

Classroom Practices of Social Inclusion According to the Acts and Policies of Secondary Level Education in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is among the nations that have ratified significant international statements promoting inclusion in education. The goal of social inclusion in education is to bring all students together in a consistent teaching-learning strategy; including a subset of disadvantaged children in regular classrooms is only one facet of this concept (Berryman, 2011). Recent studies have shown that the social environment of classroom activities and the academic context are frequently different in Bangladesh's inclusive education systems. At the same time, after this new learning environment of pandemic COVID- 19, it has become imperative to rethink social inclusiveness in education. This study indicates the exact practices of social inclusion in the teaching-learning processes and behavioral aspects of secondary education (from grade 6 to 10) in Bangladesh according to National Education Policy 2010, Recommendations of Teaching quality improvement in secondary education project by Asian Development Bank, Final Report of Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI- SEP), follow up of Secondary Education Sector Development Project (SE-SDP) and Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project (SEQAEP). This study explores the existing practices of social inclusion in the teaching- learning processes and behavioral aspects of secondary education in Bangladesh through literature review and primary data source. Primary data were collected from 60 selected samples (30 students, 20 teachers and 10 parents) based on convenient and snowball format with narrative approach. The results underscore the attitudes and real practices of the teachers' and practitioners of secondary schools of our country towards social inclusion. The findings can be supportive for the policy makers and stakeholders who are now working with development of the framework of National curriculum 2021, National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), Ministry of Education and can have a further study for how Bangladesh get predominant international treaties in teaching- learning development process especially in practice of social inclusivity in classroom level. There are many studies which are mainly based on the inclusion of primary education of Bangladesh. The ultimate philosophy of this study is to embrace all the learners in the social context of secondary education of Bangladesh with equitable access and participation in schools.

Keyword: Social-Inclusion; Teaching-Learning Strategy; Behavioral Patterns; Educational Policy

INTRODUCTION

For the last ten years, Bangladesh has paid significant attention to explore different approaches in education to ensure that effective diversity in the classrooms of the schools in all levels. Meeting the requirements of kids with different learning styles in the classroom is a must since we are working to diversify our secondary schools. The 2012 Pre-Primary Education Expansion Plan defines social inclusion in education as providing sufficient instruction that values and recognizes the diversity of children (UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020). Ethnic minorities, tribal children, children with physical disabilities, and children with intellectual disabilities all have special requirements, and the Third Primary Education Development Program (PEDP-3) emphasizes inclusive education as part of "Education for All." The phrase "equal education provided to students with disabilities in every school" is specified in the Persons with Disability Rights and Protection Act of 2013. According to Article 17 of the 1972 constitution of Bangladesh, which was revised in 2011, the state is required to provide a universal, mass-oriented, and uniform system of education.

Furthermore, Article 18 of the constitution forbids discrimination in education with respect to admission to any educational institution on the basis of religion, race, caste, creed, sex, or place of birth. Both the female stipend program and the tuition exemption for females have been expanded to the upper secondary level. In 2008, the Flexible School Calendar measure was adopted with the aim of encouraging education access to marginalized girls in disadvantaged areas. By advancing the idea of social inclusion in the conventional school system, the 2016 National Education Act draft seeks to improve educational quality. The 2010 National Education Policy, which was formed on the tenets of social inclusivity, targets children from ethnic communities, socioeconomically disadvantaged households, and students with special needs. The National Curriculum Framework (2021) states that learner-centered and competency-based curricula, as well as pedagogical shifts and paradigm shifts, are some fundamental goals for inclusion. However, the concept that teachers control to suggest student-centered practices isn't always beneficial (Angelides, 2019).

In so many cases, it is quite difficult approach for the teachers in secondary level of our country to apply social inclusivity in the culture of the classrooms. Social inclusion in education is highly context- oriented concept. Teachers are here consistently being considered as an important agent of addressing inclusion in the classrooms. As social inclusion is even more difficult to implement than in policy. This study has shown the existing social inclusion policies of secondary level and discussions which are based on the appropriate implication in the classrooms with existing and raising issues which will require for further studies (Ryan, 2016).

Bangladesh is still in the early stages of implementing social inclusion in secondary school. However, it can be argued that Bangladesh has committed to many agreements and implemented a good number of legislative steps to ensure that all pupils have equitable access to education within the current educational system. The 1972 constitution explicitly states that universal education, whether it be elementary or secondary, is necessary regardless of the situation (Hossain, 2014). Bangladesh has accepted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the Dakar Framework of 1990, and the UNESCO 2000 Declaration on Education for All, which mandates that all children get an education in an inclusive manner using a standard system. It is significant to highlight that this socially inclusive education approach is evident in the elementary and secondary education systems' curricula, acts, and policies. It can also be seen in action in the system of primary education. This study has demonstrated how, shortly after signing these treaties, Bangladesh's secondary education teaching-learning practices supported social inclusion policies and legislation. This is because failing to consider social inclusivity in the classroom can threaten to undo the progress made in secondary education in the modern era.

Research Questions of the Study

The main purposes of the study were to explore the classroom practices of social inclusion according to the acts and policies of secondary level education in Bangladesh. Also to find the ways to improve the present scenario of class practices of inclusion. To fulfill the purposes, I tried to collect information's through the following questions:

1. What are the existing national and international policies have described about social inclusivity in the classrooms of secondary level?
2. How the students from versatile social backgrounds in secondary level schools are enjoying their times in classrooms?
3. What can be the ways to ensure social inclusion effectively in the classrooms of secondary level education in Bangladesh?

Statement of the Problem

As it was quite difficult to cover all the education sector, national or international policies and there are already have so many existing researches which have shown the inclusivity of primary education sector of Bangladesh, so this this study has study has to be chosen the secondary education sector of Bangladesh. The sampling was convenient, chained and from nearby schools. In many cases students feel embarrassed to share real scenario. But limitation of this study is not the drawbacks of this study. The terms 'development' and 'social inclusion'

are closely interlinked. Because education, health and quality of life are related in cyclic way in economic growth and the economic growth can be visible if we do not pay attention in social inclusivity in education. Social inclusion in education especially in the secondary level of education, directly contributes in health and quality of life. It can only possible by adopting pragmatic strategies in inclusivity of education in the context of the country's own socio- economic condition (UNICEF, 2019). The acts and policies have already told so many times about inclusion. But the matter of concern is, if the implications and practices are actually in actions in the classrooms and teaching- learning processes in the level of secondary schools of our country. Sustainable economic growth and social prosperity can be achieved through greater participation of backward segment of the students and also nurturing them very carefully as it is aligned with globalization. Real implications and practices of the acts and policies of social inclusion in the classrooms of secondary level education in Bangladesh can bring equality and equity. Still there is lack of equitable distribution in inclusivity in secondary education which is the main pillar of poverty reduction.

Purpose of the Study

Act and policies related education enacted over the last 20 years have marked with few milestones in social inclusivity in secondary education of Bangladesh. The study's primary goal was to critically analyze the concept of social inclusion and related practices in Bangladeshi secondary school settings. The strategy was summed up by empirical research with key documents and a literature study because inclusive education in Bangladesh is primarily policy driven. This study has examined and evaluated the available data with the goal of determining how social inclusion practices relate to and are supported by Bangladesh's secondary education inclusivity regulations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The realization of social inclusion within secondary education in Bangladesh has gained traction as a crucial goal to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students, regardless of social, economic, or physical differences. Several international frameworks have significantly shaped these efforts, including UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and the Dakar Framework for Action, both of which emphasize the rights of all children to quality education (UNESCO, 1994; 2000). The foundational policy in Bangladesh, the National Education Policy (2010), aligns with these global standards and seeks to incorporate students from marginalized and diverse backgrounds, promoting inclusivity through culturally responsive and student-centered approaches (Ministry of Education, 2011). However, implementing the policies effectively at the classroom level presents challenges. Studies indicate that while differentiated instruction, peer support systems, and inclusive language are recommended, these practices are inconsistently applied due to limited resources and teacher training (Rahman, 2019).

Research shows that while Bangladesh has introduced progressive policies on inclusion, practical implementation remains challenging. Armstrong (2000) and Hossain (2014) argue that a strong policy foundation is essential but not sufficient to bridge the gap in inclusive practices at the classroom level. Barriers such as inadequate teacher training, cultural biases, and limited awareness of inclusivity practices hinder effective social integration in schools (Mitchell, 2018). Studies by Angelides et al. (2019) and Berryman & Bishop (2011) underscore the importance culturally responsive pedagogies, where teachers acknowledge and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds of students, fostering a learning environment that values diversity and reduces discriminatory behaviors.

Moreover, the role of technology has been highlighted as a means to support inclusion, especially for students with disabilities. Iqbal & Imran (2017) and Berryman & Nath (2017) document Bangladesh's initiatives to integrate ICT in classrooms, though they note significant gaps in resources and teacher training that limit the effectiveness of such technologies. In slum areas, BANBEIS (2017) reports that children face additional barriers to education, pointing to the need for targeted support in these high-poverty zones. Teachers are pivotal to these inclusive efforts, yet they often lack the training and resources needed for full implementation, resulting in a gap between policy and practice (Karim & Rahman, 2021). Overcrowded classrooms, negative societal attitudes, and resource constraints further exacerbate these challenges (Ahmed, 2022). Research shows

that while many teachers support inclusion in principle, practical challenges lead to frustration, impacting their commitment to inclusivity (Rahman, 2019).

For effective social inclusion, continuous teacher training is vital. As Malak & Sharma (2017) and Khan (2011) suggest, comprehensive training that builds teachers' skills to manage diverse classrooms can create more inclusive educational settings. Additionally, as UNICEF (2019) emphasizes, collaboration between schools and communities plays an essential role in supporting inclusive practices, encouraging an environment of respect and inclusivity. Despite progress, the full realization of social inclusion in Bangladesh's secondary education remains a gradual process, demanding sustained efforts from all educational stakeholders.

Methods of the Study

This study followed qualitative approach. Data collection included face-to-face (direct) interviews, phone conversations, and virtual meetings. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted using open-ended questions, engaging teachers, students, and parents from diverse schools and regions. One FGD session was held virtually via Zoom for 2 hours. Additionally, close-ended questions were used to explore how social inclusivity is practiced and applied in classrooms. Interviews were conducted using open-ended questions through one-on-one meetings and phone conversations. To ensure greater diversity and reliability in the findings, the study adopted a larger sample size and multiple sampling techniques. Participants were selected through convenient sampling, chain sampling, snowball sampling, purposive sampling and quota sampling. Convenient sampling has been used to include participants readily accessible to the researcher, chain sampling has been used to identify participants through referrals from initial respondents, snowball sampling has been used to recruit participants by leveraging social networks, ensuring inclusion of underrepresented groups, purposive sampling has been used to deliberately select participants with rich experiences or specific insights into social inclusion practices in education, quota sampling has been used to ensure proportional representation of gender, social backgrounds and regions in the sample.

The study has been included the following participant groups:

Students: 30 students from diverse social and economic backgrounds (15 male and 15 female).

Teachers: 20 teachers (10 male and 10 female) teaching in both rural and urban schools.

Parents: 10 parents (5 male and 5 female) representing various regions and socio-economic statuses.

This brought the total sample size to 60 participants, offering a broader perspective on social inclusion in classrooms. FGDs were conducted separately for each group (students, teachers, and parents) to explore their unique insights on social inclusion practices. Interview schedules were utilized to guide data collection. Additionally, several national and international acts and policies related to inclusive education were analyzed to interpret and contextualize the data gathered from the participants.

Ethical Consideration

This research was conducted in compliance with ethical standards for studies involving human subjects. The authors of this study ensured that all participants provided informed consent. Privacy, confidentiality, and participants' rights were safeguarded throughout the data collection and analysis process, following the ethical guidelines relevant to educational research in Bangladesh.

FINDINGS

A recent study found that different secondary teachers have different understandings and interpretations of the concepts of social inclusion in pedagogy and classroom practice (Malak, 2017). Organizational growth and capacity building, enhancing teacher training facilities (with an emphasis on inclusion), bolstering pre-service and in-service teacher training, and enhancing community involvement were the four key focuses of the TQI-SEP project. These domains were picked because they all shared the basic goal of enhancing classroom

instruction, giving all secondary school students fair access, and encouraging their involvement in all relevant school and classroom activities (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Additionally, secondary school teachers are not well-versed in the current laws, policies, and regulations pertaining to social inclusion, particularly those pertaining to students with disabilities and ethnic origins (Armstrong, 2000). Cross-cultural research conducted in Bangladesh's hill tracts and Dhaka demonstrates that the most important element influencing instructors' behavior is their reluctance and lack of attitude toward the classroom (Berryman, 2017). On the other hand, our secondary education system can be seen problem and dropout rate will be high due to teachers' negative attitude, poor quality training, lack of teaching aids and inclusive visualizing equipment, less involvement of parents and community members, less supporting and inaccessible environment of schools and last but not the least rigid curriculum and rigid method.

When instructing a seventh-grade kid who is a slow learner and highly introverted, a teacher at a prominent school in Dhaka city (who would not reveal the name) remarked, "The boy is always shy, not sociable and spontaneous like others." Therefore, it is really challenging for me to include him in activities. He doesn't seem comfortable going with other kids, in my opinion. As you can see, I also have a lot of students, so accommodating individual differences is difficult. For the sake of this study, we nevertheless witnessed a professional, unskilled scenario and a theory-oriented teacher education program in the classroom.

We have interviewed four students. One of them has come from ethnic background and studying in a secondary school of Dhaka city who shared his story of bullying by classmates and teachers. He said that, I'm being trolled and bullied by my linguistic barriers and differences. My way of talking in Bengali language is not much fluent and spontaneous as it is not my mother tongue. Some teachers also make fun and mock with my language. I can make friends and parental guidance very rarely. At the same time financial barrier is also existing in my life which is interrupting my smooth way of study. Sometimes teachers don't address me by my name. They just say, hey Chakma stand up, which hurts my ego a lot and it is totally opposite to the verses of our policies and acts.

Our second sample was a student of class 10 from Dhanmondi Boys' School. He was born and grown up with minor leveled stammering problem in speaking. He has been trolled from the early stage of his life. One day one of the teachers of his school shouted at him very loudly in front of all the students only for being mumbled in speaking and feeling difficulties in delivering the speech. He felt humiliated and ashamed of it. In 2009, a medical student was committed suicide for same reason. Obviously, it should not be the proper classroom etiquette for teacher.

Our third sample student was also from a secondary school in Dhaka city. His name is Rakib (pseudo name). He has femininity in minor level. According to our national policy and also according to the rights of our constitution, definitely it is not a problem at all. But he has been trolled by his classmates and the teachers of his school not even prohibit them to do so. Some make mimicry at his gesture. He is suffering a mental trauma and inferiority complex with it.

Our fourth sample student was a female. She covered her face and uses veil from the early childhood of her life as a part of her religious believe system. But she finds it much difficult to adjust in a renowned school in Dhaka city and according to her statement, she is being deprived in many conditions. Teachers are very judgmental at her in the matter of debate competition or exam hall also in the classroom. She said that, if teachers cannot converse or co-ordinate with a girl with covered face, then how they can make a co-ordination to a person who is visually or verbally impaired. It is a violation of chapter 21 in our national education policy.

We met our fifth sample student (reluctant to expose her identity and name of the school) was from Brahman Baria. According to her description, she is a student of grade 7 and her mother's job is sweeping and cleaning in the same school. The teachers' have made the journey of study easier by made full- free studentship to her. But in so many times and in so many cases, she gets humiliated by her classmates only for being the daughter of a cleaner. Sometimes students of the same classroom, do not want to sit with her also which is very disheartening and disrespectful to her. She has very few friends in the school. But she did not even complain to

any of the teacher of this school about this issue. Because she feels like that, may be the classmates are right at their point of view. One day she wants to become a teacher and remove the toxic discrimination from the society.

Our sixth sample student named Khalid (pseudo name) was from a renowned school of Brahman Baria. He is in grade 9 and introduce himself as being a practicing Muslim. As a part of him religious believe, he has started maintaining beard and other stuffs in his life- style. But he said that, the teachers of his school complained continuously about him that he is violating the rules of his school with his ‘abnormal gesture’. Some students, parents and teachers also gossiping on him that he is becoming an extremist. But the fact of positivity is, ‘The Gender Action Plan’ is going on for reducing gender disparity and ensuring gender- friendly environment for secondary schools, awareness raising programs for teachers and Head- teachers and also the members of School Management Committee (SMC) (consisted of Head- teachers, teachers’ representative, parents’ representative and representative of the local community) which is a really positive sign and it should be spread in all the secondary schools of Bangladesh in no time. District Education Officers (DEO), zonal officers and relevant NGO representatives are also working for this.

Many parents and teachers are still unaware to the term ‘social inclusion’. Teachers generally support inclusion policies, viewing them as essential for equitable education. They recognize the value of practices like differentiated instruction and peer support, which are recommended by policies aimed at fostering inclusive classrooms. However, teachers reported that some substantial barriers to implementing these practices effectively, including limited resources, large class sizes, and inadequate training specific to inclusive education. These constraints leave many teachers feeling ill-equipped to address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with disabilities or from socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Consequently, the gap between policy expectations and classroom realities often leads to teacher frustration, which can affect their motivation and ability to implement inclusive practices consistently.

Parents generally support the principle of social inclusion, particularly as it aligns with broader social goals of equity and opportunity. However, they express mixed feelings about its execution. Parents of students with disabilities or those from underprivileged backgrounds often feel that schools lack the necessary resources and support systems, making it challenging for their children to thrive in an inclusive setting. Conversely, some parents of typically developing children worry that teachers' focus on diverse needs may dilute the quality of instruction for their own children. This tension underscores the need for more resources and targeted support to meet diverse student needs effectively, allowing both inclusivity and educational quality to coexist.

There has been a longitudinal case study from TQI-SEIP (Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project) and SEQAEP (Secondary Education Quality and Access Enhancement Project) which was focused on the implementation of social inclusion in classrooms through the lens of two significant initiatives in Bangladesh. The study examines the impact of these projects over time, aligning their efforts with national acts and policies related to inclusive education. These two longitudinal case studies also underscored the progress made through TQI-SEIP and SEQAEP in promoting classroom social inclusion while highlighting the challenges that persist in fully aligning practices with policies.

Case Study 1: TQI-SEIP

Background: The TQI-SEIP, launched by the Government of Bangladesh with support from development partners, aimed to improve teaching quality and ensure equity in secondary education. A key focus was fostering social inclusion through teacher training and school-level interventions.

Objectives:

- To explore the role of trained teachers in promoting inclusive classroom practices.
- To assess how inclusive education policies were operationalized at the secondary level.

METHODOLOGY

Duration: 5 years (2016–2021).

Schools Studied: 5 secondary schools (urban, rural, and semi-urban).

Participants: 25 teachers (10 trained under TQI-SEIP), 100 students, and 20 parents.

Data Collection Tools: Classroom observation, focus group discussions, and semi-structured interviews.

Findings

1. **Teacher Training and Awareness:** Teachers trained under TQI-SEIP demonstrated a better understanding of inclusive strategies such as differentiated instruction, gender sensitivity, and cultural inclusivity. However, practical implementation was often hindered by large class sizes and limited resources.
2. **Policy Integration:** Schools implemented elements of the National Education Policy 2010, emphasizing equal access for students with disabilities and marginalized groups. Challenges included lack of infrastructural adaptations for students with disabilities.
3. **Classroom Practices:** Active efforts to promote group work and peer collaboration. Gender-sensitive seating arrangements and activities. Limited focus on minority students and linguistic diversity.
4. **TQI-SEIP contributed to raising awareness among teachers about inclusive education policies.** However, systemic barriers, including insufficient resources and administrative support, limited its full impact.

Case Study 2: SEQAEP

Background: The SEQAEP, supported by the World Bank, aimed to enhance education quality and access for disadvantaged students. Its focus on social inclusion targeted economically disadvantaged students, girls, and those with special needs.

Objectives:

- To evaluate how SEQAEP initiatives influenced the social inclusivity of classroom practices.
- To assess progress toward achieving equitable access and participation.

Methodology

Duration: 4 years (2015–2019).

Schools Studied: 7 schools in economically disadvantaged areas.

Participants: 140 students, 30 teachers, and 28 parents.

Data Collection Tools: Longitudinal surveys, interviews, and classroom observations.

Findings

1. **Financial Support and Attendance:**
2. **Stipend Programs** helped to reduce dropout rates among marginalized students, especially girls and those from low-income families. Increased attendance created diverse classrooms but also highlighted gaps in teacher preparedness for handling such diversity.
3. **Infrastructural Changes:**
4. **Introduction of ramps and accessible facilities** for students with disabilities. Despite efforts, many schools lacked proper maintenance, affecting long-term usability.

5. Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion: Efforts to include local cultural practices in classroom discussions. Minimal support for students from indigenous and linguistic minority backgrounds.
6. Teachers’ Development: SEQAEP introduced workshops on inclusive pedagogies, but follow-ups revealed inconsistent application in classrooms.
7. SEQAEP effectively increased access to education for disadvantaged groups, aligning with national policies. However, a lack of sustained support and monitoring limited the transformation of classroom practices.
8. Recommendations:
9. Both projects highlight the importance of ongoing professional development focused on sustainable inclusive practices.
10. Both projects have policy-to-practice integration by bridging the gap between inclusive education policies and classroom realities requires better coordination and resource allocation.
11. Regular assessment of the impact of such initiatives on classroom practices and student outcomes.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis

Aspect	TQI- SEIP	SEQAEP
Focus	Teachers’ training and pedagogy	Access and equity for disadvantaged groups
Primary Impact	Improved the awareness of the teachers on inclusion	Increased enrollment and attendance
Challenges	Resource constraints, large class sizes	Limited teachers’ preparedness, infrastructural gaps
Alignments with Policies	Moderate alignment with policy but weak implementation	Stronger alignment with policy but uneven follow- through

Here are summarized effective case studies from various countries that align with the title and explore classroom practices promoting social inclusion in secondary education.

Case Study 1: Inclusive education in Finland

Focus: Holistic inclusion through student-centered approaches

Key Highlights:

Policy Framework: The Finnish national core curriculum emphasizes inclusivity by ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of abilities or socio-economic status.

Practices

- Individualized learning plans for students with special needs.
- Use of co-teaching models where general and special education teachers collaborate.
- Support systems, including school psychologists and special education assistants, embedded in classroom.
- Improved academic performance and social cohesion among students from diverse backgrounds.

Lessons for Bangladesh:

Emphasizing teacher collaboration and creating individualized learning paths can enhance inclusivity.

Case Study 2: The Salamanca Project in Spain

Focus: Promoting Inclusive Education in Multicultural Settings

Key Highlights:

Policy Framework: Inspired by the Salamanca Statement, Spain implemented inclusive practices in multicultural schools, particularly targeting immigrant and minority students.

Practices

- Integration of intercultural education in curricula.
- Multilingual classrooms with additional language support programs.
- Regular cultural exchange activities to foster mutual respect and understanding.

Outcome: Increased student participation and reduced drop-out rates among immigrant students.

Lessons for Bangladesh:

Incorporating multicultural content and language support can address diversity challenges in classrooms.

Case Study 3: Inclusive Education in South Africa

Focus: Addressing Socio-Economic and Racial Inequalities

Key Highlights:

Policy Framework: The Education White Paper 6 outlines inclusive education as a response to overcoming apartheid-era inequalities.

Practices

- Establishment of resource centers in disadvantaged schools to support students with disabilities.
- Professional development programs for teachers to handle diversity and implement inclusive strategies.
- Peer-led inclusion activities to foster understanding and reduce discrimination.
- Outcome: Gradual reduction of racial and socio-economic disparities in classrooms.
- Lessons for Bangladesh:
- Establishing resource centers and empowering teachers with training can address socio-economic and diversity-related challenges.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis

Country	Key focus	Effective Practices	Relevance for Bangladesh
Finland	Individualized learning	Co-teaching- learning plans	Collaboration among teachers
Spain	Multi-cultural inclusion	Inter-cultural curriculum and language support	Addressing linguistic and cultural diversity
South Africa	Socio-economic inclusion	Resource centers, peer-led inclusion activities	Resource hubs for disadvantaged schools

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Existing policies related to social inclusion in education

It can be said that all the policies described above implicitly or explicitly, vaguely or specifically included many facets of education. The tenets of practice are known as policies. Every policy has practical implications. The first disability law, known as the "Bangladesh Persons with Disability Welfare Act," was created in 2001 with the goal of legitimizing education for all in order to fulfill the pledges of the Dakar Framework 2002 and the Salamanca Statements 1994. This comprehensive statute addressed the definition, education, healthcare, employment, transportation, social security, and other aspects of people with disabilities. This law has been recognized as the first attempt to ensure that children with disabilities have access to school as a legal right, notably in the educational area. This act was initiated by the Ministry of Social Welfare rather than the Ministries of Education or Law Enforcement and Parliamentary Affairs. Policymakers frequently view disability as a charity rather than a condition that requires special education (SEN) (Ainscow, 2019).

To uphold the rights of social inclusion in education, customized curricula and special education services must be developed (NAEM Report, 2019). According to Hossain (2011), schools are supposed to adapt to the needs of the students, not the other way around. The three primary goals of education for different learners are highlighted in the National Education Policy (2010) as follows:

- Bringing all socio-economically disadvantaged children into education including street- children (no. 22).
- Making sure that all of Bangladesh's indigenous and ethnic groups have the opportunity to develop their cultural and linguistic traits (no. 23).
- Upholding the rights of every child with a disability (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 1-2, no. 24).

Table 3: Policy Trajectory Bangladesh and International; Source: (BANBEIS, 2017).

2010	National Education Policy 2010
2006	UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled
2001	Bangladesh Disability Welfare Act
2000	Dakar Framework Action
1994	Salamanca Declaration

The 2010 National Education Policy recognizes the right of all children to receive mother- tongue education and acknowledges the necessity to provide special assistance to marginalized indigenous students. It is anticipated that residential facilities and schools will be constructed for both educators and students (TQI, 2012). All students' and their families' needs and interests are met by teaching and learning processes, regardless of sex, race, religion, aptitude, economic status, or other factors (ADB, 2004). These procedures are also sufficiently adaptable to students' interests. Since 2011, teaching and learning resources in five ethnic languages have been created for primary school and freely disseminated for secondary education as well (see Table 4).

Table 4: Key Statements of National Education Policy 2010

Policy Statements	Themes
Reduce prejudice among socioeconomic, ethnic, and socially disadvantaged children. Provide specific facilities for schools in disadvantaged areas (Chapter 4, p. 13).	Reducing discrimination

Increase girls' participation in institutional education and reduce girls' dropout from schools (Chapter 16, p. 40).	Gender, Access, Retention
Include students with special needs in mainstream education (Chapter 18, p. 43).	Mainstreaming, Special Education
Improve teachers' efficiency in implementing innovative teaching techniques.	Professional learning
Encourage teachers to teach kids regardless of religion, color, or socioeconomic status, ensuring equitable opportunity.	Practicing social inclusivity
Help teachers improve their delivery of classes to students from underprivileged and ethnic communities, as well as those with disabilities, taking into account their unique learning needs. (Chapter 21, pages 57, 58)	Professional learning, social inclusivity

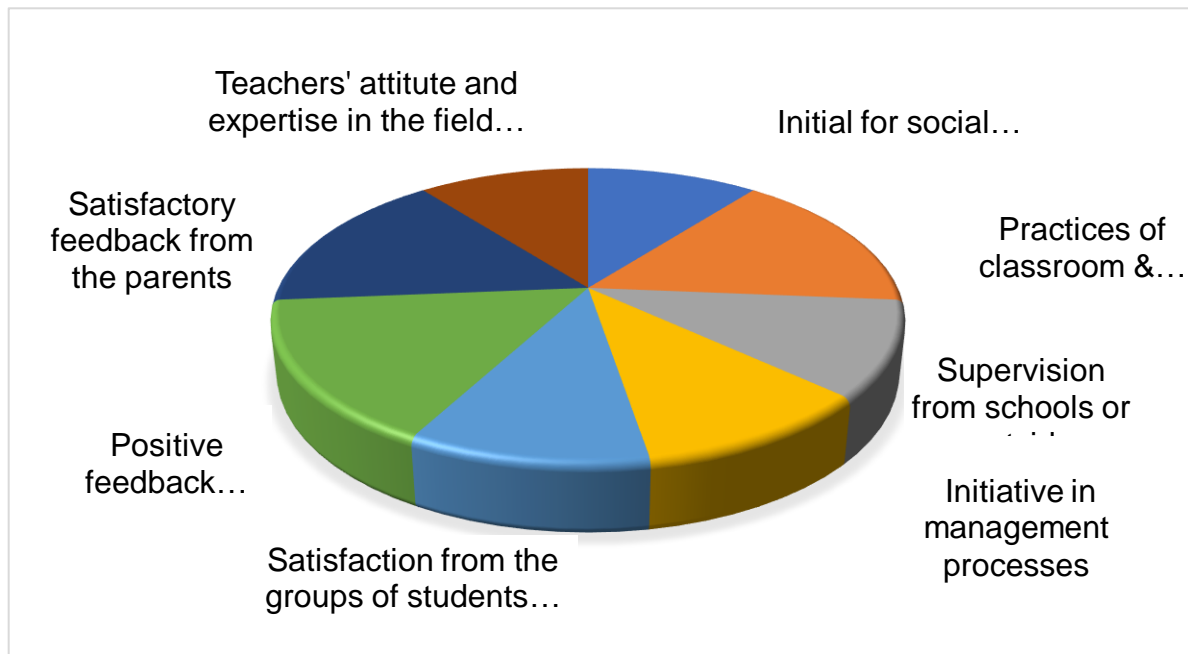


Figure 1: Social Inclusion in Secondary School Level

Ways to face and overcome the challenges of classroom practices of social-inclusion in secondary level of Bangladesh

Nobel Laureate Professor Amartya Sen once said that, social development is a process of expanding human capabilities and freedoms, which includes access to economic facilities and social opportunities. Therefore, it is very evident to us that social inclusion does not entail ignoring variety or changes in the classroom or even in society at large. It involves embracing diversity, blending all the different cultures in one society, and promoting and allowing for individual differences (Miles, 2010). Therefore, in order to make economic development sustainable, it is absolutely necessary to ensure social inclusion by creating enough opportunities with full participation for all in our classroom as well as society, regardless of gender, age, background and it

is high time we prevented degradation of values in society. The only way to create social prosperity, a high quality of living, and sustainable economic growth is to increase involvement from all facets of society. Conversely, social security is maintained in high-performing nations through social reform and social inclusion at the school level.

- Teachers in the classroom should build the sense of practicing “We not I” thought among the students. Schools should provide the knowledge of tight- knit joint family over the nuclear families. So, the students can have the love and soft- corner for the senior citizen of the society and build up a mental state of sharing empathy.
- Schools can create the opportunities of celebration of various festivals with the participation of the students from all backgrounds. It is an engagement in creative activities and part of socialization process. Because adolescents are growing up alone in today’s time due to lack of opportunities.
- It is a matter of concern that, students from secondary levels are now becoming extremely addicted to mobile phones and relevant social networks. Also, sometimes in criminal activities or juvenile delinquency. But we cannot remove technology from our life. In COVID- 19 pandemic, we have given mobile phone to our students for online teaching- learning procedures. So now we cannot snatch this from them. Now we need to think, how we can create a positive adaptability with device. In the ICT course of the schools should enhance not only cognitive but also affective, social and moral skills of technology.
- This era of new curriculum is badly in need of trained teachers. But there is shortage of qualified and trained teachers in our schools. Still 37% of teachers in our country relied on unauthorized guide books (World Bank Report, 2018). According to the National Education Policy, the ideal teacher- student ration should be 1:30. But the reality is more than 1:46. So the concentration in inclusion for the students particularly is difficult. This hindrance should be erased as soon as possible.
- Social capital for the educational institutions benefits for the results of social interaction. Social capital can give the opportunity of setting up non- monetary services for social cohesion in the secondary schools such as libraries, cultural clubs, sports, liberation corner, Bangabandhu corner, reading sessions which bring cooperation through the inclusion of adolescents and a harassment free schools and neighborhoods. Teachers should collaborate different activities with students which bring courage, enthusiasm, moral education, values, patriotism, creativity, sense of responsibility and togetherness.

In Lebanon, there is a village where most of the people are hearing impaired. Due to genetic mutation the most of the people in that village are deaf. So, people in that village have created their own sign language and that language is used all over the village and schools of that village. Those people who are not hearing impaired, also have learned this language. Now the hearing-impaired kids and non-hearing-impaired kids go to school and sit in the classroom together. So, when majority and minority work together, the social condition of that society can have success and real happiness.

In order to properly develop social inclusion in secondary level of Bangladesh, the teachers of the schools should provide both initial and continuous professional development training (Iqbal, 2017). After that, the teachers can expand the idea of social inclusion among the students and in the midst of that institution. Implication of clear policy can incorporate potential for curriculum adaptation both in rural and urban schools as research has shown that still the secondary teachers have confusion and positive and negative perspectives about social inclusion in the classrooms of secondary schools. Involvement of key people from the community such as parents, management groups, intellectuals, religious leaders, policy makers and greater awareness making activities within each community can erase the complexities in social inclusion and it can spread inclusion in diversity. Inadequate budget allocations in the schools of rural areas are another barrier better school facilities. Monitoring, supervision and mentoring is badly needed in this case before it is too late. Most importantly said, creating special support and suggestions not only for the teacher but also for the students in regular day to day school activities can facilitate mainstream teaching- learning processes with the students of diverse needs (Rashid, 2022).

- Classroom practices of social inclusion in secondary level is not a single role for anybody. It is a combined effort for Ministry of Education, educators, teachers, parents, students, curriculum, policy, educational institutions and the facilities of educational institutions.
- Lack of the practices of social inclusion in the classroom in secondary school's results in lack of successful quality education in Bangladesh. According to new curriculum it is now mandatory.
- If schools provide the appropriate context for a child's first relationship with the world outside their families, which will enable the development of relationship.
- Schools should establish the practice of respect and understanding when students of diverse abilities and backgrounds play, socialize and learn together.
- Social inclusion in education especially in secondary level have to exclude the segregation and discrimination and assembled the traditionally marginalized groups.
- Social inclusion in classroom results in civic participation, employment opportunity and a better community life.

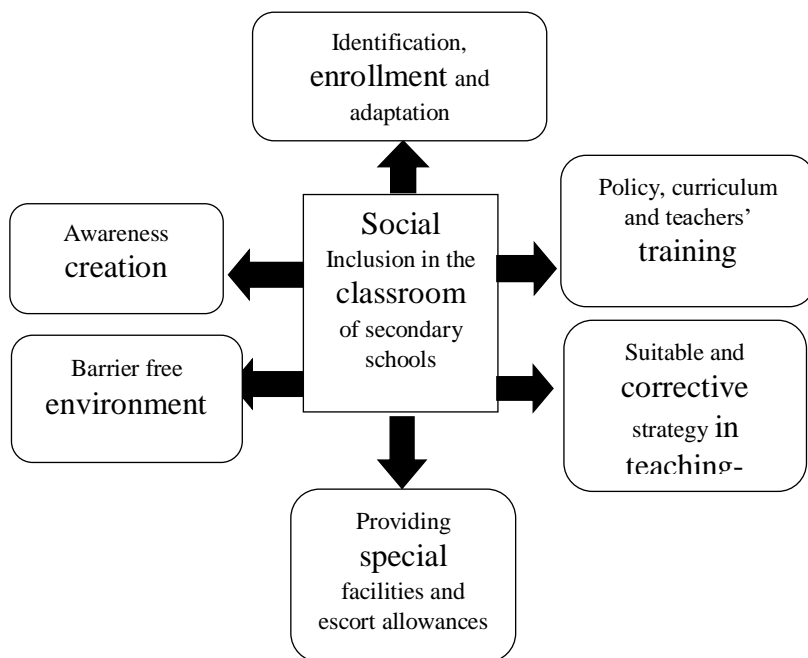


Figure 2: Ways of Social Inclusion in Secondary School

CONCLUSION

Social inclusivity means when the majority of the society care for the minority. The philosophy of social inclusion in education relies on giving equal opportunities, multi- pronged expeditious approach and full participation to the students of the classroom regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have (Mitchell, 2018). Individual approach in teaching- learning process means every student in the classroom has taken into account and all learners have the opportunities for participate and achieve together. There will be no room for marginalization, exclusion or underachievement in term of social inclusion in the secondary education in Bangladesh (Kabir, 2005). No one is superior and inferior to the context of paradigm shift of social inclusion in education. Teachers' training and counseling for the tolerance in diversity are the must. Bangladesh has to fulfil its educational goals of 21st century. It is high time we involved parents and teachers as learners, decision makers in this case. Providing interactive, fun- filled classrooms, assistive technology with technological knowledge of the teachers in the schools of secondary levels and not to think that that have too grown up for these fun-based activities, flexible curriculum as well as syllabus to reduce excessive academic load, removal of gender and other social biases, provision of adequate learning resources for the students, removal of gender and other social biases are some mandatories. Schools should find the ways out to foster friendships in a natural, supportive and encouraging environment. Students and also the teachers should imbibe desirable social behavior from each- other.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers' training and school leadership are two essential components for successful implementation of social inclusion in classroom practices for secondary schools in Bangladesh. It is necessary to become 'Includer' with embrace the differences wholeheartedly for a teacher to bring social inclusivity in the classroom (Khan, 2011). Although classroom practices of social inclusion have enormous challenges, still pre- service training with evaluation of professional development for the teachers can play a visible role in this case. Cluster based training for the teachers and catchment area practice with appropriate data for the students are also necessary. Just enrollment and mainstreaming are not the solutions. Students' friendly activity-based classroom with assumption and compassion is now should be the top- notch priority. Learner- centered curriculum with integration and spiral articulation is necessary. Not just searching for the weaknesses but find the ways to highlight the interests and strengths of students with opportunities and places for the students to spontaneous interaction in the classroom can flourish them. Students also have the confidence of 'zero tolerance' for anything that is disrespectful, intolerant of diversity, bullying, teasing, and other put- down behavior in the classroom. Schools can introduce resource persons from different diversified cultures to bring spirit and courage among students (example, Kanok Chapa Chakma). At the same time, during and after COVID- 19 pandemic has brought a new concern in the field of classroom practices of social inclusion in our country. Socially inclusive opportunities in the classroom means all students will adhere to an inclusive belief system under the guidance and supervision of teachers and school environment. Because just one type of flower cannot create a garden. Similarly, if we want to make a beautiful garden to this society in our country by our students, we should encourage and welcome the diversity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this research. The study was conducted independently, without financial or personal relationships that could influence the outcomes.

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