encouraged students to read for pleasure (Bano et al., 2018; Morni & Sahari, 2013; Rasinski et al., 1994). In addition, teachers' interactions and the reading environment at school with a vast collection of books in the library influence students to read with pleasure and thus, increase their reading habits (Huang et al., 2015; Ring et al., 2016).

**Students' Favourite Storybooks** - The present study attempted to investigate students' favourite storybooks in the categories of fictions and non-fictions. However, a good number of students (18.3%) did not read storybooks at all. The study revealed that the majority of students (56%) choose fictions like fairy tales and comics (e.g., Meena by UNICEF). Several other studies (Cox & Guthrie, 2001; Guthrie et al., 1999; Wang & Guthrie, 2004) revealed that students reading for enjoyment were occupied by fiction stories. In addition, some research (Guthrie et al., 2007) showed that fictions attract children more and motivate them to read.

Another interesting finding revealed that a good number of students' (22%) second favourite storybook was history and liberation war of Bangladesh. Students were intrinsically motivated to read in a supportive reading environment in the classroom that addressed students' curiosity and choices and fulfilled their demands (Reeve, 2012; Yang et al., 2016). However, these books were introduced in government primary schools in 2018. Within a short period, it has become one of the favourite books for students because they received new books on this topic and those were available to them at school.

The study findings further indicated that students chose the types of storybooks as their favourite books based on the stimulus they received from their surrounding environments like family, school, and community. In the cultural context of Bangladesh grandparents, parents, and other family members enjoy sharing fairy tales with the children in their leisure time to tell stories or to share ideas about real life through stories. Storytelling has

an impact on the Indian sub-continent which is equally strong in the cultural landscape of Bangladesh. The tradition of storytelling has significantly affected reading cultures across the world (Maitra, 2007). Additionally, in Bangladesh, parents used to share stories through conversations, which was also reflected in the discussion by Rahman (2016). The author mentioned the impact of folklore in society, where stories are made up of love, expectations, feeling, curiosity, experiences, and dreams portraying people's daily lives.

**Students' Reading Motivation** - The present study explored students' social and cultural environments for reading that stimulate or hinder their motivation to read. The study found students' reading motivation at an average level (58.75, scale midpoint 58). The study framed Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1977) and Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory (2000) to investigate students' reading motivation in their social and cultural environment. Self-determination theory indicates that in the social environment, students become intrinsically motivated when their competence, autonomy, and relatedness are fulfilled. On the other hand, students are extrinsically motivated by external control, results, or rewards (Legault, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The present study revealed from secondary data source that most of students are not achieving reading competencies mentioned in the curriculum for Bangla language (DPE, 2018; NAPE, 2018; Salahuddin et al., 2020; Saha & Ehsan, 2015). This lack of competence may be causing the students to lose interest in reading (Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Xia et al., 2019). In addition, the present study found that students did not find supportive reading environment in the classroom or in the school or even in the families

and community to read for enjoyment. Furthermore, no interesting activity was also found to stimulate students to connect in those social institutes which demand for students' intrinsic motivation (Cheon et al., 2016; Legault, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Zhang et al., 2020).

Additionally, ecological systems theory (1977) mentioned that students' development depends on the social and cultural environment in the closest-distance organisations like family, school, and community and the positive interaction with the members of these organisations. The present study findings revealed that the family reading environment was not very favourable for students with adequate reading facilities and supports that reflect the culture of reading at home (Chou et al., 2016). Furthermore, students had limited scope to read storybooks at home or visit the library. The Bangladesh Literacy Survey-2010 showed only 3.54% of students reported having read stories and novels. On the other hand, only 3.00% of students visited local libraries (Hossain, 2019). In this type of environment, students did not find any stimulating or favourable materials or activities at home, did not find any materials at home to choose to read in leisure time, and did not feel any interest in reading at home (Chiu et al., 2015; Mullis et al., 2017; Pelletier et al., 2001). Therefore, students do not get an environment at home that motivates them to fulfill their psychological needs. The only motivation they have is the social desire to perform better in school or public Examinations like PECE which is related to extrinsic motivation for reading (Legault, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Similarly, students did not have access to a library at school or adequate storybooks to choose from the school library, nor did they have the opportunity to express their choices to school authorities; they did not find any exciting activities or sufficient involvement in reading in the classroom, which hindered them from being intrinsically motivated to read. This has ultimately failed to provide a conducive reading environment in the classroom and at school (Guthire et al., 2007; Hoy et al., 2006; Maslowski, 2001; Patall et al., 2017). However, motivated students are more engaged in reading and curious about different texts; they love to take on the challenges of new reading materials and look forward to new materials (Hedges & Gable, 2016). In the context of Bangladesh, teachers and school authorities only stimulate students to read textbooks for the examinations and concentrate only on textbooks; students do not find any new reading materials or an environment that meets their curiosity (Salahuddin et al., 2020). It was also found in another study (Katz, 2016) that students in Bangladesh only have access to textbooks at school (cited in Hossain, 2019). Moreover, the present study found that students did not have the practice of visiting libraries, and they were not involved in any activities in their community. However, study findings revealed that students who had the scope to borrow books from the community were more enthusiastic about collecting books and spent more time reading (Islam et al., 2018). Therefore, in the social and cultural context of Bangladesh, students found the environment difficult to fulfill their needs. Furthermore, students found an environment that stimulated them to read with the goal set by their parents, teachers, and society, which led them to become extrinsically motivated to read for achieving a good score on the exam. Hence, students hardly found an environment that encouraged them to read for enjoyment or pleasure.

#### *7.4.5 Student Reading Motivation and Urban-Rural Differences*

The current study findings revealed differences in the reading environment and facilities in urban and rural areas in every layer, like family, school, and community, and gaps in reading motivation in the students of these two areas. The current study results showed that urban students (60.88) obtained a better mean score in reading motivation than rural students (56.66). The urban rural differences were also found in several other studies (DPE, 2018; Education Watch, 2015; NAPE, 2018) in Bangladesh. The differences in reading motivation between urban and rural students reported in this study were statistically significant ( $t = 3.37, p < 0.01$ ).

The present study found rural area parents' socio-economic conditions much lower compared to that of urban areas (Education Watch, 2015). A similar finding revealed in a study done in rural area of China reported that the urban students are from richer families and they are more likely to have greater access to educational resources. Therefore, urban students performed better in reading (Gao et al., 2019). Furthermore, parents in urban areas worked with their children to inspire them to read, which were missing in rural areas. Communication was a significant barrier to children's regular attendance at school in some remote areas which is often caused by rain, floods, mountain collapses, and other natural disasters. All these calamities force students to miss school for a long time who gradually fall behind in acquiring reading skills. A study (Salahuddin et al., 2020) also revealed that irregularity was a barrier to reading achievement. Furthermore, in most areas, students did not come to school to support their



parents in the seasonal work related to the particular regions, like fishing, farming, in stone fields, or anything else.

Insufficient teachers, poor infrastructure, and parental unawareness create an unfavourable reading environment for students in rural areas. Data showed that students in urban areas could read more than the ones in rural areas (Education Watch, 2015; NAPE, 2018). Similarly, due to the insufficient number of supervisors, teachers have taken this as a benefit to conducting their classes casually in rural areas. Research (Saha & Habib, 2020) showed that parents' awareness and school resources ensure quality education, which is limited in rural areas. Findings also showed that rural students had less access to the library than urban students (Education Watch, 2015), and most rural communities did not have access to library services.

#### *7.4.6 Reading Motivation and Gender Perspective*

The current study attempted to explore motivation for reading from the gender perspective too. The findings revealed significant gender differences in reading motivation. The study results indicated that girl students performed better in reading motivation score (59.86) than the boy students (57.37), with a statistical significance ( $t = 1.96, p < 0.05$ ). Several national and international studies (Basher et al., 2014; Mullis et al., 2017; Mullis et al., 2012; Ozturk et al., 2015; NAPE, 2018; Yang et al., 2016) also found similar results.

The present study found that girls are more interested in reading than boys. The reasons revealed that girls stayed at home mostly because they are not permitted to leave the house and are not required to go outside to earn for the family. This, however, could be a reflection of the social realities of Bangladesh, where girls are discouraged to go outside. On the other hand, boys do not face that limitation and are encouraged to go outside. This social norm enabled the girls to devote more time to indoor activities including reading. Furthermore, this example highlights the distinctions that society has imposed between boys and girls, with girls being expected to stay at home and manage household tasks while boys are expected to work and support the family financially (Blackstone, 2003; Dietrich et al., 2021). Additionally, the gender role was decided according to the beliefs and practices of society regarding gender roles. Moreover, religion and culture are also associated with gender-diverse responsibilities (Crabtree, 2007).

The present study also revealed that according to parents, teachers, and other members, girls were more eager to read and boys were agile, with no interest in reading. Gender stereotype attitudes of the members of society could be another area of concern while considering gender performance in reading. It had an influence on students' own interests, efforts, and self-concept for reading motivation. Even students' self-stereotyped views regarding their competence and valuing the task have an impact on their motivation for reading (Plante et al., 2013). Several studies (Sackes et al., 2015; Xia et al., 2019) found that parents' gendered views and expectations reflected their children's attitudes and motivations and that girls' perceived reading interest was higher. Furthermore, teachers are one of the key stakeholders in transmitting their expectations and developing

students' self-concept of abilities and their egalitarian views motivated students to read with confidence (Pesu et al., 2016; Retelsdorf et al., 2015; Wolter et al., 2015).

One of the initial findings regarding girls' interest in reading revealed that girls witness all forms of violence against women at home due to their long period of stay at home. Therefore, they want to be competent to protect themselves from this kind of violence through their career and education, and that is why they are more committed to studying. However, research also revealed that women could prevent violations through education (Akram et al., 2020; Sida, 2015).

The study findings revealed another reason for girls' interest in reading, considering the development of the country and girl representation in every profession with significant contribution to the country. Girl students feel empowered to observe the success of women and are enthusiastic about reading and being successful in their lives as well. However, the Bangladesh government has emphasized women's empowerment in the past decade, and the visionary leadership of the government has reached every corner of society, considering remote areas of Bangladesh. The government has developed the National Women's Development Policy 2011 to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in every sphere (MoWCA, 2011). Other research findings also showed that in the South Asian countries, Bangladesh has secured the first position in gender parity in the Gender Gap Index and is also a role model for other countries (CRI, 2019). The current study found that, in addition to all of these factors, reading motivation is influenced by the environment in the home, school, and community, as well as parents'

positive attitude towards reading and encouragement to their children (Collins & Svensson, 2008; Henning, 2013; Huang et al., 2015; Xia et al., 2019; Yeo et al., 2014). Furthermore, results also found that in early childhood, both boys and girls are motivated to read. Gradually, as the boys get older and become accustomed to the external environment, it diminishes. Similar findings were revealed in another study (DiPrete, 2012).

#### *7.4.7 Reading Motivation in Geographical Perspective*

The geographical locations possess unique characteristics in terms of geographical variety. Results showed that the mean score across the districts was not much varied, and these were almost similar except for the plain land (55.94) and hilly areas (62.35). However, students in hilly areas acquired higher scores compared to their counterparts in other regions. The results indicated that the differences in reading motivation among all five different geographical locations were not statistically significant, except for hilly and plain land. However, the difference in reading motivation between hilly and plain land students was statistically significant ( $F = 2.60, p < 0.05$ ).

The findings of this study demonstrated that there were minimal differences in terms of reading habits and facilities in schools or even in families in these places. The socioeconomic status of the parents is likewise relatively comparable across geographical locations, and there are few disparities in the parents' occupation. According to studies (CARE, 2014; Education Watch, 2015; UNICEF, 2016), these places are disadvantaged and lacking in facilities. Furthermore, primary education was identified as a 'lingering

problem' (Education Watch, 2015, p.134), particularly for these disadvantaged geographical (Char, Haor, coastal, and hilly) areas.

Moreover, the plain land, Gazipur, is an industrial area (McKinsey & Company, 2011), and migrating people live more in this area (cited in CARE, 2014). Most families were poor, marginalized, and vulnerable (CARE, 2014). So along with the other four areas, this area is also disadvantaged in considering the socio-economic condition. In addition, research (Habib et al., 2019) revealed that families from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds are admitted to government primary schools in Bangladesh.

Although the selected five geographical areas are known as disadvantaged, students from advanced socio-economic backgrounds have access to schools other than government schools in various regions, except in hilly areas. Research (Education Watch, 2008) revealed that government schools were more in the Chittagong division, and that is why government schools were the only places to admit children in the catchment areas.

Furthermore, the teacher-student ratio was also quite good in the schools in the hilly area. And students from well-off families are also admitted to the government primary school in this area. Therefore, it might be a reason for the students of hilly areas to perform better in reading motivation compared to the students from other places. However, the unavailability rate of the school library was higher for plain (91%) land schools compared to hilly areas.

In summary, the study found that students in the classroom lacked reading materials and sufficient engagement opportunities. Furthermore, the reading facilities offered at schools were inadequate. The majority of the schools lacked a library. Even in places where

libraries exist, students do not have access to them and they are not encouraged to read books. Stakeholders were mainly involved in non-academic activities at school and were unaware of reading skills and practices for reading storybooks and other materials. Furthermore, storybooks are rarely read in classrooms or outside of school. Given that all of these students' reading motivation was average, and they were mainly reading for academic reasons, they were motivated to read for grades or results that indicated extrinsic reading motivation. In a nutshell, the findings suggested that the school and community reading environment was not conducive to students developing a reading culture and habits.

#### **7.5 Research sub-question 4: What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?**

This research question investigates the reading provisions set out by important policy making documents or bodies such as National Education Policy 2010, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MoWCA), the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), the public libraries, Shilshu Academy and Biswa Sahitto Kendro. It has also explored these provisions and their implementation status for motivating students to read. Additionally, initiatives taken by non-government organisations were also examined to know how these initiatives stimulate primary level students' reading.

**Educational Policy implications for reading** - The study findings revealed that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2010 prioritized students' thinking, inventiveness, and

willingness to learn instead of rote learning (MoE, 2010). These learning objectives will demand students' engagements with significant reading experience inside and outside the classroom. However, in practice, it was found that to stimulate students' ability to think and cultivate their creativity, the practice of reading additional materials was minimal in schools and the classrooms (Hossain, 2019). Students did not have the scope to fulfill their inventiveness in the classroom as teachers could not follow reading activities due to time and space limitations in the classroom (Islam et al., 2020). Though education policy 2010 has committed to ensuring proper infrastructure along with human resources in educational institutions (Rouf, 2021), teachers are still facing problems with these limitations in implementing policy provisions for reading in the classroom. In addition, teachers spend most of their time preparing students for national examinations such as the PECE, and parents, along with other stakeholders, are busy achieving good grades in examinations by following unhealthy practices like extra coaching, reading guidebooks, leaking of the question paper before the exam, etc. (Chandan, 2016: online). Furthermore, NEP (2010) emphasizes creative methodology in the evaluation system (MoE, 2010), which encourages students to think critically and answer questions based on their own analytical abilities, not rote memorization. However, this has not yet been properly introduced into the education system. Though teachers receive training on the process of making creative questions (Roksana et al., 2018), they are not appropriately implemented. In the Annual Sector Performance Report (2018), this finding was addressed with a suggestion that teachers need to be encouraged to teach with a creative method and that the curriculum should address this for teachers (DPE, 2019). In addition, Chandan (2016) mentioned, "... the project has almost become futile as there are

numerous illegal guidebooks and coaching centres in the market which supply the students with all forms of creative questions.”

The National Education Policy (2010) mentioned community participation in school improvement and monitoring to ensure quality education. However, community members' involvement in school improvement was not focused directly on academic activities. Furthermore, NEP (2010) noted that committee members' active involvement and accountability must be ensured. In practice, there is a committee in the school including parents, teachers, and community members who are mostly involved with infrastructural and managerial matters of the school. Parents were seldom active in reading activities or participated in any reading initiatives aimed at increasing the quality of the education system as well as students' reading.

Furthermore, the NEP (2010) gave importance to the library in educational institutions and mentioned it as “the soul of an educational institution” (p. 49). Furthermore, the policy emphasizes the establishment of a library, including sufficient reading materials, to create an opportunity in school and society for cognitive development and the development of reading habits in students. However, after more than a decade of implementing the policy, the present study found that most government primary schools (54%) did not have libraries in school, and the school environment for reading additional books was not encouraging for students. An earlier study found similar results and mentioned that a formal library system is missing in the schools of Bangladesh (Hossain, 2018). Furthermore, reading was regarded as an extra-curricular activity for students’



welfare and well-being since it enables them to use their leisure time in healthy and delightful ways. However, the present study found no evidence of inside or outside reading programmes held in the participating schools.

The NEP (2010) documented active involvement of all the stakeholders, particularly parents, teachers, and community members, in various school development activities. But, the issue of active participation in academic activities and their implementation is a crucial concern. However, though several strategies were mentioned in the NEP-2010 to foster reading in school, family, and community, students did not get the opportunity to read in school or the community. They did not even have the freedom to choose the materials they wanted to read at school or at home, and they did not have such an environment in any of the institutes that encouraged them to read for pleasure. Students are stimulated to read by their parents, teachers, or society only to get a good score in the examinations (Chandan, 2016). An external control worked as an extrinsic motivational factor (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This is the only factor that influenced the primary school students of Bangladesh to read. However, policies must be implemented rather merely publishing them, and all initiatives described in the National Education Policy 2010 must be put in place to offer a reading environment at all levels of society, including the home, school, and community.

**Scope of reading and reading facilities in policies, provisions and the practices** - The National Children Policy (NCP) 2011 ensures children's overall protection and rights (MoWCA, 2011). About 36% of the total population of Bangladesh (59.3 million) is aged

under 18 (UNICEF, 2020). This policy aims to ensure the proper development and growth of

the youngsters by providing all the basic needs, including education. The NCP 2011 also mentioned supplying books, magazines, attractive school supplies, and other materials for children to ensure proper development either at no cost or at a subsidised price. They also talked about introducing the idea of libraries to students through recreational activities. It is very frustrating that, in reality, schools do not consider using library as a recreational activity and they do not offer an environment conducive to reading stories.

In light of the National Education Policy 2010, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) revised the primary curriculum, focusing on students' active participation and potential holistic development (NCTB, 2016). The new curriculum has emphasized several strategies for developing students' skills and competencies in different subject areas to ensure students' holistic development. Language is the medium for developing a child's imagination, self-expression, and creativity (NCTB, 2011). The language curriculum emphasized the four language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the reading skills are focused in the curriculum with a view to preparing students to read for both information and enjoyment. In addition, students are expected to be able to communicate in the society using this skill (reading) in their daily lives (NCTB, 2016).

Reading is not only a fundamental skill for obtaining knowledge, but it is also an enjoyable way to develop the habit of reading (Huang et al., 2015). Furthermore, it

significantly influences children's social, economic, and cognitive development (Noble et al., 2019). The curriculum also mentioned reading for both knowledge and pleasure. Though it was recommended in the curriculum, students did not have enough scope to read additional materials for both information and enjoyment, and students were not encouraged to read additional materials for content knowledge (Education Watch, 2015). On the other hand, with a limited scope of library facilities in school, students are mostly not permitted to take books from the school library.

Though it was recommended in the government documents (MoPME, 2018), the provision of using Supplementary Reading Materials (SRM) in the classroom was absent; teachers did not encourage students to read storybooks either (Salahuddin et al., 2020). There is no time allocations in the class routine for reading storybooks, and it could happen due to extra pressure from administrators and teachers to read to obtain information or knowledge that will help students succeed on tests.

Research findings show that pleasure reading helps students achieve reading comprehension skills and increase their critical thinking abilities which ultimately improve their academic results (Whitten et al., 2016). Due to the inaccessibility of storybooks or additional materials, students are not achieving the required reading skills and competencies, and they are gradually falling behind in terms of acquiring the upper-level language skills related to reading (DPE, 2018; DPE-ASPR, 2019; NAPE, 2018; Salahuddin et al., 2020). After all, the document articulated the content and objectives of reading nicely but could not ensure proper implementation.

In addition, the teachers' edition included several steps of teaching practice for acquiring reading skills (NCTB, 2016; Salahuddin et al., 2020). All the teacher participants had both pedagogical and subject-based training, and they all knew different techniques for reading. Still, they did not practice reading techniques in the classroom. Though in the NEP 2010, it was mentioned that the teacher-student ratio would be 1:30 by 2018, it has not been implemented yet. Teachers need to spend extra time managing large groups of students without concentrating on reading techniques (Salahuddin et al., 2020).

Furthermore, although the NEP 2010 mentioned filling the vacancies of teachers, teachers are under work pressure due to a shortage of teachers even after a decade of implementation of the policy (Khatun & Salahuddin, 2019). Moreover, practicing reading techniques requires a reasonable amount of time (Saha & Khan, 2014) and repeated practice over and over in the classroom. In reality, teachers had to take on various responsibilities other than teaching, and these additional activities made them exhausted and hindered their practice of different reading techniques in the classroom. If there should not enough room in the classroom for the teacher to concentrate and focus on the students' holistic development, this holistic development will be limited to this document.

All core skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are supposed to be assessed as part of the evaluation criteria (NCTB, 2016). However, in practice, the tests are mostly used to evaluate different skills through writing. Though it is said that reading skills are also examined, paper and pencil examinations cannot appropriately evaluate reading

skills (Salahuddin et al., 2020). There should be coordination between policy planning and strategy, as well as supportive facilities for implementation. Otherwise, missions of developing students' creativity will only remain in the document and they will never come to light.

**Reading initiatives of the Ministry of Primary and Mas Education (MoPME) and practices** -Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), the concerned ministry for primary education, has emphasized reading and writing skills to ensure quality primary education through a circular. The circular has emphasized reading daily at home, compulsory reading in the classroom, the use of book corners and SRM at school, pronunciation competitions, 'one day, one word', and other activities (MoPME, 2018). In addition, the Primary Education Development Programme Four (2018–2023) includes provisions for SRM to promote reading habits and enhance reading skills (World Bank, 2018).

However, several government organisations (e.g., NEP-2010, MoPME, DPE, and NAPE) mentioned ensuring the practice of reading supplementary materials in the classroom to develop students' reading habits. However, present research findings revealed that all the participating schools have government-provided supplementary materials, but these are not used in the classroom. Another study reported that the use of SRM gradually decreases with time (Salahuddin et al., 2020). The current study discovered a tendency among teachers to conceal the absence of reading practices in the classroom and passing on the liabilities to others' shoulders. For example, teachers blame the administrator for

not allocating a specific time slot for reading SRM while the administrators point their fingers to the teacher for not being willing to practice. The study found that no time was allotted in the class routine to read SRM. Moreover, teachers may not receive that level of attention from the administration or they may not see the value in employing those reading activities. Since the activities were emphasized in several government documents, there should be intense monitoring to determine why they are not being implemented. In addition, the required facilities teachers need to implement these activities should also be appropriately addressed.

Though several activities were mentioned in different documents, the facilities were not adequate for implementing those activities in the classroom. For example, a one-day and one-word activity requires additional time to be completed in the classroom. There were several steps a teacher needed to take for a single student. Due to limited contact hours for a language course with a large group of students it was not feasible for the teacher to apply those ideas properly. However, it was evident from teachers' opinions of the current study that, along with other issues, teachers' willingness is required to use reading activities in the classroom.

### **Contributions of existing libraries**

The Shishu Academy, a leading organisation for children's development under the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs, is working to develop children's talent through proper care and training. One of the organisation's significant tasks, among others, is to create, print, and publish children's literature. The present study findings revealed that there was not much affiliation among local-level authorities e. g., schools,

parents of the primary school students, and Shishu Academy for using library books which they have for co-curricular activities. The culture of reading, which fosters motivation to read for young children, was not practiced by this organisation. Research has consistently suggested that when parents, schools, and other stakeholders have a common goal, share their vision, and work together; they reach a stage that ensures students' development and success in learning (Epstein, 2009; Epstein, 1987; Saha & Khan, 2014; Simonds, 2012).

The current study further found that very few educated and conscious parents bring their children to visit the library and explore the books of Shishu Academy. However, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds from government primary schools had no contact with the Shishu Academy. Most importantly, the number of libraries is at a minimum (70 total libraries), mostly in urban areas. Therefore, students in remote and rural areas are badly missing this opportunity. It is important to note that the academy focuses more on children's creativity through cultural events. Hence concentrating on reading library materials may not be the main purpose except for book selling purpose. It was revealed in this study that most of the books in the field office of the Shishu Academy are sold to various government and non-government organisations especially during various literary and cultural events (such as book fair) organised on important national days. The majority of people were not personally connected with the library. The library plays a vital role in fostering a positive reading environment all over the country. Children enjoy reading through exposure to books, which would intrinsically motivate them to read (Sahaffner, 2013). However, to fulfil the goal of the academy and develop

children's creativity and curiosity towards the history of the country, reading would be one of the best ways. However, children's connection with books through this organisation would not be adequately fulfilled.

Although children constitute 36% of the total population in Bangladesh (UNICEF, 2020), the present study found that public libraries have only 5–10% of children's books out of their total collection. The percentage, which mostly covers the district headquarters is very low for children. Rural children are deprived of these facilities. In NEP 2010, it was specifically urged to reduce discrimination between urban and rural areas, and it was far behind implementation and these areas were more deprived of library facilities as these rural areas they are prone to frequent natural calamities. In addition, there were several expansion activities mentioned in the public library functions including a reading competition. However, the study did not find any school where reading competition was organised.

In addition to school library, in the NEP 2010, there was a guideline for the public library to run by the information and communication technology (ICT) in phases. Moreover, the education policy also stressed the availability of a public library in each Upazila to supply additional reading materials at school. In practice, these policy plans are not executed at the school level. In addition, schools or the library authorities did not have any regular activities regarding using the public library. There was a gap in the dissemination practices of using public libraries for children. Parents were mostly unaware of the public



library, and the others who had information about the library were not interested in sending their children to there.

Though library has a vital role in nurturing reading for enjoyment and academic purposes (Evans et al., 2010; Hoyne & Egan, 2019), they are limited in number to serve the vast population of Bangladesh (Akter, 2017). Even the, primary school students did not have any affiliation with the libraries (both public and Shishu Academy), and there were no reading activities or initiatives within the public library and government primary schools taken by education officials, teachers, or public libraries. However, some research (Islam & Chowdhury, 2006; Hossain, 2019) mentioned that policy-makers consistently overlooked the needs and importance of school libraries. Although being mentioned in the National Education Policy 2010, access to using libraries has not yet been implemented and there is no monitoring system either.

Although there were many spots for mobile libraries, they were not found in any participating study schools in both urban and rural areas. Furthermore, parents were not aware of and were unwilling to collect books from the library for their young children. There is a misconception about young children's storybook reading practices that primary school students were too young to read storybooks. Parents are comparatively positive about reading storybooks to their secondary school children. However, students from secondary school collect books from the mobile library.

Interesting practices were found in the establishment of Bangabandhu Corner, which was circulated by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME, 2018). It was found that due to the availability of books at Bangabandhu Corner school, students were well acquainted with the books related to the Father of the Nation and the Liberation War of Bangladesh. The stimulating finding is that these types of books were on students' favourite book lists and they loved to read and explore these books. It happened only because of the availability of these books in schools and the exposure they received to reading them. However, all the books in the corner were not age-appropriate as the early grade students could not read those books. As a result, apart from ensuring a reading environment, adequate reading materials are also required to foster the culture of reading and develop reading habits among students (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Lee & Yeo, 2014).

The current study found these libraries in each community, particularly in urban areas, but the culture of reading or borrowing books was minimal among the community members. It was discussed in the previous sections that there were several reasons for students' limited involvement with these libraries. Parents, teachers, and other education system stakeholders wanted their children to perform well in their examinations (Education Watch, 2015; Majid & Tan, 2007). Both teachers and parents did not consider reading as something worth doing for pleasure or to enjoy. Therefore, they did not find any connection between reading storybooks or other reading materials as they were only concerned with the textbooks that students need to read for academic lives. For that reason, both the parents and teachers did not take any initiative or did not get involved in making the library facilities available to students. Though the library was mentioned as a

mirror of society in the policy, practically, it was not viewed as a fundamental part of education or human life (Hossain, 2019; Rahman, 2016). The present study found that 73% of students did not visit libraries with their parents.

Moreover, parents' socio-economic condition and institutional education discouraged them from connecting with the out-of-school activities that are meant for enjoyment, pleasure, and the fulfillment of the mind's hunger (Baker et al., 1997). The research also acknowledged that reading for enjoyment was linked with higher reading skills and higher academic achievement (Whitten et al., 2016). However, the guidelines for using different libraries were not clear for parents and other stakeholders in the policies. To encourage students to visit libraries, the government should provide clear guidelines and a practical and realistic strategy can be implemented together with due facilities. Institutionally and nationally a coordination process should be enhanced.

### **Non-government initiatives for reading**

It has been observed that besides the government, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are working in the primary education sector to improve the reading skills as well as the habits of reading among early grade students in government primary schools.

Organisations (NGOs) like Room to Read Bangladesh, Save the Children Bangladesh, BRAC Institute of Educational Development-BRAC University (BIED-BRACU), and World Vision Bangladesh, along with some other organisations worked on early grade

students reading and literacy. They considered grade one to grade three level students' reading skills and explored the present status and challenges faced by government primary school students in achieving this skill. These organisations worked to improve students' reading skills through some interventions in the early grades (grades I-III) of the primary education system in some regions of Bangladesh. Some organisations have gathered information on the students' social backgrounds and the reading resources available in their homes and communities to know the present status of their reading skills. Some of these projects and programmes of these organisations have already ended. However, the findings of the non-government projects and programmes showed that after paying particular attention to reading skills, students performed better in reading. In addition, after taking several initiatives or interventions through these projects or programmes, the practice of borrowing books from the library, reading with peers, or personal reading time increased (Islam et al., 2018).

Though the interventions of these organisations within a limited portion of Bangladesh showed a positive impact on students' reading skills, improving the government primary education system in Bangladesh required initiatives that could impact students all over the country rather focusing on students in particular regions. The whole country should be focused on for engaging all stakeholders, like teachers, parents, community members, and local level officials, to promote the culture of reading at home, in school, community, and ultimately in society.

### **Publication and publishers of Children's Literacy**

“The development of the book publishing industry is possible only by building a reading society from country to country” (Ahmed, 1993, p. 8). More than 150 publishers publish children's books in Bangladesh, yet it is not reflected in the number of publications, which is evident from the less availability of children's books. Therefore, many students were far behind gaining access to these materials. The present study found that the practice of reading storybooks or additional materials is minimal in the social layers like family, school, and community. In a given year, the public library purchases 5–10% of its total book collection for children, and these books are disseminated across the country through its 71 branches. However, around three decades ago (in 1991), a study revealed that renowned publishers published 22.68% of children's books. The authors also mentioned that there would be fewer publications in the government sector and probably no books for children under five (Ahmed, 1993). A reading society can be built up by raising the number of publications so that they can reach everyone.

Furthermore, the current research found that certain children's books are released with attractive and colourful illustrations printed on high-quality papers and that those with simple text are appealing to children. But they might have a hefty price, which is difficult for low-income families to afford. Furthermore, the scarcity of children's book publication makes it difficult to make them available in remote rural areas.

People are more interested in the traditional practice of combining numerous topics into one book because many themes can be accessed at the price of one book that meets their

needs. Some booklets feature a few pages with appealing and child-friendly contents. However, despite the attraction of these monothematic contents, some parents are unwilling to spend money on these very few pages. According to NCP 2011, reading materials should be provided to children for free or at a subsidized cost in order to ensure their cognitive development.

Furthermore, Ahmed (1993) responded to UNESCO's proclamation of "Books for Everyone" in 1972 by arguing that it was nothing more than a collection of phrases that only existed in documents and were never executed. Even while there were policies and provisions in place to ensure accessibility to reading for pleasure, most students had the minimum scope to explore out-of-text reading. Furthermore, students from remote areas are exposed to these resources in a limited way. Moreover, students who have access to gadgets such as mobile phones, laptops, computers, etc. spend their time with those devices and lose interest in reading storybooks. Thus, children's books are gradually losing popularity, and they are not sold and read as expected.

Finally, reading for pleasure is very important, not only for enjoyment but also to develop a society that loves to read. Furthermore, it also impacts reading achievement and cognitive, social, and emotional development. When students love to read out of their own interests, it is not necessary to push them to read, whether for academic or recreational purpose. As reading was deemed important in the policies, and several strategies were also mentioned, it is time to concentrate more on implementation by publishing sufficient number of reading materials for children and providing them in

school libraries at no cost or minimum cost to increase the children's access to such reading materials.

## **7.6 Policy implications and concluding remarks**

The reading provisions for primary school students as stated in various national policies and other government provisions have been discussed under this research question. The entire discussion demonstrated that national policies, plans, and other government organisations highlighted the importance of reading as a skill and also stressed on ensuring library facilities through a variety of programmes and projects. Furthermore, other documents stated that all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community members, must actively participate in implementing these policies and programmes.

Reading is recognised as a recreational activity in policies such as the National Educational Policy (2010) and the National Children's Policy (2011). In practice, reading was not even practiced an important skill in the classroom. The effect of this scenario was reflected in the academic achievements regarding reading competencies as well as in the story-reading habits among primary school students in Bangladesh. A good number of students never read storybooks and those who did also practiced only the bare minimum. Though NEP-2010 acknowledged the library as a mirror of society or the soul of an institute, it was non-existent in more than half of the primary schools (54%) in Bangladesh. There is a large gap between the policy plan and its implementation. Other researches also claimed that library was not viewed as a fundamental part of education or human life (Hossain, 2019; Rahman, 2016). Teachers also do not consider reading storybooks as important and do not usually encourage them even though they

acknowledged that reading storybooks is good and sometime useful for better academic achievement.

The National Curriculum stresses the importance of reading for pleasure as well as reading for acquiring knowledge and well-articulated the teaching strategies for reading in the teacher's edition. Furthermore, teachers also received training to implement those techniques. However, teachers faced numerous barriers to implement the teaching techniques in the classroom due to limitations imposed by lack of infrastructural support, limited human resources, and time constraints. Furthermore, though the curriculum mentioned reading for pleasure and promotes students' creativity, there was no scope in the school routine for leisure reading or reading storybooks. Students did not even get the scope to borrow books from the school library. To ensure healthy development of the students, policies and implementation strategies should be well coordinated, so that it would be possible to implement according to the plan properly.

There are several libraries in urban communities like the public library, Shishu Academy library, and Mobile library. The purpose of these libraries is to enhance the overall development of students and promote an enlightened society that foster a culture of reading. However, there is no coordination among libraries and no strategies for executing plans to achieve the ultimate goal of student development. Furthermore, libraries did not exist in geographically disadvantaged and rural areas. It would be impossible to foster students' holistic development and promote the culture of reading across the country without addressing the needs of the rural students.



In order to encourage students to visit libraries the government should provide clear guidelines and formulate a practical and realistic strategy that can be implemented together with due facilities. The coordinating process should be improved at both the institutional and national levels.

To foster a reading environment in the family, school and community, all stakeholders including parents, teachers and community members need to work together to implement the policy plans and other initiatives taken by government. Furthermore, because most parents are unaware of the importance of reading as a skill and reading for pleasure, it should be well disseminated through training, workshops, or via various social platforms such as radio, television, advertisements, social media, and local government offices.

When parents are informed about the value of reading storybooks as additional materials, they would work enthusiastically for their children's development and better performance. The study also suggested that it is also very important for policymakers to dispel the myth that storybooks are not appropriate for young children and are harmful to academic achievement.

Finally, despite the importance that NEP 2010 and other government policies/ organisations have given on encouraging students to read, the recommended strategies have not been implemented by the concerned organisations yet. Students did not find the appropriate reading environment and facilities at various institutions such as schools, homes, and communities, preventing them from developing reading habits and, therefore,

resulting in the lack of a reading culture. Furthermore, in the rural areas of Bangladesh, these facilities are scarce. Primary school students in Bangladesh hardly ever read for pleasure. Reading for pleasure may assist in the development of learning skills and reading abilities. Reading for enjoyment should be well organised with adequate reading materials in all social organisations, starting with a kid at a young age. Organisations should work cooperatively and collectively. Furthermore, supportive facilities and a proper monitoring system should be ensured to identify the barriers faced by the practitioners.

For primary school students the reading environment and culture found at their homes, schools, and communities were not quite favourable. The prevailing socio-cultural context does not encourage children to read for the purpose of skill development or to read for enjoyment. They were neither encouraged to read additional materials in any institutions nor are they given any opportunity to express their choices regarding reading. They were ultimately incapable of reading in this environment. There were national policies, programmes, and provisions for reading, but their implementation and coordination require more attention of the concerned bodies. Considering the findings of the study, all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, education professionals and policymakers should reconsider the reading environment at all layers of the society in order to foster a favourable reading environment that stimulates students to read for pleasure.

## **Chapter Eight: Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This last chapter provides an overview of the research findings, which led to the formulation of a set of recommendations relating to the core research queries. The chapter is organised by summarising the findings for each research question followed by recommendations to address them. Based on the findings and discussions of the study, a set of recommendations was drafted taking the existing policy and programmes into account. The recommendations are meant for improving the reading environment in each institution, such as the family, school, and community. The chapter also contains sections on the limitations of the research. Moreover, the chapter proposes a comprehensive model for enhancing reading motivation among the young learners by integrating the family, school, community and existing policies. It is expected that this proposed model will provide useful directions for fostering a reading culture in the society. Finally, the chapter concludes with an indication of the future research direction.

### **8.2 Overview of the Study**

The study aims to explore the social and cultural aspects that contribute to reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh. In the context of Bangladesh, most of the research undertaken so far had focused on students' reading skills development issues. For example, through the Bangla language test, the National Student Assessment (NSA) measured students' learning outcomes considering other domains, including reading comprehension (DPE, 2019; DPE, 2018). In addition to that, the

National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) has conducted national-level studies to investigate the reading condition of the primary level students in Bangladesh (NAPE, 2018). Along with the government organisations, some non-government organisations also focused on early grade students with a view to improving their reading skills (READ, 2017; Shimu & Hossain, 2018). However, despite the limited literature available to understand the social and cultural context of reading motivation and practices and its link with the socio-cultural context e.g., school, family and community, the present study examined parents' perception and practices of reading for their younger child. The study aimed to explore how the school environment and practices motivate reading practices among the students and how community facilitates these young members to read. Furthermore, the study explored how national-level policies and provisions foster reading motivation among younger citizens. The mixed methods study was conducted by collecting data from students of grade IV, their teachers and parents, community members, local education officials, different library officials, and children's book publishers.

### **8.3 Summary of Findings and Recommendations of the study**

The research findings guided the study to devise a set of recommendations for creating a reading environment that motivates students to read. Motivation to read comes from the environment students belong to. All stakeholders and organisations need to work collaboratively to create an environment for reading and encouraging students to read to be lifelong reader. The recommendations along with the findings of the study are presented below under the research question and relevant sub-questions.

**Research Question:** What socio-cultural aspects influence reading motivation of the primary school students in Bangladesh?

This study was guided by the following sub-questions:

1. How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?
2. What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?
3. What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?
4. What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?

### **Findings with recommendations**

#### **Sub-questions:**

1. How do parents of Bangladesh perceive reading?
2. What are the family practices that influence students' reading motivation?

### **Summary of the Findings**

The study findings revealed that parents in Bangladesh expressed their perceptions of reading in three words: study (*porasuna* or *poralekha*), education (*shikkha*), and reading (*pora*). Parents frequently used reading as a form study (*porasuna* or *poralekha*) and education (*shikkha*), which are similar to the English meaning of reading e.g., “gaining knowledge from books or the process of teaching, training, and learning”. On the other hand, parents less frequently used the notion of reading as an act of reading (*pora*), which means looking at and understanding the meaning of written or printed words. In addition, parents viewed reading as a way to help their children achieve academic achievement and

success in life through building a career rather developing a skill to be acquired or practiced for enjoyment.

The findings regarding family practices reveal that the government primary school students in different areas of Bangladesh had limited facilities to read at home. Most of the parents had lower institutional education with a daily income based of work. Those parents mainly gave importance to reading textbooks. The practice of buying storybooks for their children was almost absent in most families. The parents encouraged reading only to get good results in the exam without focusing on it as a skill. Even parents perceived that reading storybooks hamper their children's academic outcomes. The family practice of reading aloud to children was also found to be a rare activity in the families. However, research revealed that parents' interaction with their children through reading increases their reading ability and interest (Swalender & Taube, 2007). Most of the students had minimal exposures to visiting libraries with their parents and browsing through books, which is linked to the development of reading habits and a love of reading (Ring et al., 2016). The study findings showed that parents were unaware of these libraries and did not use them. It was also reported that many students had mobile phones, computers, and other devices, which they did not use as reading purposes, instead used them for entertainment such as playing games

## **Recommendations**

### *8.3.1 Ensuring reading friendly environment at families with parents' positive attitude towards reading*

The study proposed the following aspects to foster a positive reading environment in families and make parents aware of the importance of reading.

**Awareness-raising and sensitization program for parents** - Family is the first institution to create encouraging environment for children to love reading. Therefore, awareness rising for reading should begin with the family. The study suggested that the government should develop an awareness-raising and sensitisation program to make parents aware of the necessity of reading supplementary materials, importance of developing a reading culture within a family. The awareness-raising programme might also encourage parents to give their children adequate storybooks, and help them understand the multiple benefits of reading for children's physical and mental well-being as well as academic success. Furthermore, such programmes could disseminate the importance of visiting libraries for enjoyment, which ultimately endorses young learners' reading achievement. Such programmes could be celebrated on a particular day by all government primary schools in Bangladesh and may include follow-up activities. Moreover, awareness raising campaigns can be run it through billboards, advertisements on television and/or radio, print media and organising programs at school and social media platforms

**Adequate reading materials for students in familiar environments** - The majority of the parents in government primary schools had minimum institutional education and were occupied with daily earning basis occupations. So, they may not have enough scope to buy storybooks for their children regularly. This study recommended that the government should provide adequate reading materials to other institutions like schools, communities, and public libraries and should have coordination among these organisations to help overcome these families' social and economic limitations. This could ensure students' access to sufficient reading materials in their familiar environments so that they feel inspired to read.

**Presence of early reading habits and practices** - Parents should create an environment in their family where young children may discover the pleasure of reading. The study recommended that in the early years, parents could collect picture books from the community libraries and practice reading those pictures aloud and sharing and spending quality time with their children even though they (parents) were not able to read. Furthermore, parents could collect storybooks written in easy words to make their children accustomed to reading at an early age, even before they are sent to school. In addition, for external motivations parents should encourage pleasure reading at home for their children to read along with some incentives such as awards, grades, or compliments. This culture of reading with children and spending time reading with them may help build a lifetime reading habit and improves reading ability.



**Using electronic devices for educational purposes** - Parents must supervise their children's use of electronic devices. They should tell their children about the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing these devices as reading tools. They should also offer their children instructions on how to use them responsibly. These devices can be used by children as good sources of reading materials. Therefore, specific instructions and planning for children to use these devices as reading gadgets are required.

**Training to enhance parental reading support for their children** - The study recommended that, as most of the parents did not have institutional education and were not able to support their children's reading, there should be training and sharing sessions for parents, especially the rural ones, on how they could help their children in reading activities at home. The training could focus on issues like bringing adequate additional materials from the community to the house, encouraging children to read, ensuring children's reading at home, rewarding children for reading, and having dialogues with children to monitor and supervise their reading.

**Sub-question 3.**

1. What aspects of the school environment influence students' reading motivation?

**Summary of the Findings**

The findings related to the school reading environment showed three different forms of reading environments namely, classroom reading environment, reading environment in school, and students' reading habits and motivation.

The study findings revealed various areas of classroom reading environment that included a book corner in the classroom, assessing students reading abilities, and reading practices as classroom reading facilities and environments for motivating students' reading. Regarding the reading environment in school, it was found that there were instructions for some reading activities like compulsory reading in each subject, reading competition, use of SRM, ensuring Book Corner, etc. to be practiced within the school. However, findings revealed that these activities and facilities were hardly ever existed in the classroom. Furthermore, in a large classroom, teachers did not get the time to communicate with individual students, and students did not get the scope to read one-to-one with teachers. Students' reading ability tests provided almost no attention in the assessment procedure, which caused demotivation for reading among both students and parents.

Moreover, library facilities were absent in most of the schools. Furthermore, where there were libraries, they were housed in teachers' rooms, which discouraged students' easy access to the library. And there was no time allotted for students to use the library to read at school. It was also found that, in most schools, there were minimal arrangements for students to borrow books from the library and take them home. Though library facilities were minimal, most schools have a Bangabandhu Corner, and students were enthusiastic to see the images of Bangabandhu and pictures of other historic events (e.g., the war of liberation) displayed there. Age-appropriate and a sufficient number of books need to be

added to the corner related to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

As the education system and schools focus more on examinations, particularly the PECE, teachers could not emphasise reading storybooks to upper-grade students. Teachers perceived that pre-primary to second-grade students were too young to read storybooks. However, teachers also faced some challenges in implementing the reading techniques. The challenges caused by large number of students, huge workload, limited time for implementing reading techniques, frequent changes in instructions, etc. In addition, teachers regarded teachers' sincerity as a barrier to using reading techniques in the classroom.

When considering students' reading habits, findings revealed that students were more inclined to read textbooks than storybooks. Furthermore, most students spend three more hours reading textbooks after school every day. On the other hand, a small group of students read stories for 17 minutes or less than that in a day, with a good number of students who have never read storybooks. Students like to read fairy tales, Meena comics, and Liberation War books as their favourite storybooks. In addition, findings revealed that students' reading motivation were at an average level with a focus on extrinsic motivation, where girls were more motivated to read than boys. Furthermore, urban students performed better compared to the rural ones. Moreover, students from hilly areas performed better in terms of geographical locations, and the differences among the five locations were not statistically significant except for hilly and plain land. Overall, the

facilities and environment for reading in schools were too limited for students of government primary schools to stimulate them to read.

## **Recommendations**

### *8.3.2 Developing a culture of reading and ensuring support for reading at school*

The study suggested several areas for improving reading by providing support and facilities in the classroom and school environment. The suggestions are mentioned below.

**Arranging for enough reading activities in the classroom and school** - A sufficient number of reading activities need to be arranged inside and outside the classroom to create an environment for regular practice of reading and developing reading habits. The activities may include reading competition (both intra and inter school level), reading a certain number of books in a month, sharing reading experiences with peers, group reading in the classroom, quality interaction with teachers on a reading text etc.

Moreover, some provisions of giving incentives can be introduced to motivate students to read. The incentives could be in the form of verbal praise, displaying students' names on the board, gifting a book, or other form of rewards that students may find interesting.

**Availability of adequate reading materials at school library and book corner** - Though the library, the soul of the educational institute, is absent in most of the government primary schools, all government primary schools in Bangladesh should have one. Furthermore, the location of library should be re considered to ensure students' smooth and easy access. However, in the absence of libraries in all schools, each school has supplementary

reading materials. These materials need to be provided to the students for reading at school as well as borrowing them to read at home. In addition, a librarian needs to be appointed in every primary school to manage the library, to understand students' needs and interests about reading, and to help and guide students in selecting books from the library. Additionally, age-appropriate reading materials such as picture books, comics, fairy tales, travel stories, history, culture, liberation wars, biographies of famous people, etc. could be added to both the book corner and the school library each year. These might promote reading culture and habits in the schools and stimulate students to be curious about reading these new and exciting books.

**Time allocation for storybook reading at school** - For providing reading opportunity in the school environment, students should have the scope to read storybooks at classroom and in school. For that, in the class routine there should be a particular period for reading storybooks at least once or twice a week. As government schools had policies for setting up book corners, Bangabandhu corner and a library at schools, students should have the scope to explore these different corners and categories of books can be collected and provided for students' use. This would create a pleasant reading environment and develop a reading culture, as well as stimulate students' curiosity and connect them to the institution.

**Training teachers to promote book reading among students at an early age** -Reading non-textbooks (e.g., storybooks) at school or at home is often discouraged in an examination-centric education system like Bangladesh. Furthermore, teachers mostly

perceive that young students are unable to read storybooks. Though it was mentioned in the professional development training manual that teachers would read to early-grade students, it is not done due to teachers' perception that early-grade students are too young to read storybooks. However, reading starts at an early age, even if a student cannot read. It could be done in alternative ways such as through storytelling, showing pictures and discussing the pictures, turning the pages and involving children in that process, making them curious to ask questions by observing the pictures, etc. The present study recommends that these ideas and the importance of sharing and reading stories to all the students should be well disseminated among the teachers through training and guidelines. Moreover, early childhood reading has a significant impact on learning to read and helps students become lifelong learners. Furthermore, there are government published reading materials for each grade in government primary schools, and those should be used in the classrooms regularly.

**Focusing on reading in the classroom** - Students' enhanced reading capacity would increase their interest in reading, which would ultimately, enable them to read and understand the other subjects. So, reading should be the given utmost priority along with other fundamental skills from the very early grades. The competencies mentioned in the curriculum for reading in each grade need to be given priority so that students get promoted to the next grade by achieving those competencies. If students are promoted from one grade to another without acquiring the learning competencies for reading, they will struggle to cope with the next grade, and gradually will lose interest for reading.

Moreover, a strong focus on reading would develop a culture of reading to make students competent readers.

**Stakeholders' involvement in facilitating reading** - The study recommended that parents' involvement with schools could be strengthened by shifting their intervention from general communication to academic matters. Parents may play crucial roles in encouraging students to read, participating actively in students reading, and other reading-related activities that enhance students' reading interests, achievement, and also develop positive attitude toward reading.

Community culture and practice help children build values and culture. Thus, every community should have a favourable reading environment and facilities. The study suggests that community members can promote reading by organizing reading circle, ensuring library facilities in the community, encouraging children to share reading materials with their peers, organizing a bookfairs in their community on important national days, and organizing reading competitions to ensure a good reading environment and opportunities in the community. In addition, community members' active involvement in the reading initiatives and programs undertaken by schools would play an important role to make such initiatives and programs successful. Overall, when all the stakeholders like parents, community members and teachers work together to help ensure the desired level of reading preferences and aptitudes, students also feel attached, confident, and encouraged to gain and address them.

1. **Sub-question 4.** What aspects of policy and provisions influence reading motivation?

### **Summary of the Findings**

The study explored different policies and provisions of the government as well as some non-government organizations to analyse the provisions offered by such institutions to foster an inspiring and reading-friendly environment in the family, school, and community. The study identified a number of strategies recommended for enhancing learners' reading competencies suggested by the National Education Policy 2010 which included developing students' curiosity rather rote learning, introducing creative evaluation, and ensuring adequate infrastructural and human resources. Furthermore, the NEP-2010 specifically mentioned library as an essential infrastructure of school and emphasised its importance in cultivating reading habits. In addition, all the stakeholders' involvement in schools is recognized as a recommended strategy for fostering reading. Reading was highlighted as a recreational activity in the National Children's Policy (NCP) 2011, with the aim of providing reading resources to support quality education.

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) emphasized several teaching techniques for reading. Reading was also noted in the curriculum as a joyful activity as well as a tool for gathering information. The current study also found that the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) has several instructions for acquiring reading skills and ensuring reading habits among students such as compulsory reading in school



across subjects, reading a paragraph at home as homework, pronunciation competitions, ‘one day, one-word activity,’ and so on.

In addition, several ministries run different libraries, including the libraries of Shishu Academy, the public library, and the mobile library all over the country for young children’s holistic development and to cultivate a culture of reading for students and the society as a whole.

The study also found that only a small number of publishers publish children’s literature in Bangladesh. Only 5–10% of the total number of books purchased by the public library each year is for children. Furthermore, it was revealed that students at government primary schools were not connected with different forms of libraries across the country. Finally, the study found the reading initiatives taken by the non-governmental organisations in some parts of the country, which appeared to be helpful for early grade students.

## **Recommendations**

### *8.3.3 Ensuring Policy Implementation with Specific Instructions and Adequate Resources*

The following points are recommended to help implement the policy plans and other government initiatives.

**Policy directions related to reading** - The study findings revealed that pleasure reading and reading non-text materials were not encouraged in the school, family, or community for primary school students in Bangladesh. The present study recommended cultivating

students' thinking, inventiveness and willingness to learn. Hence, there should be a policy direction to ensure a reading environment in social institutions like families, schools and communities to encourage students to read for enjoyment. In addition, the emphasis on reading should be placed from the early years by bringing in necessary clauses the policy, curriculum, and instructional strategies to be implemented in the classroom. Finally, there should be sufficient instructional practices and activities in the school and classroom that motivate students to read with pleasure.

**Guidelines for using library and ensuring coordination among libraries** - Though the National Education Policy mentioned library as the soul of an educational institution and emphasised adequate reading materials in school and community for developing students' reading habits, most schools had limited library facilities. Moreover, there was little coordination among community libraries like Shishu Academy, public or mobile libraries, and government primary schools. The present study recommended that there should be a common guideline for using those library facilities and extended reading activities could be promoted through coordination between those libraries and government primary schools so that students have the opportunity to explore an abundance of reading materials from a variety of sources. The networking among different libraries would foster a culture of reading among young students. In addition, there should be a library in each school, including the e-book facilities, with particular attention paid to rural areas.

**Coordination among policymakers, practitioners, and monitoring authority** – The study findings revealed that there were policies or provisions from several organisations

for ensuring reading in school and the community. In practice, those were not executed, and the monitoring process was not well coordinated to investigate the gap between the policies and their implementation. The present study recommends that there should be coordination among policy planners, practitioners, and monitoring authorities to ensure the implementation of the adapted policies and provisions for reading. Representatives from all the stakeholders could sit together at a regular interval to find the gaps between the policies and practices and take appropriate initiatives to accommodate them. In addition, the monitoring system must be enhanced so that academic domains may be evaluated separately from administrative domains.

**Policies for assessing reading** - The exam-oriented education system has put much emphasis on achieving good results. In such situation, students' reading abilities were not properly assessed, whether in the class tests or in the terminal or public examinations. This could be a reason why students, teachers, and parents are demotivated about developing genuine reading skills. Therefore, this study recommends that there should be a specific guideline for assessing reading abilities separately in the evaluation system, which should focus on reading only. In addition, a specific mark (15–20%) should be allotted in the formal examination system to evaluate students' reading abilities through formative and summative assessments. However, along with reforming students' reading assessment, there should be measures to ensure sufficient reading opportunities by providing adequate reading materials in the school and classroom.

**Emphasizing availability of children's books** - The proportion of children's books should be increased to ensure all primary school students' access to children's literature

for. Most of the books published for children have been kept and unveiled in the urban areas of Bangladesh. In rural and remote areas, students have minimal exposure to these books. So, an adequate number of children's books should be kept available in rural areas' schools. Additionally, children's books must be colourful and printed on good quality papers to attract the younger students. However, this might make children books even more expensive, and not all the parents would be able to afford them. The government should grant a subsidy to the publishers for publishing good quality children's books. In addition, national and international NGOs can work together with the government to make these initiatives successful for promoting a reading culture all over the country. Furthermore, children's book publishers should be encouraged to publish age-appropriate books in large quantities.

**Raise awareness and stimulate reading across the country** - The study findings revealed a misconception among parents that reading storybooks hamper students' academic achievement. It was found not only among parents but also among other stakeholders like teachers and community members, who have similar assumptions and have a conservative attitude towards story reading. It was also discovered that story readers tended to hide their likings for reading stories as reading storybooks were not appreciated in the society. So, the present study recommended disseminating the importance and effect of reading storybooks from policies to the practice level. It should be ensured at the execution level by initiating several activities for all stakeholders such as parents, teachers, community members, publishers and monitoring and supervision authorities to work together to disseminate and implement these initiatives in a holistic

manner. Such policies may include - providing library support in schools and communities, the provision of reading materials in local languages, the publication of adequate books for children, adequate reading activities in schools and communities; and sharing sessions or meetings about the importance and responsibilities of stakeholders in encouraging students to read storybooks to make the society a reading society.

All these could be done even with the help of several mass media like radio, television, newspapers, through advertisements, billboards, festoons or audio-visual media, social media, and via school as well as the community. In addition, a nationwide reading program needs to be accommodated to foster a widespread reading culture in urban and rural areas including all the government primary schools in Bangladesh. The whole country should come under this program, focusing on remote urban areas to build a reader's friendly society.

### **Introduce book gifting program at upazila level**

To build a reading culture in society and introducing storybooks from the early years even before children enter school, book gifting programs need to be initiated for young children in the catchment areas of each school with collaboration of the local government and non-government organizations. When choosing books for gifts, one should consider whether they (the books) are age-appropriate, colourful, pictorial, and cater to children's favourite topics and interests to make the students curious and accustomed to reading in family and community. Parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds also feel connected to encouraging their children to read and interact with those books. In addition,

community volunteers can work to read out and help young students read those books, even if their parents are not able to read. Through these voluntary programmes children from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds come to the same platform to be involved with reading and love for reading.

#### **8.4. Implications for educational practices**

The results of this study outline the necessary steps for all stakeholders, including policymakers, curriculum developers, educators and implementing authorities, who are responsible for developing and motivating of children's reading at respective family, school and community settings. The study identifies some areas that need to be considered for developing a reading culture within the family, school, and community to improve the social environment and motivate primary school students' reading.

The findings of the study showed that, to foster a culture of reading in families, a reading environment and a positive cultural capital need to be ensured in the families of most of the primary school students. Along with this, parents' reading habits, interactions through reading, and reading facilities would encourage children to be interested about reading at home. However, the study suggested several activities to develop a habit of reading and a culture of reading by parents which include mentioning parents' active involvement in reading at home and school and raising awareness through programs. In addition, the study further revealed that reading facilities and practices in the classroom as well as at school need to be well-organised so that students have the opportunity to read and participate in the classroom as well as school enthusiastically. Moreover, the study found

that community facilities remained largely unexplored and unused by primary school students, and most community facilities were missing.

In summary, the study results provide recommendations for policy planners, curriculum developers, educators, and other stakeholders to initiate relevant programs, projects, and reading activities and ensure that students enjoy reading with adequate facilities to build a reading friendly society. In addition, policy planners would provide an implementation guideline with effective monitoring and supervision plans. Also, through national-level initiatives and awareness-raising programmes, parents would be aware of the reading environment at home and would ensure facilities and guide their children to read at home. Teachers and school authorities would ensure the availability of the facilities and take appropriate steps to ensure a supportive reading environment at school and in the classroom to encourage students to read. Furthermore, a supportive reading-friendly community could be established to transmit the reading culture from one generation to another. All of this, in the end, would lead to the achievement of sustainable development goals through the provision of quality primary education.

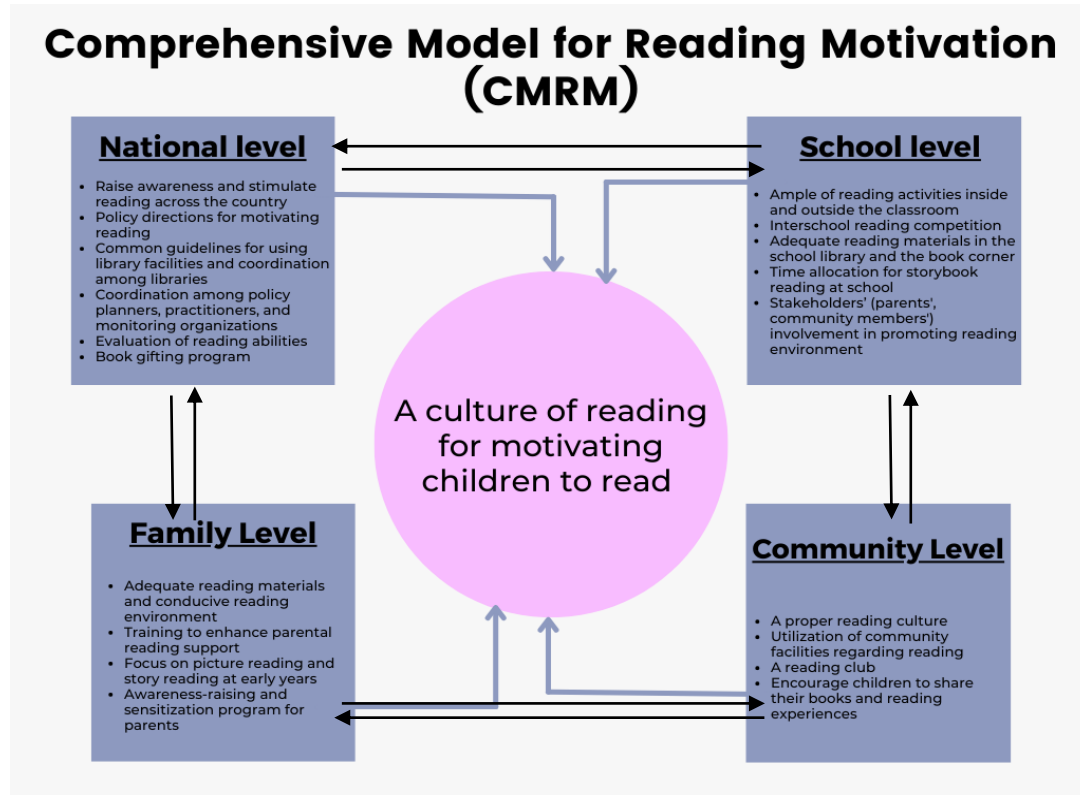
### **8.5 A Proposed Comprehensive Model for Reading Motivation**

After discussing the major findings of the study and providing recommendations on each of the research questions, the present study suggests a comprehensive model for motivating the government primary school students as well as all the children of Bangladesh to foster a reading culture in society. The aim of the study was to understand the social and cultural environment of primary school students for their reading motivation at home, school, and in the community. In addition, national policies and

provisions and their influences on motivating children to read were also explored in the study. This comprehensive model suggests fostering a culture of reading in the society of Bangladesh by considering children at the centre and linking them with four interrelated components in their surrounding environment. The four components consist of family, school, community, and national-level initiatives. In the top-down approach to the education system of Bangladesh, the model does not follow the top-down directions, and it follows the correlation and coordination between the various components. For example, the model suggests that students would receive books as gifts from their community in the early years, and community volunteers, along with parents, would help them read those books. In addition, the national awareness-raising program encourages parents and other stakeholders to ensure a supportive reading environment in their family and community. Furthermore, teachers also worked on arranging sufficient scope for reading in the classroom and the school and communicating with parents to ensure a reading environment in the families. Parents and other stakeholders would even work to implement reading initiatives taken from the national or school levels. There should be coordination between the initiatives taken by Shishu Academy and other libraries with the schools. As a result, all the components would support one another to create a culture of reading in the family, school, community, and policy execution. They can also ensure this in every layer of society. The study hopes that it is possible to build a reading culture in society through this vertical-horizontal model of reading motivation.



**Figure 8. 1:** *Comprehensive Model for Reading Motivation*



### 8.6 Limitation of the Study

The study had to face several challenges because of the pandemic COVID-19. The piloting of the study was planned at the beginning of 2020 which was delayed due to COVID-19 as it was tough to get permission from the authorities to bring students to school for data collection. Furthermore, piloting was done only in two centres in Dhaka city. Then, it was again a great challenge to collect data during the amid the COVID-19 and the lockdown through most of 2020 and part of 2021. It was a huge challenge to get permission from the different and diverse regions of Bangladesh to collect data from students. These challenges add to the researcher's stress, anxiety and hardship in completing the study within the academic timeline.

One of the limitations of the study was that the data regarding the social and cultural context of Bangladesh on reading motivation was collected only through questionnaire survey of the students and interviews with the parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. However, it would be better to observe the school and home environment of concerned students directly. This would generate a more authentic picture of people's reading habits and practices as well as their environments and challenges. Unfortunately, the absence of regular classes limited investigating day to day reading practices in the classroom and school. These limitations were addressed by employing a triangulation process of data collected from various sources.

### **8.7 Future Research Direction**

The present study was conducted to explore the issue of primary school students' motivation to read in the social and cultural context of Bangladesh. Future research is needed to investigate the relationship between family reading practices taking into account the socio-economic conditions and their impact on reading motivation. The current study found that most parents begin their children's reading practices by memorizing alphabets, numbers, rhymes, and so on. Future studies may look at the interactions and practices in the early years of reading that would motivate students to read and develop literacy skills. Again, many students in government primary schools come from families where they did not get the opportunity to read which might be an issue to explore further with more specific focus on reading capitals. Future research may look at aspects of the curriculum and school activities that can encourage students to read through school so that they can become independent readers and motivated to read.

## 8.8 Conclusion

The social and cultural aspects of family, school, and community that motivate students to read were investigated in this study using a mixed-method convergent parallel design. The study further explored state-level policies and provisions to encourage students to read. The study employed ecological system theory and self-determination theory to examine the effects of the surrounding environment on children's development and to see whether students' basic psychological needs were fulfilled by the interactions among the members of these organizations and the environment in motivating students to read.

Reading is a fundamental skill for learning a language and a prerequisite for academic success, and this basic skill has a significant contribution throughout life. In the social and cultural context of Bangladesh, the present study found that parents of government primary school students in Bangladesh had a positive attitude toward education. Parents, on the other hand, saw reading as a method for getting good grades and establishing a career rather as a skill that must be acquired for pleasure reading. Even though parents believe that reading is essential for success in life, the practice of providing books, reading facilities, and reading habits to parents as a home reading culture still has room for improvement. The experience of visiting libraries was also found to be limited among primary school students in Bangladesh. Similarly, the school environment was not conducive to reading, and students had limited scope to read in the classroom or utilize additional reading materials at school. Students, like their families, had limited access to school libraries. Even in schools with libraries, resources are insufficient to create an environment that encourages students to read. Insufficient reading activities in school and

the community hinder students' enthusiasm to read for pleasure. The community libraries, like the library of Shishu Academy, the public library, etc., were rather unexplored by students who were not connected with these community facilities.

In Bangladesh, students in government primary schools read mainly to achieve good grades, prizes and meet societal expectations. Girl students, however, were more motivated to read than boy students. In addition, students in urban areas have higher reading motivation. Furthermore, students of hilly regions were more motivated to read than in other areas. Except for hilly and plain areas, there were no statistically significant variations found across various demographic groups.

Reading stimulates the function of the brain and develops a child's imagination. This sophisticated process boosts the brain's critical thinking ability and encourages further reading. The lack of reading hampers students' critical and rational thinking development processes. In addition, once children learn to read, they can read anything they want to, which will eventually help develop their reading habits and shape their preferences for pleasure reading. In order to develop a nation with a young generation of inquisitive and keen readers students must be given the appropriate environment and resources at their home, school, and community. In addition, policies and provisions relating to reading must be implemented in different layers of the society. To accomplish the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which advocates quality education and lifelong learning for all, it is critical to create and promote a reading culture among the young learners in the social, educational and cultural contexts of Bangladesh.

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**Pictures Taken in The Field Work (With Consent)**

**Participants (students) from different geographical locations**



Students from hilly area with the researcher



Students from plain land with the researcher



Participating students from Char areas with researcher



Participating students of Haor areas with researcher



Participating students from coastal areas with field researcher

### **Bangabandhu Corner at School**



### **Library at School**



### **Library of Shishu Academy (Central Library)**



## Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Parents and Community members



FGD with community members of hilly area



FGD with parents of haor area



FGD with parents of plain land



FGD with parents of coastal area



FGD with community members of haor area

### Interview with assistant teacher



Researcher with As. Teacher



Researcher with As. Teacher



Researcher with As. Teacher

### Interview with Education Officials



Researcher with PTI superintend coastal area



Researcher with DPEO coastal area



Researcher with DPEO haor area



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Explanatory Letter for Director General of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE)



#### Institute of Education and Research University of Dhaka

31.08.2020

To  
Director General  
Directorate of Primary Education  
Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216  
Bangladesh

**Subject: Seeking permission to conduct my PhD research at government primary schools of Bangladesh.**

Sir,

I am writing you requesting for permission to conduct research in government primary schools of some selected Upazillas in the Sirajganj, Sunamganj, Rangamati, Bhola, and Gazipur districts of Bangladesh. The name of the upazillas are enlisted and enclosed herewith. This letter contains an explanatory statement and a separate consent form.

I am Shilpi Rani Saha, Assistant Professor, Jagannath University, conducting my PhD research as a UGC PhD fellow, 2019 at the University of Dhaka, under the supervision of Associate Professor Md. Ahsan Habib PhD. The thesis is entitled ‘A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh’.

The research will explore the situation of the social and cultural context in promoting reading motivation for the students of primary schools in Bangladesh. Along with this,

the study will also identify parents' perception about reading, facilities provided at home as well as in the community to expedite students' reading motivation. Moreover, the impact of school practices and expert opinions on different policies of education regarding students' reading motivation executed in the primary education system of Bangladesh will also be explored in this study. Hope this study will contribute to policy and practice level to ensure reading friendly environment and activities to promote reading motivation for the young generation of Bangladesh.

I will contact with the head teachers for conducting surveys with the students, interviewing the teachers and school observation. I will also take informed written consent from the concerned teachers who will be interviewed. Parents' and community peoples' consent will also be taken for participating in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). There is no foreseeable risk to the participants or side effects from participating in this study.

There is no payment for participating in my research study.

Data transcripts will be transcribed using pseudonyms which will be used in the thesis and any resulting publications where appropriate. All the participants will be given the opportunity to review their statements and final approval on that. The specific location of the study will not be disclosed in the final publication.

Participation is voluntary and participants are not under any obligation to consent in participating in this study. Students, teachers, parents, and community people do not need to answer any questions they feel deniable. Participants can withdraw their names at any point in time of this study even after data collection without any explanation.

A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

It is possible that this data might be used in the future in other publications relating to the purpose of this study such as journals, articles, or conference papers. In every event, the anonymity of data will be strictly maintained.

If you would like to consider contacting in any aspect of the study please let the researcher or the supervisor of the study be informed.

Supervisor	Researcher
<b>Associate Professor Md. Ahsan Habib</b> <b>PhD</b> Department of Educational Psychology & Guidance Institute of Education and Research (IER) University of Dhaka, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh Phone: +880-1843391310; E-mail: <a href="mailto:md.habib@du.ac.bd">md.habib@du.ac.bd</a>	<b>Shilpi Rani Saha</b> PhD Student Institute of Education and Research (IER) University of Dhaka, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh Phone: +880-1711281100; E-mail: <a href="mailto:s.shilpir@gmail.com">s.shilpir@gmail.com</a>

If you are willing for me to proceed with this research, please provide me a permission letter and a return signed consent form in a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shilpi Rani Saha

PhD Researcher

Institute of Education and Research (IER)

University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dhaka -1000

&

UGC PhD Fellow-2019

Phone: +880-1711281100;

Email: [s.shilpir@gmail.com](mailto:s.shilpir@gmail.com)

## Appendix 2: Approval of the Directorate of Primary Education

### Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) Bangladesh, Dhaka



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর  
সেকশন ২, মিরপুর, ঢাকা ১২১৬  
[www.dpe.gov.bd](http://www.dpe.gov.bd)



স্মারক নং: ৩৮.০১.০০০০.৩৪৬.৯৯.২০২০-২৭

তারিখ:

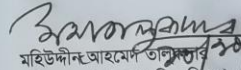
২৬ আশ্বিন ১৪২৭  
০১ অক্টোবর ২০২০

বিষয়: পিএইচডি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহ কাজে সহযোগিতা।

সূত্র: ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের আই ই আর এর গত ৩১.০৮.২০২০ তারিখের পত্র।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রোক্ত পত্রের আলোকে জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় “Influence of social cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh: an exploratory study” শিরোনামে পিএইচডি করছেন। তাঁর গবেষণার তথ্য সংগ্রহ কাজে নিম্নোক্ত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে অনুমতি প্রদান করা।

- ক. কোভিড -১৯ পরবর্তীতে বিদ্যালয়ের পিএইচডি কার্যক্রম শুরু হলে তিনি শিক্ষক, শিক্ষার্থী ও সংশ্লিষ্টজনের সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ করবেন;
- খ. সংগৃহীত তথ্যাদি শুধুমাত্র পিএইচডি কার্যক্রমের কাজে ব্যবহার করবেন;
- গ. সংগৃহীত তথ্যাদি কর্তৃপক্ষের পূর্বানুমতি ব্যতীত পিএইচডি কার্যক্রম ছাড়া আর অন্য কোন কাজে ব্যবহার করতে পারবেন না;
- ঘ. শুধুমাত্র যেসকল সাক্ষাৎকার প্রদানে আহ্বায়ী শিক্ষক, শিক্ষার্থী ও সংশ্লিষ্টজনের কাছ থেকে তথ্য সংগ্রহ করবেন;
- ঙ. তথ্য প্রদানকারী যে কোন সময় তাঁর প্রদত্ত তথ্যাবলী প্রত্যাহার করতে পারবেন;
- চ. জনস্বার্থে এ আদেশ জারী করা হলো।
- ২। এ আদেশে মহাপরিচালক মহোদয়ের সদয় সম্মতি রয়েছে।

  
মহিউদ্দীন আহমেদ তালুকদার  
উপপরিচালক (প্রাক-প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা)  
১৯/১০/২০

উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার  
..... উপজেলা..... জেলা।

অনুলিপি:

- ১। বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, ঢাকা, রাজশাহী, খুলনা, বরিশাল, চট্টগ্রাম, সিলেট, ময়মনসিংহ ও রংপুর।
- ২। জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার..... জেলা।
- ৩। জনাব প্রফেসর মো: আহসান হাবীব, আই ই আর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
- ৪। জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচডি গবেষক, আই ই আর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়।
- ৫। অতিরিক্ত মহাপরিচালকের ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী (অতিরিক্ত মহাপরিচালকের সদয় অবগতির জন্য)
- ৬। মহাপরিচালকের ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী (মহাপরিচালকের সদয় অবগতির জন্য)
- ৭। অফিস কপি।

## Appendix 3: Approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Gazipur

### Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Gazipur



পনপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসের কার্যালয়  
গাজীপুর।



স্মারক নং-জেপ্রশিঅ/গাজী/২০২০/১৬৬৬

তারিখ: ২০-১১-২০২০

বিষয় : পিএইচটি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহ করে বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি।

সূত্র : স্মারক নং-এচ.এস.ও.১.০০০০.৩৬৬.৯৯.২০২০-২৭, তারিখ: ০১-১০-২০২০

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রের প্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচটি পাবলিক, অইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় "Influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh: An exploratory study" শিরোনামে পিএইচটি করছেন। তাঁর ব্যবস্থাপনা জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহের নিমিত্ত গাজীপুর জেলার সদর উপজেলা এবং শ্রীপুর উপজেলার সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়-৩৬৪ শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা, এসএমসি, গণমাধ্যম ব্যক্তিবর্গ, অভিজ্ঞাবলগণের সঙ্গে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ ও বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের নিমিত্ত নিম্নবর্ণিত সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়সমূহ পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি প্রদান করা হলো।

ক্রমিক নং	উপজেলায় নাম	বিদ্যালয়ের নাম	মন্তব্য
১	গাজীপুর সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
২	গাজীপুর সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৩	গাজীপুর সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৪	গাজীপুর সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৫	গাজীপুর সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৬	শ্রীপুর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৭	শ্রীপুর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৮	শ্রীপুর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৯	শ্রীপুর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
১০	শ্রীপুর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	

(মোহাম্মদ মোহাম্মদ হোসেন)  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার  
গাজীপুর।

জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা  
পিএইচটি পাবলিক  
অইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।


সদর অবগতির জন্য অনুরোধ:

১. বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, ঢাকা বিভাগ, ঢাকা।
২. উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, গাজীপুর সদর/শ্রীপুর, গাজীপুর।
৩. সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সবুজি রাস্তার, গাজীপুর সদর/শ্রীপুর, গাজীপুর।
৪. প্রধান শিক্ষক, ..... সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর সদর/শ্রীপুর, গাজীপুর।
৫. সরেফুল নথি।


D:\My Documents\2020\Gazipur\1 Letter.docx

**Appendix 4: Approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO),  
Sunamganj**

Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh  
District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Sunamganj



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার কার্যালয়  
সুনামগঞ্জ



স্মারক নং-৩৮.৪৬.৯০০০.০০০.২৫.০০১.২০.১১৮২

তারিখ : ৫৫ পৌষ ১৪২৭ বঙ্গাব্দ  
২৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

বিষয় : পিএইচডি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহ কাজে উপজেলাভিত্তিক বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি।

সূত্র : স্মারক নং-৩৮.০১.০০০০.৩৪৬.৯৯.২০২০-২৭, তারিখ : ০১.১০.২০২০ খ্রি.।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বেগম শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় "Influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh : An exploratory study" শিরোনামে পিএইচডি করছেন। তাঁর গবেষণার জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহের নিমিত্ত সুনামগঞ্জ জেলার সদর উপজেলা এবং দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ উপজেলায় সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা, এস.এম.সি, গণ্যমান্য ব্যক্তিবর্গ, অভিভাবকবৃন্দের সঙ্গে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ ও বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের নিমিত্ত নিম্নসাক্ষরকারী কর্তৃক নিম্নবর্ণিত সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়সমূহকে পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি প্রদান করা হলো।

ক্রমিক নম্বর	উপজেলার নাম	বিদ্যালয়ের নাম	মন্তব্য
০১	সুনামগঞ্জ সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০২	সুনামগঞ্জ সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৩	সুনামগঞ্জ সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৪	সুনামগঞ্জ সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৫	সুনামগঞ্জ সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৬	দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৭	দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৮	দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
০৯	দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
১০	দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	

মোঃ মোশারফ হোসেন ২৫/১২/২০

জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
সুনামগঞ্জ  
ফোন : ০৮-৭১-৬১৩২৫  
ই-মেইল : dpeosunam@gmail.com

বেগম শিল্পী রানী সাহা  
পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা

স্মারক নং-৩৮.৪৬.৯০০০.০০০.২৫.০০১.২০.১১৮২(৩৭)

তারিখ : ৫৫ পৌষ ১৪২৭ বঙ্গাব্দ  
২৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

অনুলিপি : সদয় জ্ঞাতার্থে ও কার্যার্থে

- ০১। বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, সিলেট বিভাগ, সিলেট।
- ০২। উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সুনামগঞ্জ সদর/দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ, সুনামগঞ্জ।
- ০৩। সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সংশ্লিষ্ট ক্লাস্টার, সুনামগঞ্জ সদর/দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ, সুনামগঞ্জ।
- ০৪। প্রধান শিক্ষক, ..... সপ্রাি, সুনামগঞ্জ সদর/দক্ষিণ সুনামগঞ্জ, সুনামগঞ্জ।
- ০৫। সংরক্ষণ নথি।

মোঃ মোশারফ হোসেন ২৫/১২/২০

জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
সুনামগঞ্জ

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## Appendix 5: Approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Bhola

### Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Bhola



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসারের কার্যালয়  
ভোলা।  
dpeobhola@gmail.com



স্মারক নং-৩৮.০১.০৯০০.০০১.০০.০০০.২০২১/০৬

তারিখঃ ০৩/০১/২০২১

বিষয়ঃ পিএইচডি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহে কাজে উপজেলা ভিত্তিক বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি।

সূত্রঃ স্মারক নং-৩৮.০১.০০০০.৩৪৬.৯৯.২০২০-২৭, তারিখঃ ০১/১০/২০২০খ্রিঃ।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় "Influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh: An Exploratory Study" শিরোনামে পিএইচডি করছেন। তাঁর গবেষণার জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহের নিমিত্ত ভোলা জেলার সদর ও চরফ্যাশন উপজেলায় সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা, এসএমসি, গণ্যমান্য ব্যক্তিবর্গ, অভিভাবকবৃন্দের সঙ্গে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ ও বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের নিমিত্ত নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী কর্তৃক নিম্নবর্ণিত সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয় সমূহ কে পরিদর্শনের অনুমতি প্রদান করা হলো।

ক্রমিক নং	উপজেলার নাম	বিদ্যালয়ের নাম	মন্তব্য
১	ভোলা সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
২	ভোলা সদর	ইসলাম সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৩	ভোলা সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৪	ভোলা সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৫	ভোলা সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৬	চরফ্যাশন	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৭	চরফ্যাশন	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৮	চরফ্যাশন	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
৯	চরফ্যাশন	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	
১০	চরফ্যাশন	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়	

জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা  
পিএইচডি, গবেষক আইইআর  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।

নিখিল চন্দ্র হালদার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার  
ভোলা।

স্মারক নং-৩৮.০১.০৯০০.০০১.০০.০০০.২০২১/০৬(৪)

তারিখঃ ০৩/০১/২০২১

অনুলিপি সদয় অবগতি/অনুষ্ঠিতের জন্য প্রেরণ করা হলো।

১। বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, বরিশাল বিভাগ, বরিশাল।

২। উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, ভোলা সদর/চরফ্যাশন, ভোলা।

৩। সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সংশ্লিষ্ট ক্লাস্টার, ভোলা সদর/ চরফ্যাশন, ভোলা।

৪। প্রধান শিক্ষক-সপ্রাণি, ভোলা সদর/চরফ্যাশন, ভোলা।

৫। অফিস কপি।

নিখিল চন্দ্র হালদার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার  
ভোলা।

## Appendix 6: Approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Rangamati

### Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Rangamati



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসারের কার্যালয়  
রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা।



স্মারক নং: অস.০১.৮৪০০.০০.১৩.০৪০.২০২০-২৩০

তারিখ: ০৪ চৈত্র ১৪২৭ বঙ্গাব্দ  
১৮ মার্চ ২০২১ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

বিষয়: পিএইচডি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহ করতে উপজেলা ভিত্তিক বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শন ও অংশীজন (Stakeholder) গণের সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণের অনুমতি প্রদান।

সূত্র: প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর এর স্মারক নং-অস.০১.০৯০০.০০১.০০.০০০.২০২১/০৬, তারিখ: ০৩/০১/২০২১ খ্রিঃ

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় "Influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school student in Bangladesh : An Exploratory Study" শিরোনামে পিএইচডি করছেন। উক্ত গবেষণার জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহের নিমিত্ত রাঙ্গামাটি জেলার সদর ও কাপ্তাই উপজেলার নিম্নলিখিত সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়গণের শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক, এস.এমসি ও অভিভাবকসমূহের সঙ্গে মতবিনিময়, সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ এবং বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের জন্য নিম্নলিখিত শর্তে তাকে অনুমতি প্রদান করা হলো।

উপজেলার নাম	বিদ্যালয়ের নাম
রাঙ্গামাটি সদর	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
কাপ্তাই	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়
	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়

- শর্ত: (ক) বর্তমান কোভিড-১৯ পরিস্থিতিতে যথাযথ সতর্কতাসহ মেনে, সাময়িক দূরত্ব বজায় রেখে ও সর্বোচ্চ সতর্কতা অবলম্বন করে সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণ করতে হবে।  
(খ) শিক্ষার্থীদের সাক্ষাৎকার গ্রহণকালে সংশ্লিষ্ট অভিভাবকের ইচ্ছা/অনিচ্ছাকে বিবেচনায় রাখতে হবে।  
(গ) সংশ্লিষ্ট তথ্য শুধুমাত্র নির্ধারিত গবেষণার কাজেই ব্যবহার করা যাবে।

(মোঃ সাজ্জাদ হোসেন)  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার  
রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা।  
ফোন: ০৩৫১-৬২২৪০  
ই-মেইল: dpeorange@gmail.com

জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা  
পিএইচডি গবেষক, আইইআর,  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।

- সদয় অবগতি ও প্রয়োজনীয় কার্যার্থে অনুলিপি প্রেরণ করা হলোঃ
- ০১। মহাপরিচালক (গ্রেড-১), প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, মিরপুর, ঢাকা।
  - ০২। বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, চট্টগ্রাম বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম।
  - ০৩। উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সদর/কাপ্তাই, রাঙ্গামাটি পার্বত্য জেলা।
  - ০৪। সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, ..... ক্রান্তার, সদর/কাপ্তাই, রাঙ্গামাটি।
  - ০৫। প্রধান শিক্ষক, ..... সত্রাবি, সদর/কাপ্তাই, রাঙ্গামাটি।
  - ০৬। অফিস নথি।



## Appendix 7: Approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Sirajgonj

### Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh District Primary Education Office (DPEO), Sirajgonj

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার কার্যালয়  
সিরাজগঞ্জ।

তারিখ: ২৭ মে, ২০২১

স্মারকনং: জেএশিঅ/সিরাজ/২০২১/২৫০/২

বিষয়: পিএইচটি কার্যক্রমের জন্য তথ্য সংগ্রহ কাজে বিনামূল্যে পরিদর্শনের অন্তিমিক প্রস্তাব।

সূত্র: প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তরের স্মারক নং: ৩৮.০১.০০০০.৫৪৬.৯৯.২০২০-২৭, তারিখ: ০১/১০/২০২০ খ্রি।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয় ও সূত্রের আলোকে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা, পিএইচটি পবেমক, আইইআর, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় " Influence of socio cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh: An exploratory study" শিরোনামে পিএইচটি করছেন। সুতরাংপরে শর্ত মোতাবেক তাঁর গবেষণার তথ্য সংগ্রহ কাজে এ জেলার সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর উপজেলার নিম্ন লিখিত বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শনের অন্তিমিক প্রসন্নসহ বিদ্যালয় সংশ্লিষ্টদের সার্বিক সহযোগিতা প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

ক্রমিক নং	উপজেলার নাম	সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের নাম	মন্তব্য
০১	সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর	..... সগ্রাবি	
০২	সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর	..... দক্ষিণ সগ্রাবি	
০৩	সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর	..... সগ্রাবি	
০৪	সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর	..... সগ্রাবি	
০৫	সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর	..... সগ্রাবি	
০৬	কাজিপুর	..... সগ্রাবি	
০৭	কাজিপুর	..... নর সগ্রাবি	
০৮	কাজিপুর	..... মডেল সগ্রাবি	
০৯	কাজিপুর	..... সগ্রাবি	
১০	কাজিপুর	..... সগ্রাবি	

উল্লেখ্য যে, তাঁকে স্বাস্থ্যবিধি মেনে এবং সামাজিক দূরত্ব বজায় রেখে তথ্য সংগ্রহের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

মো: আমিনুল ইসলাম মন্ডল  
জেলা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অফিসার  
সিরাজগঞ্জ  
২৭/৫/২০২১

প্রাপক,  
জনাব শিল্পী রানী সাহা,  
পিএইচটি পবেমক, আইইআর,  
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।

অনুলিপি সদয় অবগতির জন্য :

১. মহাপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা অধিদপ্তর, সেকশন-২, ঢাকা-১২১৬।
২. বিভাগীয় উপপরিচালক, প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা, রাজশাহী বিভাগ, রাজশাহী।
৩. উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ।
৪. সহকারী উপজেলা শিক্ষা অফিসার, সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ।
৫. প্রধান/সহকারী শিক্ষক ..... সগ্রাবি, সিরাজগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজগঞ্জ।
৬. নথর নথি।

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### Appendix 8: Informed consent for Head Teacher

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Dhaka University researcher for their records

This study will explore the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh in terms of primary school students reading interest. At the same time, the study will explore the perceptions of the parents about reading as well as the environment of the families, schools and communities exist for their reading motivation. Simultaneously, the school practices including the opinion of the experts about policies will also investigate in the study. Moreover, the study aims to contribute in creating proper environment for reading motivation for the young generation of Bangladesh. The researcher also assumes that the study will contribute in improving the policy planning as well as in the real practice field of students reading motivation.

I agree to take part in the Dhaka University PhD research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I have kept for my record. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to allow my students to fill up the survey questionnaire given by the researcher

No

Yes

2. I agree to allow my students to fill up the motivational scale given by the researcher

No

Yes

3. I agree to allow my teachers to be interviewed by the researcher

No

Yes

I understand that the research respondents' participation is voluntary, that they can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that they can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from all the participants for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying school name.

Signature:

Name:

Head Teacher

Name of the school:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Date:

## Appendix 9: Informed consent for Student

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Dhaka University researcher for their records

This study will explore the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh in terms of primary school students reading interest. At the same time, the study will explore the perceptions of the parents about reading as well as the environment of the families, schools and communities exist for their reading motivation. Simultaneously, the school practices including the opinion of the experts about policies will also investigate in the study. Moreover, the study aims to contribute in creating proper environment for reading motivation for the young generation of Bangladesh. The researcher also assumes that the study will contribute in improving the policy planning as well as in the real practice field of students reading motivation.

My parents/teacher and the researcher have explained to me the research and I understand the purpose of the study. I agree to take part in the Dhaka University research project specified above. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to be fill up the survey questionnaire given by the researcher  Yes  No
2. I agree to fill up the motivational scale given by the researcher  Yes  No

I understand that the researcher will take my concerning for the approval in the questionnaire and motivational scale before it is included in the write up of the research study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from both tools for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

Signature with Name:

Date:

## Appendix 10: Informed consent for class teacher

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

**NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records**

This study will explore the socio-cultural context of Bangladesh in terms of primary school students reading interest. At the same time, the study will explore the perceptions of the parents about reading as well as the environment of the families, schools and communities exist for their reading motivation. Simultaneously, the school practices including the opinion of the experts about policies will also investigate in the study. Moreover, the study aims to contribute in creating proper environment for reading motivation for the young generation of Bangladesh. The researcher also assumes that the study will contribute in improving the policy planning as well as in the real practice field of students reading motivation.

I agree to take part in the Dhaka University PhD research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I have kept for my record. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to take part in the interview by the researcher  Yes  No

I understand that the participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying school name.

Signature:

Name:

Designation:

Name of the school:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Date:

## Appendix 11: Informed consent for Parents

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

**NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Dhaka University researcher for their records**

I agree to take part in the Dhaka University PhD research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I have kept for my record. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to take part in the interview by the researcher

Yes

No

I understand that the participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying school name.

Signature:

Name:

Designation:

Name of the school:

Telephone:

E-mail:

## Appendix 12: Informed consent for Community Member

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Dhaka University researcher for their records

I agree to take part in the Dhaka University PhD research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I have kept for my record. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to take part in the groups interview by the researcher

Yes

No

I understand that the participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw my child at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

I understand that data will be kept in a secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5-year period unless I consent to it being used in future research.

Signature:

Name:

Occupation:

Area:

Telephone:

Date:

E-mail (If any):

**Appendix 13: Informed consent for National Level Experts**

Title: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

**NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for their records**

I agree to take part in the Dhaka University PhD research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I have kept for my record. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

1. I agree to take part in the interview by the researcher  Yes  No

I understand that the participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying school name.

Signature:

Name:

Designation:

Name of the school:

Telephone:

E-mail:

## Appendix 14: Participants index for Tool Validation Workshop



### Tool Validation Workshop for

**Title of the Research: Influence of socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh: An exploratory study**

Venue: Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, Room no: 212

Date: 29 October, 2020

Sl.	Name of the participant	Designation	Signature
1.	Md. Sifat Al Hasnat	Assistant Professor, PISER, Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) & PhD Student of IER, DU Email: sifathasnat@gmail.com Phone: 01815431666	
2.	Jahanara Begum	Lecturer, Depart. of English Southeast University & PhD Student of Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP) Phone: 01712059874	
3.	Mousumi Das	MEd. Thesis Student of (2018-19) IER, Dhaka University Email: mousumiduier@gmail.com Phone: 01783728501	
4.	Bushra Fairouz Medha	MEd. Thesis Student (2018-19) of IER, Dhaka University Email: bushra.fairooz299@gmail.com Phone: 01914444822	
5.	Samita Akbar	MA. Development Studies, (2018- 19), Dhaka University Email: Phone: 8801682170069	





## Appendix 16: Interview Guideline for Teacher



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

Name of the District:      Name of the Upazila:      Living Areas: Urban/ Rural (Put a tick✓ mark)

Name of the School:

#### Demographic Information

Items	Responses
Name:	
Age:	
Gender:	Boy/ Girl (Put a ✓ mark)
Educational Qualification:	SSC/HSC/ Degree/ Honours/Masters/Others
Professional Qualification:	CinEd/ DPed/ BEd/ MEd
Teaching Experience (Number of years):	
Contact Details:	
Signature with Date:	



## **Institute of Education and Research**

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

### **Interview Guideline for Teacher**

1. How interested are the students in your class in reading?
2. How do you teach your students in creating motivation for reading?
3. Do you have any particular time for reading in the daily routine?
4. How do you help the student if they require any additional support in reading?
5. What are the barriers you face in implementing reading training?
6. Do you have any instruction from the government in stimulating reading skills? Where did you get these guidelines? What is the context for the implementation of these guidelines?
7. How is your students' interest in reading linked with the school library?
8. How do you view the effect of storybooks on academic success?
9. Do you have a book corner in your class? How do you use the book corner?
10. Do the students of your class involve any other organisation for reading competition?
11. Is there any difference between boys and girls? If yes, then why?
12. How do the parents involve with school reading activities?
13. How do you evaluate your students reading capacity?
14. What are the barriers you face in practicing reading techniques?
15. What elements of today's society inspire students to read?
16. What kind of steps can be taken to inspire the reading of primary school students?
17. What is your suggestion to foster reading motivation for primary level students?

## Appendix 17: Interview Guideline for Educational Expert



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

#### Demographic Information of Educational Expert

Name of the Organisation:

Designation of the Expert:

Items	Responses
Age:	
Gender:	Boy/Girl (Put a $\checkmark$ mark)
Educational Qualification:	
Contact No with email address (If any):	
Signature with date:	



## **Institute of Education and Research**

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

### Experts Interview Guideline

1. How do you view current reading situation of the students of primary level students of Bangladesh?
2. In there any element in the social and cultural context of Bangladesh to promote reading environment?
3. How reading skill is important for students' achievement?
4. What are the specific initiatives of your organisation? What are the implementation procedures of these initiatives?
5. How do you measure your initiatives? Can you share your experience please?
6. What are the initiatives taken by the government to foster reading?
7. What are the obstacles to implement all these initiatives?
8. Is there any difference between boys and girls about reading interest? Why?
9. What should be the future plan for the improvement of reading culture?
10. Please share your suggestions to foster reading motivation for primary level students.

## Appendix 18: Focus Group Interview Questionnaire for Parents



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

#### Demographic Information of Parents

Name of the District: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the Upazila: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of the Urban/Rural  
(Put a  $\sqrt{\quad}$  mark) Name of the School: \_\_\_\_\_

Sl	Name	Age	Gender: Boy/ Girl	Number of Children (Write the Number)	Your Profession	Your Husband 's/Wife's Professio n	Educati onal Qualific ation	Your Husba nd's/W ife's Profess ion Educat ional Qualifi cation	Do you have the readin g table for your kid?	How many childr en friend ly books at your house (write the numb er)?	Conta ct detail s and signat ure with date
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											
5.											
6.											



## **Institute of Education and Research**

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

### **FGD Questionnaire for Parents**

1. When did your child start reading?
2. Why reading is important?
3. How do you help your child in reading?
4. Do you read with your child? What kind of materials? Can you tell me a story about the last book you read with your child? Do you read for yourself?
5. What kind of environment do you create at home for your child to read?
6. How many times did you bring the story books?
7. How many story books do you have for your kids at home?
8. Is there any difference between boys and girls about reading interest? Why?
9. Do you provide any additional benefits in terms of gender difference?
10. How do you view your community library?
11. What is the role of the family members in students reading capacity?
12. How is your involvement with school reading activities?
13. How do you view the effect of storybooks in academic success?
14. What is your valuable advice on primary school students reading motivation?

## Appendix 19: Focus Group Interview Questionnaire for Community Members



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

#### Demographic Information

Name of the District:

Name of the Upazila:

Urban/Rural Area

(Put a  $\sqrt$  mark) School Code:

Date:

Sl	Name	Age	Gender (M=Boy F=Girl)	Educational Qualification	Occupation	Contact No with email address (If any)	Signature
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							





## Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

### FGD Questionnaire

1. How do you view current reading situation of the students of primary level in your community?
2. Are there any differences of interest in reading with current generation and your generation? Why?
3. Is there any library in your community?
  - a) If yes, then when did it establish? What was the story behind it?
  - b) If no, what are the effects of it on your community children?
4. How often do you go there? How do you feel? Please narrate in details.
5. Do you provide books in the community library? How often?
6. How this library can help the children of your community to build a good reader? Please share your opinion.
7. How do you help your young family members in reading?
8. How do you view the roles of the family members in developing children's reading habit?
9. Is there any difference between boys and girls about reading interest? Why?
10. Is there any characteristic in your community in encouraging children reading interest?
11. How do you work for encouraging children reading interest in your community?
12. How is your involvement with school reading activities?
13. Please share your ideas to foster reading motivation for primary level students.

## Appendix 20: Reading Motivation Scale for Primary Level Students (RMSPLS)



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

1.	I like to read books.	4	3	2	1
2.	I buy books with the money I get as a gift.	4	3	2	1
3.	Reading is very difficult for me.	4	3	2	1
4.	I choose the books I read.	4	3	2	1
5.	If the material is interesting, I would like to read it even if it is difficult.	4	3	2	1
6.	I want to be the best reader in my class.	4	3	2	1
7.	I should read, that is why I read.	4	3	2	1
8.	Reading helps to know the unknown things.	4	3	2	1
9.	I am a good reader.	4	3	2	1
10.	My teachers praise me if I can read, that's why I read.	4	3	2	1
11.	I like to read new things. I	4	3	2	1
12.	I usually share my reading events with my parents.	4	3	2	1
13.	I usually share my reading experience with my classmates.	4	3	2	1
14.	I like to read the things that I like.	4	3	2	1
15.	I like to read more when someone praises me.	4	3	2	1
16.	I usually learn the hard things by reading them.	4	3	2	1
17.	I like to read any types of storybooks.	4	3	2	1
18.	I complete my study the way my teacher says.	4	3	2	1
19.	I go to the school library to read books of my choice.	4	3	2	1
20.	I can understand how good I am at reading by my results.	4	3	2	1
21.	I work hard to read better than my classmates.	4	3	2	1
22.	I get more pleasure if I get to read the books of my choice.	4	3	2	1
23.	I like to bring books from the community library.	4	3	2	1

## Appendix 21: Student Survey Questionnaire



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

School Code:

Upazila:

Date:

#### Demographic Information

Information	Responses
Name:	
Class:	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Roll:	
Gender:	Girl/Boy (Put a tick✓ mark)
Parent's Educational Qualification:	(Put a tick✓ mark) No institutional education/up to class five/ up to class ten/college or university /others
Mother's Educational Qualification:	(Put a tick✓ mark) No institutional education/up to class five/ up to class ten/college or university /others
Parent's Profession:	
Mother's Profession	
Do you have electricity at your home?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
What kind of book do you like most?	Different kind of storybooks/Travel stories/Scientific stories/Books on Liberation War/ Meena Cartoon/General Knowledge/ Ghost story/ Daily newspaper/Others

### Survey Questionnaire for students

Items	4 points scale			
<b>Reading facilities at home</b>				
1. Do you read every day?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
2. How long do you read textbooks every day?	4 hours or more	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours or less
3. Do you read story books?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
4. How long do you read storybooks per week except textbooks?	4 hours or more	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours or less
5. What kind of things do you love to receive most in your birthday?	Dress	Toy	Book	Others
6. Can you remember the person whom you started to read first?	With my parents	With other family members	With siblings	With house tutor
7. How often do your parents discuss with you about a book?	Everyday	Once in a week	Once in a month	Never
8. How often do your parents buy storybooks for you?	Once in a month	Once in every two months	Once in every four months	Never
9. How do your parents help you in your reading?	Everyday	Once in a week	Once in a month	Never
10. How often do you go to library with your parents?	Once in a week	Once in a month	Once in every two months	Never
11. Do you have your reading table?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
12. How many storybooks do you have at your home except textbooks?	More than 50	26-50	01-25	Nothing /bvB
13. Do you have any electronic device like mobile, computer or any other that you use for reading?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
14. If the answer of 13 is yes, how much time do you spend on that for reading?	3 hours	2 hours	1 hours	Don't do
15. How long do you read storybooks with other family members except your parents?	Twice in a week	Once in a week	Once in a month	Never
16. When you were younger, did your family members read out stories to you?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
<b>Reading facilities at school</b>				
17. Do you have library in your school?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			

18. If you have the library, do you collect storybooks from the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
19. Do you have computer in the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
20. If you have the computer, do you get the scope to use?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
21. Do you have internet facility in the computer of the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
22. What types of books do you collect from the library?	Different kind of storybooks/ Meena Cartoon/ Travel stories/Scientific stories/Books on Liberation War/ General Knowledge/ Ghost story/ Daily newspaper/Others (Put a tick✓ mark in to multiple item, if needed)			
Reading facilities at classroom				
23. Do you have book corner in your classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
24. Do you get scope to participate in loud reading at Bangla with your teacher?	Everyday	Once in a week	Once in a month	Never
25. Do you get scope to read storybooks in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
26. Do you get the scope to participate any reading competition?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
27. Are you involved with reading programme of any other organisation?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
Reading facilities at community				
28. Is there any library in your community?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
29. How often do you go there?	Once in a week	Once in a month	Once in every two months	Never
30. How often do you get your required books there?	Always	Almost all the time	Sometimes	Do n't get
31. How many books do you bring from there in a month?				
32. Do you exchange books from your neighbours?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			
33. Do you collect books from the mobile library?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)			

## Appendix 22: Observation Checklist for School Reading Environment



### Institute of Education and Research

Topic: A study on socio-cultural aspects of reading motivation among primary school students in Bangladesh

School Environment for Reading Motivation Scale (SERMS)

Demographic Information

Name of the School:	Urban/Rural Area (Put a $\sqrt$ mark)
Category of the school:	Number of students:
School code:	Number of teachers:
Date:	

Items	Responses
Library related facilities	
1. Do you have a library in the school?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
2. Do you have a library in the school?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
3. Does this school initiate the 'Bangabandhu Corner'?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
4. Where is the library situated?	A separated room/Head teacher's room/Ass. Head teachers' room/ Ass. teachers' room /Others
5. Is the library open every day?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
6. Is there a specific time to close the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
7. Are students allowed to take books at home from the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick $\sqrt$ mark)
8. What are the physical facilities of the library?	Sitting arrangement/ enough light and air/ a good number of books/ electricity/ Alternative electricity system/ computer/ internet/registrar book for borrow books/ Others (you can Put tick $\sqrt$ mark as much as needed)
9. What kind of books are there in the library?	Story book/ Novel/ Travel stories/religious/ science/ Liberation war of Bangladesh/comics/ adventure/ Drama/ Literature/ general knowledge /Adventure/Horror/ daily newspaper/others (you can

	Put tick✓ mark as much as needed)
10. Is there a librarian with a particular degree for the library?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
11. How many books are there in the library?	
12. How many books are there in the Bangabandhu Corner?	
Reading related facilities in the classroom	
12. Is there electricity in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
13. Is there computer in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
14. Are there internet facilities in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
15. Are there multimedia facilities in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
16. Do students get the opportunity to use computers?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
17. Is there a book corner in the classroom?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
Reading related facilities in the school	
18. Do you have reading materials (supplementary reading materials-SRMs) in school?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
19. Is there any group of students according to their reading skills?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
20. Do you have any reading competition in the school?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
21. Is there reading assessment system in the school?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)
22. Are the students of the school involved with any organisation that has a reading programme?	Yes/No (Put a tick✓ mark)

**Appendix 23: Registrar copy of assessing students' reading capacity  
in Bangla Language  
Grade IV (Collected from school)**

১৬  
শিট: ১ - ২০২০  
ক্রমিক - ৪২, পশ্চিম জাভান - G-১২৩, M-৩৪৫৬৭ L- শিষ্টাঙ্গ

ক্রমিক নং	ছাত্র ছাত্রী নাম	জন্ম তারিখ		বয়স		শ্রেণি		মোট	গড়
		কাল	বৈশাখ	বয়স	বৈশাখ	শ্রেণি	শ্রেণি		
১.	দেবলী ভট্টাচার্য ব্রিগী	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২.	অনুমা টী: ভট্টাচার্য	৫	৫	৫	৫	-	-		
৬.	স্বস্তিকা দাস সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৪.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৫.	জাহান্না শান্না আনা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৬.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৭.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৮.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৯.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১০.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১১.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১২.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৩.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৪.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৫.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৬.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৭.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৮.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
১৯.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২০.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২১.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২২.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৩.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৪.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৫.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৬.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৭.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৮.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
২৯.	সাদিয়াতুল রহমান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৩০.	নুজ্বাত আহান	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		
৩১.	জাহান্না জাহান্না সেরা	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫	৫		



## **Appendix 24: Sample Transcription: Focus Group Interview with parents**

### **Q. Why is reading necessary?**

Parent A: If he can't read, he can't do anything. The older he becomes, the more he needs to read. I was not a good student in school. But I realized I could do better if I could read.

Parent B: Education is needed in every field of life. Maybe my son can't do something great, but he can at least make a living. Education is required in order to do any work - run a family or look after kids.

### **Q. The habit of reading storybooks at home**

Researcher: Do you read storybooks for pleasure?

Parent A: I never read storybooks (Parent's educational qualification is 5th grade).

Researcher: Do you get the chance to read storybooks with your child?

Parent A: My child used to read storybooks when he was younger, and I would help if there were a problem somewhere. Nowadays, I don't get the opportunity to read with him. My child is learning to play a musical instrument in an organisation; so, he doesn't have enough time to read storybooks.

### **Q. Do reading storybooks hamper academic results?**

Parent A: If a student has time to read a storybook after reading a textbook, he can read a storybook. Reading storybooks increase reading skills. When my child gets a storybook, he reads it for a long time, wasting his study time. So, I forbid him to read storybooks.

There are a lot of contemporary issues in the Bangla textbooks, and students can learn a lot by reading that book.

Researcher: What kinds of books do they like to read?

Parent A: They like to read stories about Mullah Nasreddin Hooja.

Researcher: Do you get the scope to buy these kinds of storybooks for your child?

Parent B: Our children are young to read storybooks, and they are not old enough to read storybooks. Kids want many things, but we don't give them all.

#### **Q. Availability of Library at school**

Parent A: Our kids are not affiliated with any library. There is a public library nearby, but the kids don't go there. I don't know whether there is a school library (father - a teacher by profession). Another parent said there is a bookshelf in the school, and there are a few books in its racks. Students need to take a book from the shelf and leave it there after reading, as children cannot take books home.

Researcher: Do you have any electronic devices for reading at home?

Parent B: I have a laptop at home, but my child does not use it for reading. Furthermore, mobile phones were also not used as reading materials, and it is used for playing games.

#### **Q. Relationship with school**

Parent A: Teachers let us know about all the academic concerns by phone, even in a lockdown. They report any issues with **our child**, such as if **our children** are inattentive, the results are **inconsistent**, or **they are** irregular in class. In the parent meeting or regular school visit, **teachers also take these issues to us**.

Researcher: Do you have any other experiences?

Parent B: My daughters have some weaknesses in mathematics, and I came to school and shared that with the teachers. The teacher says they try their best; I need to manage the rest at home.